

Educational Status of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe People in Assam

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Abstract

The article 45 of the constitution of India promised to give education to its all citizens irrespective of their caste, class, religion, language, race, region etc. Again, Right to Education Act 2009, represents to give free and compulsory education for children between the age group of 6 to 14 in India under the article 21A of the constitution. But, even after 69 years of Independence of India, it is seen that large section SCs and STs remains illiterate in different parts of the country. In Assam majority of the people are belong to SCs and STs who are still illiterate because of number of social, economical, geographical, cultural and religious problems. Hence, the researcher has attempted to find out the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people in Assam through survey method and data have been collected from secondary sources. It is observed that the literacy rate in Assam is progressively achieved; its successes towards the literacy percentage of SC and ST people which is slightly better than the national level. Like the other states of India, Assam also provides safeguards to protect the interests of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes against any injustice in the matter of establishment of an admission to educational institutions and grant from state funds but yet that safe guard is hardly implemented and excited.

Keywords: Education, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, etc.

Backdrop Of The Study

Assam is one of the northern states of India, in which the education is provided by the state government as well as central board of education. Thereafter, the government is continuously helping to improve the status of education of the nation. Gradually, the Government of Assam has declared education is free in the state up to class Xth standard since April 1978, and stress has been laid on the implementation of the national adult education programme in the state (Sen, S. Pp 40-43) The Government of Assam has implemented the free and compulsory education policy for students up to the age of 14. However, the education of both the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes has been adversely affected by (the ubiquity) of unequal diffusion and provision of formal education and inadequate provision continues to serve as the most fundamental of educational deterrents to participation of SC/ST children. The constitution of India was framed in 1950 with an objective to social political and economic justice to all irrespective of caste, creed and religion. It was well visualized that, development in education along with other allied sectors would play a vital role in bringing about desirable changes in the country. It was planned that the backward sections of the Indian population i.e. scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other backward classes must be provided opportunity in education to develop critical thinking and self determination and contribute to the progress of the country. The state government is provided opportunities to the education of SC/ST people contained in Articles 15 (A), 45 and 46 of the Indian constitution. Article 15 (4) underscores the state's basic commitment to positive discrimination in favour of the socially and educationally backward classes like the scheduled castes (SC) and scheduled tribes (ST), Article 45 declares the states endeavored to provide free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of 14 years. Article 46 stated the specific aim to promote with special care the educational and economic interest of SC/ST. In its effort to offset educational and socio-economical disadvantage, the Indian states conceived a range of enabling provisions that would facilitate access to and ensure retention of SC and ST people in education (Chatterjee,

S.K. Pp 1-13). So, Assam is a northeast path of India in which it is found from various sources that the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people are socio-economically as well as in the field of education very poor in comparison to the other groups of people.

Objectives Of The Study

The present study has been designed by the researchers to find out the literacy rate of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people in Assam. Data has been collected from Secondary sources.

Observation and Discussion

Education and literacy of SC and ST people

Education and literacy are the responsible and good indicators for the development of a society. Literacy is generally associated with many social, political, and economic factors. The higher level of education and literacy leads to a more awareness and also contributes in improvements of socio-economic conditions. The growth literacy percentage of SC and ST people in Assam is shown in the following table-

TableNo-1: The growth of literacy rate of SC and ST people in Assam

Year	Gen	SC	ST
1961	27.39	24.42	24.35
1971	28.72	25.79	26.03
1981	N/A	N/A	N/A
1991	43.20	53.94	49.16
2001	64.28	66.08	62.05
2011	73.18	N/A	N/A

Source: Census report of Assam From (1961to 2001) & provisional Census data, 2011

It is observed that the literacy rate in Assam is progressively achieved; its success towards the literacy percentage of SC and ST people is slightly better than the national level. Like the other states of India, Assam also provide safeguards to protect the interests of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes against any injustice in the matter of establishment of an admission to educational institutions and grants from state funds. Under different articles and schedules of the Indian constitutions (viz. article 15(A), 16(4), 19(5), 23, 29, 46, 164, 330, 334, 335, 339, (i) 342, 371, fifth and sixth schedules) the SC and ST people have been given protection. Although attempt has been made to think up some suggestion for the better improvement in education for these groups of people, this suggestion could be followed. Then proper development of SC and ST people in all aspects mainly in education can be expected in this state.

It is found that as per 1961 census report in Assam the general literacy rate were 27.39%, the literacy rate of SCs was 24.42% and the literacy rate of STs was 24.35%. So, it is revealed that the SCs literacy rate was slightly better than the STs literacy rate and the general literacy rate was better than the SCs and STs literacy rate as per 1961 census.

According to 1971 census in Assam the general literacy rate was 28.72%, the SCs literacy rate was 25.79% and the STs Literacy rate was 26.03%. Hence, it is found that the STs literacy rate was better than the SCs literacy rate and the general literacy rate were better than the SCs and STs literacy rate as per 1971 census.

It is observed that as per 1991 census in Assam the general literacy rate was 43.20%, the SCs literacy rate was 53.94% and the STs literacy rate was 49.16%. So, it is also revealed that the SCs literacy rate was better than the STs literacy rate and the SCs and STs literacy rate was far ahead than the general literacy rate as per 1991 census.

It is also revealed that according to 2001 census in Assam the general literacy was 64.28%, the SCs literacy rate was 66.08% and the STs Literacy rate was 62.05%. Hence, it is found that the SCs literacy rate was

better than the general and STs Literacy rate as per 2001 census. However, from the census of 2011 in Assam the General literacy was 73.18%. It is revealed that the 2011 census report shows higher literacy percentage of General Caste as compared to the previous census report (1961, 1971, 1991, and 2001). But in 2011 census the SCs and STs literacy percentage is not available.

Fig. No-2: The graphical representation of growth literacy rate of SC and ST people in Assam from 1961-2011

From the above graphical representation, it is found that the SCs literacy rate is better than the STs Literacy rate in Assam. Again, it is also clear that in 2011 the general literacy rate is better which is shown in the graph where the literacy rate of SC and ST is not available.

Conclusion

From the present study, it is clear that the literacy rate of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe people is not satisfactory as compared to the other groups of people in Assam. Although the constitutional commitment is there to provide safeguard to protect the SC/ST people against any injustice in the matter of establishment of an admission to educational institutions and grant from state funds but yet that safeguard is hardly implemented and excited. The government of India makes a lot of efforts to implement it but due to the discrimination it is not successful. Yet, in the state they remain the most backward ethnic groups. It is evident from their average rate of literacy for the major indicator of the educational development. Even fifty three years of intervention has not made any significant impact for improving the educational conditions of the SCs and STs clearly, for which only government effort is not sufficient rather, public awareness and involvement are indispensable.

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