

## Education of Scheduled Tribe Students with Special Reference to Rangachahi College Mising Students, Majuli Assam

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### Abstract

*Education is a device through which an individual or group of individual can solve problems and develop themselves. Without education, in the modern era, nobody can claim as a civilized human being. This paper will study the education of Scheduled Tribes people with special reference to Rangachahi College. This study sought to make an analysis on the present educational status of Mising students who belong to the Scheduled Tribe community of Assam. Scheduled Tribes are regarded as the weaker section of our country, as they are developing communities having their own living style and language. So, importance and more concentration should be given to the education of the Scheduled Tribe community. A few years back Mising community was known as the 'Miri' community of North East India. The Mising communities are peace-loving and they lived on the bank of river. So, they are regarded as backward, aboriginal, forest tribe etc. therefore it is necessary to be given importance to the study of the education of Mising people.*

**Keywords:** Education, Mising Students, Schedule Tribes, Backward.

### 1. Introduction

It is a matter of great regret that the modern civilized man, who claims to be sufficiently educated, does not care to look at the socio-economic and educational problems of the tribal population in the backward region of India. Scheduled Tribes (S.T.) are regarded as the weaker section of our country, as they are not developing like the people have their own living style and language. Every tribe has their own culture. Some of the important tribes which are live in Assam are Bodo, Mising, Karbi, Dimasa, Kuki and Hymar, etc. As S. T. is considered the weaker section of society more concentration should be given to this group. Education is a device through which an individual or group of individual can solve problems and develop themselves. So, importance should be given to the education of S. T. students.

In Assam, there are two types of Schedule Tribes one is Schedule Tribe Plains who are live in the plains area of Assam. Another one is Schedule tribe Hills who are live in the Hilly areas of Assam. Tribes belonging to S. T. (P) are Mising, Sonowal, Deori, Bodo etc. Again tribes belonging to S. T. (H) category are Dimasa, Karbi, Kuki, Hymar, etc. But in all India basis, there are no differences between S. T. (P) and S. T. (H). Centrally both S. T. (P) and S. T. (H) are belonging to the S. T. category.

Rangachahi college is a college situated in the middle area of Majuli Island. The majority of the students of this college are belonging to the Mising community which is belonging to the Scheduled Tribe Plains category. Apart from them, students belonging to OBC, SC, and general categories are also studying in this institution.

In consideration of the above, the present study entitled "Education of Scheduled Tribe Students with Special Reference to Rangachahi College Mising Students, Majuli, Assam." is sought to understand the status of education of S. T. students. This study is based on the Mising tribe in the selected S. T. students of Rangachahi College as they are one of the weaker sections of society.

## 2. Literature Review

There are so many books, articles, journals, and newspaper magazines published regarding the subject matter of S. T. student's education. Usually, S. T. people stayed in remote areas and their main occupation is cultivation. Being a part S.T. community, most of the time Mising tribal children have to engage in private sphere activities like weaving, cultivating, and rearing domestic animals like Duck, Pig, Cow, Goat, etc. As a result, they have to face many problems during the time of achieving an education. Even if they want to achieve higher education but they cannot bear the high cost of study materials due to backward economic conditions. Apart from this, many Mising parents are unaware of the needs and importance of higher education still today. The significance of the study lies here that why the students of Mising community have been lagging behind the light of education. In India, there is a large number of Scheduled Tribe population has existed and more than 533 tribal populations exist all over India they are live in backward places as well in remote areas which are not sound for a healthy education (*Education Exclusion of Scheduled Tribes in India*). They are always excluded from the different developmental activities because of their geographical alienation from other civilized populations. Almost 90 percent Scheduled Tribe and Mising population are living in a rural area, forest, and remote area which is less accessible from the mainstream population.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, the Tribe is termed as a “*small group defined by traditions of common descent and having temporary or permanent political integration above the family level and a similar language, culture, and ideology.*” They have been isolated from the mainstream development opportunities and they missed their history because their sense of history is very superficial and due to a lack of specific education (*Tribe Life in India*). During the time of the 1931 census, the tribal people were known as the term “Primitive Tribes” and also usually used as “Forest Tribes” or “Hill Tribes”. However, in the 1941 census the tribes were again changing a different identity i.e. known as simply “Tribes”. From the primitive stage, their identity was changing day by day as well today the constitution of Indian democracy specified their identity as termed “Scheduled Tribes” (*Tribal Life in India*).

In this regard, education is a means by which a community or society can transform their living styles from backward or miserable conditions to healthy forward conditions and they can improve their communication skills and the potentiality of their future lives. As a whole accessing education is very helpful for a particular community or a group of community because through education a particular community become empowered, capacity to overthrow the different barriers, and get the strength to fight against evil practices of society which are not necessary for modern latter society (*Challenging Issues of Tribal Education in India*). During the primitive stage of the Mising people were not very much conscious about achieving education so their percentage of literate people is very less than other communities. They only engaged in their day-to-day activity which was to produce cultivation because their main livelihood was cultivation. The Mising people were mostly dealing with the fieldwork; they didn't think of the education for their children. As a result, they become an educationally backward class in society. While they have become educationally backward sections at the same time they are bound to have stayed backward sections in all aspects of society. Because due to illiteracy they loosed their history.

The role of education in the modern civilized world has been increased day by day. Without education, we people never see the light of the modern civilized world. Education

does not mean only the development of one side i.e. economy. It is an all-round development of a society. Education improves the ability to adjust to different situations whatever problems arise in front of the human being. Education is the only means to improve the inner ability of a particular community and develop the potentiality of living styles or so on. Professor Amartya Sen recently emphasized education as an important parameter for any inclusive growth in an economy. Education removes the different problems like poverty and unemployment, generates employment, economic growth, international relationship, and improves social status and standard of living style of society. The scheduled tribe community has been known as a backward section of society before the British period. The percentage of educated or literate people was so less than in other sections of society. The challenges of S.T. students in accessing education are (*Challenging Issues of Tribal Education in India*) the discrimination of male-female in their society and they are not aware of the government programmes and policies which are made for their improvement. Due to this problem, many S.T. women as well as Mising women unwillingly became illiterate.

Rani, M. (2000) in her study found that due to the language barrier the relationship between teachers and students has become problematic. Because the children belong to the S.T. community they are unable to understand the language of the teacher so they cannot properly communicate with the teacher. That's why many S.T. children have to terminate their access to education. Jha&Jhingran, D. (2002) have very clearly argued for the use of mother tongue in the system of education in particularly S.T.dominated areas. "*The Praitichi Committee Report (2002) identifies the cost of schooling, lack of motivation of teachers, lack of inspection, and the increasing dependence on private tutoring to be the main hurdles in the path of education for tribal children*" (*Challenging Issues of Tribal Education in India*). The economic condition also plays a very significant role in accessing education of the S.T. population. Because due to the high cost of the study materials S.T. people are unable to bear and as a result, they have to stay apart from the light of education. The family support of the S.T. community was not sound for education. Because many times S.T. people didn't give any importance to educating their children and they ignore education.

Gautam, V. (2004) strongly articulates in his article about the "Drop-out" rate among S.T. students. He argued in his article about how medium instruction and appointment of the teacher is a cause of dropout rate of S.T. students. In this point of view, he analyzed that the wrong medium of instruction as well as the appointment of non-tribal teachers in the tribal areas caused a large communication gap between teachers and children which is leading to the high dropout rate of S.T. students in education.

Very few studies have been conducted on the education of Scheduled Tribes, especially on the Mising Community of Assam. Thus, keeping in view the dearth of data, an attempt will be made in the proposed study to investigate the education of S.T. students with special reference to Rangachahi college of Assam.

### 3. Significance of the study

Normally, Scheduled Tribe peoples stay in remote areas because their major livelihood is cultivation. As a result, they face the educational institution problem. Though they want to achieve higher education but they can not bear the cost of the study materials. Apart from this, many Scheduled Tribe people are still today unaware of the need of achieving higher education. The significance of the study lies here. The majority of the

students of Rangachahi College are belonging to the Mising community which is belonging to the Scheduled Tribe Plains category. As the Mising community people are staying in remote areas and Rangachahi College has also situated in a rural area, study on education for S.T. students with special reference to Rangachahi College is significant.

#### **4. About Mising community**

Most of the S. T. students are belonging to the Mising community at Rangachahi College. So present study is done on Mising students of Rangachahi College, as they belong to S.T. (Plains) category. Therefore, there is a need for a little knowledge about the lifestyle of the Mising Tribe. The Mising community is a very significant ethnic group in the North East region of India and the second largest tribal community of Assam. According to the 2001 census the Mising community covers 17.8 percent of the tribal population of Assam. The total population of the Mising community is 5,87,310 and is found mostly in districts like Majuli, Dhemaji, North Lakhimpur, Sonitpur, Tinsukia, Dibrugarh, Sibsagar, Jorhat, and Golaghat of Assam. Originally, the Mising community was inhabited the Abor and Misimi hills of Arunachal Pradesh. They usually live on the bank of river Brahmaputra and the Subansiri and they belong to the 'Tani Group'. Their living style is very simple, generally, their houses consist of Mé:ram and Pé:rap for cooking food and keeping the kitchen materials. The majority of Mising tribes are patching domestic animals like pigs, Cow, Goat, Duck, etc. in their houses. Mising women are very experts in weaving activity too. Usually, Mising people are known as peace-loving and culturally rich tribes with having their own living style.

#### **5. Area of the study**

It is on November 06, 1983, a "Red-Letter Day" of the Greater Rangachahi area in the history of higher education of Majuli, one of the biggest river islands in the world that an energetic social organization namely "Majuli Jila Yogi Sanmilani", taking an adventurous role under the leadership of Late Dambarudhar Saikia as President and Sri Bogaram Nath, M. A., B. T., as Principal and secretary with the blessing of reverend Satradhikar Sri Sri Krishna Chandra Dev Goswami of Garamur Satra, Majuli, along with a group of energetic social workers of the entire Rangachahi region, enkindled the candle of the temple of higher education as "Rangachahi College" in Majuli.

Rangachahi region, the heart place of Majuli, ten kilometers distance from the headquarter of the sub-division Garmur, totally free from the danger of the erosion of the Mighty Brahmaputra, has many distinctive characteristics of geographical identity, literary atmosphere, Socio-cultural and historical heritage, healthy and harmonious social environment with peace and tranquillity. It is established in a congenial socio-cultural atmosphere paving the way for intuitive learners.

Now, the college is imparting the knowledge of spiritualism, patriotism, universal brotherhood, and civic consciousness of moral and ethical values through general education to the thirsty growing generation. Rangachahi College is aware of encouraging students to be ideal and capable of making a bridge of cooperation, and understanding. We, greatly emphasize the idea of self-sufficiency, self-employment, self-reliance, and the development of human values through the concept of value education.

#### **6. The objective of the study**

The objective of the study is as follows:

- To put forward an understanding of the educational status of the Mising Tribe.
- To study the problems of scheduled tribe students of Rangachahi College in accessing education.

### 7. Operational definition of the terms

Operational definitions of the terms are as follows:

- **Weaker section:** - Weaker section means those sections of society that are underdeveloped in every aspect of life viz. socially, economically and educationally, etc.
- **S. T. Students:** - S. T. students mean those students who are belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category.
- **Mising Students:** Mising students are those students who are belonging to the Mising community.

### 8. Delimitation of the study

Delimitation of the study is as follows:

- ✚ Present study delimited to the Rangachahi College only.
- ✚ It delimited to the S. T. students belonging to the Mising community only.
- ✚ The study delimited to the H. S. 2<sup>nd</sup> year, B. A. 3<sup>rd</sup> Semester, and B. A. 5<sup>th</sup> Semester S. T. students of Rangachahi College only.

### 9. Methodology

**Method:** Descriptive method has used for the study as the study was done for finding out the fact.

**Population:** All the S. T. students of Rangachahi College were regarded as the population of the study. During the study total, S. T. students at Rangachahi College were 173 out of 294 total students.

**Sample:** Purposive sampling technique was used for sample selection. 87 samples are selected by using the same sampling technique. Selected units were approximately 50% of the total population. All the units were not interested to give the data, so the purposive sampling technique was used and selects the units for getting the purpose.

**Tool:** A questionnaire method was used for data collection of the study. The questionnaire was self-structured and close-ended.

**Analysis and interpretation of data:** - Quantitative data analysis and interpretation technique was used for data analysis and interpretation of collected data.

**The statistical technique used:** - Percentage statistical technique was used for data analysis and interpretation of collected data.

### 10. Analysis and interpretation data

Analysis and interpretation of the study are as follows:

Table 1

Table showing the existence of communication problems and financial problems of S. T. students: -

Sample	Items	No. of 'Yes'	No. of 'No'	Percentage of 'Yes'	Percentage of 'No'
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87	Communication problem	51	36	58.20%	41.38%
	Financial problem	64	23	73.56%	26.44%

From this table, it was found that 58.20% of S. T. students have faced communication problems and 41.38 % did not face communication problems to achieve education. Again 73.56% of S. T. students faced financial problems and 26.44 % did not face financial problems to take admission and fulfill other remaining needs of the study.

Table – 2

Table showing the existence of the linguistic problem and problem of family support of the S. T. students: -

Sample	Items	No. of 'Yes'	No. of 'No'	Percentage of 'Yes'	Percentage of 'No'
87	Linguistic problem	56	31	64.37%	35.63%
	Problem of family support	09	78	10.34%	89.66%

From this table, it was found that 64.37% of S. T. students have faced the linguistic problem and 35.63% did not have a linguistic problem to achieve education. Again 10.34% of S. T. students faced the problem of family support and 89.66% did not have the problem of family support to take admission and fulfill other remaining needs of the study.

Table – 3

Table showing the S. T. students unable to buy study material and have domestic work pressure: -

Sample	Items	No. of 'Yes'	No. of 'No'	Percentage of 'Yes'	Percentage of 'No'
87	Unable to buy study material	64	23	73.56%	26.44%

	Have domestic work pressure	52	35	59.77%	40.23%
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From this table, it was found that 73.56% of S. T. students were unable to buy study material and 26.44% were able to buy study material to achieve education. Again 59.77% of S. T. students have domestic work pressure and 40.23% did not have domestic work pressure at home.

Table-4

Table showing the S. T. students how gender issues and traditional customs determine the accessing education: -

Sample	Items	No of 'Yes'	No of 'No'	Percentage of 'Yes'	Percentage of 'No'
87	Gender issue	60	27	68.97	31.03
	Traditional customs	61	26	70.11	29.89

From this table, it was found that 68.97% of S. T. students kick out of education due to gender bias and 31.03% of students have not been oppressed in the name of gender in achieving their education. Again 70.11% of S. T. students have traditional customs pressure and 29.89% did not have traditional customs pressure at home or society in the respect of education.

Table-5

Table showing the role of the political institution like Autonomous Council and political leader's influence in accessing education: -

Sample	Items	No of 'Yes'	No of 'No'	Percentage of 'Yes'	Percentage of 'No'
87	Political institutions like Autonomous Council	22	65	25.29	74.71
	Political Leaders	20	67	22.99	77.01

From this table, it was found that 74.71% of S. T. students didn't get any support from political institutions like Autonomous Council and only 25.29% of students have

got from those institutions in achieving their education. Again 77.01% S. T. students didn't have any help from their community political leaders and 22.99 % did have the political support to access education.

### **11. Findings of the Major study**

The major findings of the study were as follows: -

- 58.20% of S. T. students have faced communication problems at Rangachahi College.
- 73.56% of S. T. students faced financial problems in the study area.
- 64.37% of S. T. students have faced linguistic problems and 35.63% did not have linguistic problems to achieve education in the study area.
- 10.34% of S. T. students faced the problem of family support and 89.66% did not have the problem of family support to take admission and fulfill other remaining needs of the study.
- 73.56% of S. T. students are unable to buy study material and 26.44% can buy study material to achieve education.
- 59.77% of S. T. students have domestic work pressure and 40.23% did not have domestic work pressure at home at Rangachahi College.
- 68.97% of S. T. students kick out of education due to gender bias and 70.11% of S. T. students have faced problems in accessing education in the name of the traditional customs of the S.T. community.
- 74.71% of S. T. students didn't get any opportunities or support from political institutions like Autonomous Council and also 77.01% of S. T. students didn't have any help from their community political leaders to achieve education.

### **12. Suggestions**

- ❖ Government and non Government organizations should organize awareness programme for Schedule Tribe peoples to make them aware of the need for education in modern times.
- ❖ Government should take steps for improving the financial status of S. T. people by developing new schemes for self-employment.
- ❖ To educationally improve the S. T. community it is necessary for a ground-level reformation of their traditional customs and has to remove the gender biases from their mindsets.
- ❖ The Autonomous Council should have played a crucial role in the upliftment of education of S. T. students as well as political leaders of their respective communities might have played a very decisive role and making aware their community people about politics and trying to make them understand the necessity of politics in the sphere of accessing education.

### **13. Conclusion**

From the above discussion, it is clear that there are various problems faced by the scheduled tribe students of Rangachahi College like financial problems, linguistic, family support problems, domestic work pressure problems, gender bias, traditional customs, and biases of their political body and leaders, etc. It is also clear that there are some remedial measures for solving the problems of S. T. students.



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