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Educational Conditions Of Mishing Tribe In Kulajan Village Of Dhemaji In Assam

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Abstract

Education is a process by which people not only impart knowledge but also develop those attitude and habits with which he may successfully face feature. Education mainly stands for deliberate training and instruction. Like other animal man not only react on biological instinct but he behave in a way to which he is trained. Education is a sub system of the society and related to other subsystem. India is the home land for a large variety of indigenous people. Tribal population represents one of the most economically impoverished and marginalized group in India. With a population of more than 10.2 corers, India has the single largest tribal population in the world. It constitutes 8.6% of the country's total population country (according to 2011 census). In Assam, good numbers of tribal people are living in both hill and plain areas. Statistics shows that tribal communities are improving their educational condition from last three four decades. In this regards Mishing are not lagging behind.

Keywords: Education, Conditions, Mishing, Tribe.

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the primary agents of transformation of society toward development. It act an as input not only for economic development but also for inner strength of the communities which helps them in meeting of life. Education is single most important means by which individuals and society can improve personal endowments, build capacity levels, overcome barriers, and expand opportunities for a sustained improvement in their well-being. So, education is an important avenue for upgrading the economic and social conditions of people. Literacy and educational attainment are powerful indicators of social and economic development.

According to Durkheim (1897) "Education is the influence exercised by adult generation on those that are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to develop in the child a certain number of physical, intellectual and moral statuses which are demand of him by both the political society as a whole and the special miliue for which he is specifically destined".

In India, educational scenario is not encouraging, earlier education was confined in upper classes, as a result, majority of people were deprived of getting formal education. But after independent government takes lots of steps to spread education at all level of society. Constitutions of India declare that it is the fundamental right of children between the age group of 6-14 to get education. India has made progress in terms of increasing the primary literacy rate by 2011. But in spite of that India lagging far behind than developed countries in regards to education. Still around 25% people of the country are illiterate. Similar scenarios prevail among the tribal communities of the country. But North East India tribes depict a different picture. According to 2011 census report Mizoram has highest literacy rate (91.58%) in India. But a literacy rate varies among the tribal communities of North East India. Some tribal groups like Mizo, Khasi, Garo, Rabha, Bodo, Mishing etc. have a satisfactory literacy rate whereas tribes like Santal, Kurukh, Nagpuri, Munda (tea tribes) and others literacy rate is low than national average.

Review of literature

Large numbers of work were done on health and education of tribal in India, some of relevant reviews are given below:-

Shah and Patel (1977) in their book, *Educational structure*; studied the impact of education on Mishing tribe from structural point of view. They argued that the benefit of education such as Scholarships and residential facility etc. were enjoyed by the Mishing of upper Assam. The study also revealed that the benefit of higher education had favored the higher segments of the tribal group.

Chaoudhury and Rao (2010) analyze the impact of education on the scheduled tribes belonging to different economic setting. They found that, the indigenous scheduled tribes were generally advanced in education compare to the migrated scheduled tribes. Educated scheduled tribes has more modern attitude toward sociability of occupation, family, marriage, religion and politics as compared to illiterates.

Pradan (2011) while talking about tribal education said that, education is the most important agent of social change. Most of the tribal communities are educationally backward. The tribes of north-east differ from their counterparts in other parts of India in several respects. The substantial one is their exposure to modern education and as a result their literacy rate increases and hence their chances of being advantageously adsorbed in the modern economy are much higher than that of their counterparts elsewhere in India.

Adiresian and Mananathan. (1974) talk about problems of education among Mishing tribe in Assam. They said that majority of Mishing student coming from illiterate homes with difficult financial situation engaged in no extracurricular activities.

Elvin (1959) in his book titled *A New Deal of Mishing Tribe in India* suggested that in Mishing village school should become as much of Mishing institution as dormitory. He talk

about the needs of effective school programmes, types of school equipments, school building, learning environments, medium of instruction, technical education for Mishing Tribes

N. N. G. Mathur (1949) in his book, *Educational problems in India* discuss education among Mishing tribe. He highlights educational problems of Mishing pupils, teachers and social workers.

Akangtemba (1986) in his book *Health and Education*, talks about problems of education of Mishing tribe of Assam. He say that the problems of primary education were related with the irrelevant text books, lack of physical facilities, absence of school libraries, confusion in introduction of pre-primary education, absence of cumulative records etc.

Lakhi Nath Pegu (2000) talk about the educational condition of Mishing of India. He gives emphasized on education for reformation of Mishing society. He said that there is need to remark certain superstitious practices that are prevalent in the tradition belief of Mishing.

P.Kar (1957) in his book *Educational aspect of Tribal Society*, discuss about educational status of Mishing of Assam. He suggested various steps through which tribal pupils (Mishing) were trained and the method, contents and the agencies through which tribal can be educated.

T.Lakra(1976) talk about changes that have occurred due to education among the Mishing of Assam. He found that due to education, changes occur in the health, socio-economic and political spheres of Mishing.

D.Lyndem (1985) in his book *Development of Education* talking about education of Mishing in Assam.He studied the development plans and progress in primary education system of Assam since independence and found that baring the establishment of few government high school in 1994, the government did not do anything directly for educating Mishing tribe.

Ashwini, Kumar, Gang.(2000) in this book *Educational Condition of Tribal Society* talk about the development of educational background of the tribal student of Assam specially Mishing student. They found that education system does not have much effect on Mishing society.

R.,Jadhav.(1983) discusses educational development of Mishing of Dhemaji District of Assam. He study about the social, cultural, religious, background of Mishing and their economic conditions and backwardness and also give a description of their educational progress of the tribe. He also found that education in tribal areas had expanded during the period 1970-80 as because number of primary schools were opened in tribal villages of these years.

D. Power(2010) in her article on ‘Combating Child Labour through education of Mishing tribes ‘expressed that child labour and education is strongly inter-linked. Among the Mishing birth order and gender plays a role in sending children to school, apart from this, poverty in other determinants which effect enrollment of children to School.

T. C. Das (1950) said that Mishing student could complete successfully their education in comparison to their non-tribal.

Objectives of the study

Following are the main objectives of the study:

1. To understand the Educational Conditions of Mishing tribe.
2. To understand the impact of government policies and programmes on education of Mishing tribe of Dhemaji district, Assam.

Education Qualification of the Reapondents

Tribals of Assam improving their educational condition, it contributes to economic growth and it has its impact on population controls, life expectancy, morbidity, maternal mortality and infant mortality etc. Mishing of Kulajan village also realise the importance of education. The education qualifications of the respondents are given bellow.

Table No. 3.01 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their Educational Qualification

So. No	Educational Qualification	Respondents		Grand total and percentage
		Sex		
		Male	Female	
1.	Illiterate	5(4.76%)	3(5.45%)	4(2.5%)
2.	Primary	10(9.52%)	7(12.72%)	17(10.62%)
3.	Middle school	12(11.42%)	4(7.27%)	16(10.00%)
4.	High school (ten standard)	15(14.28%)	6(10.90%)	21(13.12%)
5.	HSLC	20(19.04%)	10(18.18%)	30(18.75%)
6.	HS	28(26.66%)	13(23.63%)	41(25.62%)
7.	Graduate	12(11.42%)	11(20%)	33(20.62%)
8	Post graduate	3(2.85%)	1(1.81%)	4(2.5%)
Total	-	105(100)	55(100)	160(100)

Source: Field survey from February 2021.

The above table reveals that 25.62% of respondents educated up to higher secondary level out of which 26.66% male and 23.63% female, 20.62% of respondents educated up to graduate level out of which 11.42% male and 20% are female, 18.75% of respondents are matriculate out of which 10.04% male and 18.18% female, 13.12% of respondents educated up to tenth

stander out of which 14.28% male and 10.90% are female, 10.62% of respondents educated up to primary school level out of which 9.52% male and 12.72% female, 10% respondents educated up to middle school level out of which 11.42% male and 7.27% female, 2.5% of respondents are illiterate out of which 4.76% male and 5.45% female, and 2.5% of respondents educated up to post graduate level out of which 2.85% male and 1.81% female.

So, literacy is the predominant feature of kulajan village and gender discrimination regarding educational qualifications is almost nil in the village. Both male and female are educated up to master degree level. For getting clearer picture of literacy level of the village, the respondents' family members educational qualifications are discuss here under.

Table No. 3.02 Distribution of the Respondents' family members on the basis of their Educational Qualification.

So. No	Educational Qualification	Respondents family members		Grand total percentage
		Sex		
		Male	Female	
1.	Illiterate	31(10.14%)	32(11.42%)	63(10.75%)
2.	Literate	48(15.64%)	53(18.12%)	101(17.23%)
3.	Primary	42(13.72%)	60(21.42%)	102(17.40%)
4.	Middle school	77(25.17%)	74(26.42%)	84(14.00%)
5.	High school	61(19.93%)	39(13.92%)	100(17.06%)
6.	HSLC	23(7.52%)	11(3.92%)	34(5.80%)
7.	HS	14(4.57%)	8(2.85%)	22(3.75%)
8.	Graduate	7(2.28%)	2(0.71%)	9(1.53%)
9.	Post graduate	3(0.98%)	1(0.35%)	4(0.60%)
Total	-	306(100)	280(100)	586(100)

Sources: Field survey from february2021.

Above data shows that 17.40% villagers are educated up to primary level, 17.00% educated up to high school level, 14.33% educated up to middle school level, 5.80% are matriculate, 3.75% educated up to higher secondary level, 1.53% educated up to graduate level, 0.60% educated up to master degree level, 17.23% are literate and 10.75% are illiterate. Sex wise 25.17% male and 26.42% female educated up to middle school level, 19.93% male and 13.92% respondents are female educated up to high school level, 15.64% male and 18.12% female are literate only, 7.52% male and 3.92% female are matriculate, 4.57% male and 2.85% female educated up to higher secondary level, 2.28% male and 0.71% female educated up to graduate level,

0.98% male and 0.35% female educated up to post graduate level and 10.14% male and 11.42% female of the village are illiterate.

So, it is found that around 65% villagers educational qualification not exceeded high school level, near about 10% educated up to high school & higher secondary level and only near 2% and less than 1% educated up to graduate and master degree level. It gives a clear indication of improving educational status in the village.

Intergenerational Literacy level

For understanding educational improvement picture among the villagers,' inter-generational educational scenario is taken into consideration. Following table make it clear.

Table No.3.03 Distribution of the Respondents by their Educational level as Compared with their Forefathers.

Inter-generational educational qualification	Respondents	Father	Grandfather
Illiterate	4(2.5%)	95(59.37%)	120(75%)
Literacy	17(10.62%)	20(12.5%)	18(11.25%)
Primary	16(10%)	16(10%)	12(7.5%)
Middle school	21(13.12%)	15(9.37%)	5(3.12%)
High school	30(18.75%)	5(3.12%)	3(1.88%)
HSLC	41(25.62%)	6(3.75%)	2(1.25%)
HS	32(20.00%)	6(3.75%)	1(0.63%)
Graduate	4(2.5%)	2(1.25%)	0
Post graduate	1(0.63%)	1(0.63%)	0
Total	160(100)	160(100)	160(100)

Source: Field survey from february2021.

The educational level of the respondents is three generation depth. Apparently 2.5% respondents, 59.37% respondents of their father and 75% grandfather are illiterate. Therefore illiteracy is a predominant feature of the life of respondents' father and grand father whereas literacy is the predominant feature of present generation. Around (97.5%) one tenth of the respondents are literate and remaining educated up to the standards ranging from primary level to the degree of Bachelor of Arts to master of Arts. Father of 60% and slightly more than three fourth grandfathers of literate respondents were also illiterate. Among literate respondents, two fifth is constitute by those having education up to primary level, one fourth are matriculation, one fifth are educated up to high secondary level. Of remaining educated respondents 4 is graduate and one is master degree holder. Whereas slightly more than one

fifth respondents father are literate and educated up to primary level, and less than one fifth of grandfather are literate and educated up to primary level. Again less than one tenth respondents' fathers' education ranges from middle school to high school level and near 6% of respondents grandfather; education range from middle school to high school level. Of the remaining educated respondents father 6 are high secondary pass, 4 are graduate and 1 is master degree holder.

The analysis indicates that the predominant phenomenon of the life of villagers is widely prevalent literacy. In compare with the two of their previous generations, present generation is better educated. The respondents are found sufficiently differentiated over a range of educational levels. This indicates a gradual tendency for education is coming up among the villagers. To understand this fact it is require analysing the regarding parents' tendency of educating their children.

Attitude toward Children's Education

Most of the villagers are in favors of sending children to schools. They are of the view that without education new generation could not able to get anything. For understanding the respondents' attitude toward children education they were asked whether they send their children to school or not. Their reply is shown in the following table.

Table No.3.04s Respondents on the basis of Sending Children to School.

Sending all children to school	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Yes	125	78.12%
No	35	21.88%
Total	160	100

Source: Field survey from February 2021.

The above table shows that 78.12% of respondents sent all the children to school and 21.88% of respondents do not sent all children to school. When the respondents asked about the reason of not sending all children to school, then they express many problems related to their decision. These are shown in the following table

Table No.3.05 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of the Reason of not sending all Children to School.

Reasons	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Financial problems	23	65.72%
Lack of Interest of children	6	17.14%
Early marriage	4	11.42%
Family Dispute	2	5.72%
Total	35	100

Source: Field survey from february2021.

The above data shows that 65.72% respondents are not sending all children to school because of financial problems, 17.14 % are not sending all children to school due to lack of interest of children, 11.42% are not sending all children to school because of early marriage and 5.72% of respondents are not sending to school because of family dispute.

Case I

Mr. Dondi Pegu 40 years old has 4 children. He said that he send only two child to school because of poverty. He is a wage labour and unable to bear the expenditure of educating all children. He also expresses that only getting midday meal and free dress and book are not sufficiency. For educating children special care like given tuition etc also requires. He said my elder son leave study and now helping me in earning.

Case I

Mrs.Binita Doley 51 years old women said that she has two sons and three daughters. In the beginning she enrolled all her children to school.But now two daughter leave studies because of her husband's behavior. He is a danker and every day after taking wine started to scold them and beat them. He behaves like a mad, he throw cook food, book of the children etc. So, far managing all these she did not send her two daughters to school. Elder one studied up to sixth standard and younger one upto eight standard.

For above case it appears that poverty, family environment some time compail parents to stop their children's education.

Types of school prefer for Children's Education

The village has three schools within its boundary namely lower primary, middle school and high school. All these schools are government added Assamese medium school and function under Sarbasiksha mission. Most of the villagers belong to low income group. So, majority of them prefer government school for their children's education.

Table No. 3.06 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of the types School they Prefer for theirs Children's Education

SL No.	School prefer for children's Education	Respondents		Grand total and percentage (%)
		Sex		
		Male	Female	
1.	Private school	38(36.19%)	20(36.37%)	58(36.25%)
2.	Governments school	67(63.81%)	35(63.63%)	102(63.75%)
	Total	105(100)	55(100)	160(100)

Source: Field survey from february 2021.

The above table shows that 63.75% of respondents prefer government school for enrolling their children whereas 36.25% respondents prefer private school. Sex wise 63.81% male and 63.63% female prefer government school for enrolling their children and around 36.19% male and female both prefer to send their children in private school.

It is found that those who have better economic condition prefer to send children to private school. The respondents who prefer private school for enrolment their children is of the view that private school give better education than government School, medium of instruction of private school is English which will help their children in getting higher education near feature.

Place of Study

For educating children the villagers even ready to send them in different places. It is found that large number of villagers sending their children outside the village for better education.

Table.No.3.07 Distribution of the Respondents sending their Children outside the village for Education

Place of studies	Respondents	Percentage (%)
With in village	102	78.46%
Outside village	28	21.54%
Total	130	100

Source: Field survey from february2021.

The above table reveals that 78.46% of respondent children getting educating in schools which are located within the village, whereas, and 21.54 % of respondents sending their children outside the village for education.

Case I

Mr. Abhijit Regon said that his son is staying in Dhemaji town and studying in Dhemaji Commerce College. He said that I am not rich but for the sake of son's better future I took all the pain of sending him outside.

Case II

Mrs. Labanya Pegu 52 year's old housewife said that her son and one daughter is staying in Dhemaji town in rented house and studying in Dhemaji College. She also said that somehow we are managing their expenditure because we realize that without education they would not get any job.

Case III

Mr. Dibya Taid 54 year's old teachers inform that his son took admission in Sociology department of Dibrugarh University and stayed in the hostel of that university. He also said that gradually villagers started to realize the importance of education and enrolling their children in school. He expresses his grievances by saying that along with improvement of educational qualification, evil of the society is not removing.

Gender Discrimination in Educating Children

Gender discrimination in enrolling children in school is one of the major problems of developing country. As a result outcomes at the subsequent educational levels are quite low for female children in comparison to their male counterparts. It is said that parents' education especially mother's education has its effects on daughter schooling. Though there is a general belief that among tribal communities gender discrimination does not prevail. But practically

tribal women also face, discrimination in different sphere’s of their life. Mishing of Kulajan village initially does not made any discrimination in enrolling their daughter in school but if problem occurs then it is the girl who has to scarify her education for the sake of family.

Case I

Mrs.Lalita Doley 35 years of old house wife express her grievance by saying that her 10 years old daughter was better in studies than her son but when she give birth of fourth child then situation compile her to stop her daughters education for looking after younger sibling. She also said that our economic condition is not good and I have to go for work by keeping small kid under the custody of my elder daughter.

Case II

Mr. Pankaj Taid 50 years old said that when his daughter studying in class nine one every good marriage proposal came from neighboring village. The boy is working in Indian Army. So, he stops her education and gets married with that boy two years ago. Now she has one son and leading good married life.

Case III

Mr. Bikash Pegu 49 year old farmer said I have enrolled all my son and daughter to school but suddently their mother become ill. So, I stop education of my two daughters for cooking and taking care of their mother.

Case IV

Mrs Ranjita Pegu 52 year’s old divorced women said that due to financial hardship I stop my daughter education but somehow I continue my son’s education.

These cases show than the villagers give more preference to their son’s education than girls. But one thing is that in the beginning they enrolled all their children to school irrespective of sex but when difficulties occurred they does not hesitate to stop daughters education. Gender discrimination also existed in the case of enrolling children in Assamese and English medium school. A general tendency is found among the villagers that they prefer son to enroll English medium private and girl to Assamese medium government school.

Table No.3.08 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of gender discrimination in Educating Children.

Enrolling English medium private school.	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Son	29	50%
Son and Daughter	22	37.93%
Daughter	7	12.06%
Total	58	100

Source: Field survey from February 2021.

Above table reveals that 50% respondents enrolled their son in English medium private school, 37.93% respondents enrolled both son and daughter English medium private school and 22.41% respondents enrolled their daughter English medium school. So, haif of the

respondents prefer to give better education to their son only, a little less than two fifth tried to give equal opportunity to their daughter in private school.

Cases I

Mr. Lakhya Pegu 40 years old said I am working as a primary school teacher and I have four children. So, it is difficult for me to send all the children in private English medium school. That is why I decided to enroll son in English medium school because in future he have to earn for survival but daughter will get married and their responsibility will take by their husband.

Mr. Bolin Tiad, Mrs. Runi Taid and Mr. Pankaj Pegu also express similar view regarding sending son to English medium private school.

Cases II

Mr. Robin Patir 37 years old said that he enrolled both his son and daughter in private English school because both of them needed better education for their survival.

So, it appears that majority of villagers made gender discrimination in enrolling children in government and private school. But change started to occurs as few parents are showing gender equality in enrolling children.

Dropout

Dropout means any students who leave school for any reason before completion of a programme of studies without transferring to another elementary or secondary school. In kulajan village also number of students leave the study in middle. The dropout rate of the students of kulajan village is shown in the following table.

Table No 3.09 Dropout Rates of the students of Kulajan village.

Year	Enrollment				
	Class. I	Class. II	Class. III	Class. Iv	Class. V
2010	50	50	40	35	35
2011	57	57	52	52	40
2012	60	60	57	57	55
2013	55	55	52	52	45
2014	68	64	60	60	50
2015	62	62	56	56	55
2016	74	74	70	70	68
2017	70	70	64	60	57

Source: School Attendance Register from 2020.

The table reveals that the number of student enrolled in class I continued up to class II and after that drop out started. Dropout from class II to class III were high in the year 2010, 2014 and 2015 which was near 20%, 12% and 10% respectively and rest of the year it was less than

10%. But the picture is more critical if class I enrolment is compare with class V enrolment. In the year 2010, 50 students enrolled in class 1 but only 35 student enrolled in class V. From 2010 to 2017 huge gap is found in the enrollment in class 1 and enrollment in class V. So, there is a tendency for dropping the studies among the student of the village.

The teacher of the school also express their dissatisfaction about the dropout and said that most of the guardian are not taking care of their children education. They thought that only enrolling is sufficient for educating children. The boys of the village are more interest enrolment in playing, fishing etc. not in studies. Parents sent their children to school only for midday meal and nothing else. When respondents were asked about the reason for dropout of their children from school then they express their view in different ways. The reason behind it is explain in following table.

Table No.3.10 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of the Reason of Dropout of Children from School.

Reasons of Dropout	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Financial problem	18	60%
Unable to pass examination	6	20.00%
Lack of interest	4	13.33%
Early marriage	2	6.67%
Total	30	100

Source: Field survey from November 2021.

The above table reveals that among the dropout students parent 60% of respondents stop their children to education because of financial problems, 20.00% said their children leave study in the midst because they unable to passed examination, 13.33% said children dropout from school because lack of interest and 6.67% respondents children dropout from school because of early marriage.

So, the main reason behind dropping out of children from school is poverty. It can be said that educational situation of the village will improve in future, but only under the constraints of the given economic life.

Higher Education for Children

Generally villagers are not interested in giving higher education to their children. There is a tendency among them that after passing high school examination their children should engaged in somewhere for earning. But few respondents want their children should educated upto graduate and master degree level. Their view is given bellow.

Table No.4.01 Distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their Interested in giving Higher Education to Children.

Higher Education for Children	Respondents	Percentage (%)
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No	97	74.62%
Yes	33	33.25%
Total	130	100

Source: Field survey from february 2021.

The above table shows that 74.62% of respondents do not want to give higher education to their children, while 25.38% of respondents want to give higher education to children.

In sum, it can be said that presnt generation of Kulajan village is better educated than earlier two generation. The parents are more interested in sending their children in school. But traditional mind set restrict them some time to do justice with girls education. The dropout scenario shows that it is girls of the villages who sacrifice their education more than their male counterpart. Numbers of literate people of the village are increasing but the number of higher education is not increasing with same spead .It is mainly due to poverty, traditional mindset, lack of higher educational institution in the surrounding and so on.

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