

A Study on Socio-Economic and Educational Status of Tea Tribe Community with Special Reference to Thowra Tea Estate, Dibrugarh, Assam

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ABSTRACT:

Tea is the second most popular drink in the world, after water. Assam produce largest no of tea in India. Tea community people are the backbone behind this achievement. Tea community people work hard to achieve high in their day to day life but the condition of the garden worker is not sound in Assam. This study is attempted to know about the socio-economic and educational environment in thowra tea-estate under dibrugarh district. Descriptive and analytical methods have been used for the study.

Key words: Tea tribe, garden, socio economic, environment.

INTRODUCTION:

Assam is one of the most beautiful states in India. India is the richest biodiversity zones in the world. Assam introducing tea industry and tea tourism and it's also well known in the world tea market. And the tea plantation is the center of attraction for the state. The tea industry is the crucial part of Indian economy. Assam produces 55% of Indians total production of tea. This industry is highly dependent on a large workforce. It is the only sector where the majority of worker is female. About one million labourers are dependent on Assam tea industry. These laboures are living with the basic facilities provided by the tea planters or companies. Tea tribe people are the main worker in the plantation. Tea tribe is the major plain tribe of Assam. Who generally found in upper Assam mainly in Dibrugarh, sivasagar, jorhat, lakhimpur, dhemudi, tinsukia. Assam is producing quality tea in India. Tea tribe people have their own language like Sadri, odia, saora, kuruk, gondi, kui, kharia, santhi and Mundari. Sadri is the

pre dominantly spoken as first language. And the festivals are an important part of their lives and deeply connected to their religion and culture they celebrate many festivals during season. Major festivals celebrated by the community are Fagwa, karam, jitia ,danda puja, tusu puja, mansa puja, lakji puja, diwali, durga puja, nowakhai etc.

Initiatives for tea tribe people:

1. Awareness programs on child/ human trafficking, family planning, legal awareness health etc.
2. Coaching for higher studies.
3. Development of community center for tea community.
4. Electrification of tea workers quarter by ASEB.
5. Financial Assistance @ 5.00 Lakh each to the families of martyrs belonging to tea tribe people.
6. Financial assistance for higher education.
7. Post and pre metric scholarship for tea tribe students.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Different research scholars and academicians have already conducted some research work on different issues on tea tribe community. Some reviews are given below

Ansari and Sheereen (2016) in this study it is found that the number of illiterate is more than literates in the study area. And the workers with monthly expenditure range between rs. 2500-3500 constitutes 31.2 percent of the worker and the worker with monthly expenditure range more than rs. 5000 constitutes only 8% of the workforce.

Debnath and Debnath(2017) stated that tea plays very essential role to developing the socio economic condition of tea garden workers. In this study they found that the socio economic condition of tea garden workers of west Tripura is very despondent.

Dr. Sharma (2017) stated that the no of illiterates are more than the literates in the study area. 58% of the respondents are illiterates where as 20% studied upto class v only 2% of respondent studied after class x.

Bosumatari and P. Goyari (2013) stated that educational status of tea plantation women worker in Assam examined that the education facility is not sufficient for tea garden workers children specially for girls because non availability of nearby schools and the child marriage is the another problem of tea garden community.

P, Devi.(2014) analyzed socio-economic status of the tea garden women worker in sonitpur district, assam. She identified that the no of family member is so high. And the education level of women workers is so less and their monthly wages is less than 5000.

Majumder and Roy(2012) stated that the working conditions of tea garden workers is very poor and low wages, low job satisfaction, low income, gender discrimination inadequate

facilities such as housing, drinking water, food etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

1. To Study about the Socio-economic and educational status in Thowra Tea-estate.
2. To know the measures taken by the management for the development of socio-economic condition of the laborer in the study area.
3. To find out the day to day problems faced by the tea-garden workers in the Thowra tea estate.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Education is the process of facilitating learning, knowledge, skills, value, beliefs and habits of group of people transferred to other people, through storytelling, discussion, teaching, training and research. And that has a formative effect on the way one thinks, feels or acts.

1. With the help of the study we were able to know about the educational awareness of tea tribe people or how to spread awareness among them.
2. This study help us to know how to solved their educational problems and measures for the improvement of these problems.
3. This study helps to know about the literacy rate of the tea tribe people.

With the help of this study we were able to know about day to day problems facing by tea garden community and how to resolve it.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study is descriptive and analytical. The data used for the study are collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data have been collected from the respondents. 1288 tea workers are presently working in thowra tea estates. For present study 64 sample is selected (5% of the total workers)

information and data are collected with a well structured interview schedule, questionnaire and observation schedule. Data are also collected from the management of the tea estate or the secondary data is collected from the official records of the tea garden journals, magazines etc. workers are selected at random as respondents for collecting information and data.

FINDINGS:

SOCIO ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF TEA TRIBE COMMUNITY:

Tea estates are mainly located in remote areas. The literacy rate of the community is one of the lowest in Assam, particularly among girls and women. Due to this, girls are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation and early marriages are prevalent among them. Since the majority of the communities are still labourers, the live in labour lines built inside tea-estates and established by tea planters. Non education, poverty, addiction of alcohol, poor living standard, raising population, lack of awareness, inadequate health facilities are the problems in their lives. Literacy level among of the community is only 46% one of the lowest against Assam's 72% overall literacy rate. Unawareness and poverty are the hinder for their educational development. "Tea tribe welfare department" is looking for the socio-economic welfare of the community. There also exist chai morcha party or sanghatn for the betterment of the tea garden community. The tea plantation sector in Assam is the largest provider of the industrial employment in the state. In this sector around 8 lakh people engaged for earning their livelihood. The labourers are employed on permanent and temporary basis. The employed worker is providing the residents in the tea estate. Thus a large number of family were settled within the

tea estates on the garden workers. From this study it is found that the tea community is not conscious about their health and they do not take care of their health. Their living condition and food habit are also responsible for their poor health. Almost all tea community people use drink alcohol, swing tobacco, gutka, and pan masala, such type of bad habits are responsible for their ill health. It directly hampers the socio-economic condition and the development of tea community in study area.

Level of education:

Education is the backbone of a developed society. So, it plays a very significant role in the development of a society. In the study area, it is found that the level of education among the respondent is not well. There is primary school and aganwadicentre in the garden. There is also labour club for the development of education and socio-cultural life of tea community people. Among 64 respondents, 47 respondents can read and write the low literacy level and unawareness is a major hindrance to the sound development of the community. In this study it is observed that the younger generation of the community people is interested to be educated after secondary education.

Table no 1

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF RESPONDENT:

Qualification	Respondents	Percentage%
Post Graduate	0	0%
Graduate	18	29%
Above HSLC	30	47%
Below HSLC	8	12%
Illiterate	8	12%

Source: fieldwork

From table 1, it is clear that out of 64 respondents 29% are Graduate, 47% are above HSLC, and 12% of are below HSLC. Due to low level of education, the people of tea community are unable to take participations in

any developmental activities and extracurricular activity.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONDS AND INCOME LEVEL:

Income level is the best indicator of the economic condition of a person or family and society. From the study, it is found that the income level of the community people in the study area is very low as compared to other government and private sector employee. Each male and female earn daily 220rs and the wages are paid to the workers after 15 days. Permanent workers get a free quarter including water and toilet facilities for children health care facilities. During this study it is observed that the economic condition of the permanent workers is comparatively better than a temporary worker. They have also their own extra income source like farming of pigs, goats, cocks and cultivation.

Table no 2

OCCUPATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE RESPONDENTS:

Sl. no	Occupation	No. of respondent	Percentage
1	Permanent worker	53	83%
2	Temporary worker	11	17%

Source: Field work

From table no 2. It is clear that the permanent worker is more than the temporary workers in thowra tea eastes.

Table no 3

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME OF THE RESPONDENTS:

Sl. no	Average monthly income	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Upto 3500	4	6%

2	3500-5000	20	31%
3	5000-8000	35	55%
4	Above 8000	5	8%

From table no 3. It is clear that the monthly average income of the tea garden worker is 5000-8000.

MEASURES TAKEN BY THE MANAGEMENT:

1. The employed worker is providing the residents in by the tea estate.
2. Permanent workers get a free quarter including water and toilet facilities.
3. The management provides medical treatment and better facilities serious patients free of cost.
4. Free health checkup and medicine.
5. Provide firewood's.
6. Free rice twice in a month.

DAY TO DAY PROBLEM FACED BY TEA-GARDEN WORKERS:

Illiteracy or lack of awareness is creating problems in their day to day life. Most of the tea garden workers are not able to speak other languages like- Assamese, Hindi, English for this reason they may face humiliation in public place and communication problems in their day to day life. Due to illiteracy they are facing problem in coping up with present technological environment. They are not able to fulfill their basic needs like filling up forms of Bank, or any other governmental forms. Low wages in tea garden people they have face many problems in their day to day life. Due to unawareness and illiteracy tea garden people are not getting chance to take advantage of the governmental schemes and initiatives for their upliftment. Tea garden

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workers carry tea-baskets on their back for a long time no matter what the weather is. These activities affect their health.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Due to the poor socio economic condition and educational unawareness they fail to maintain better living style. Through some facilities are provided by the garden authorities to the labourer it is not enough to live the life comfortably. Their wages rate is very low to survive in the present economy. Government takes various initiatives or schemes for the upliftment to the socio-economic condition of tea community people and proper implementation of these initiatives will change the life of tea garden workers and their community.

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