CHAPTER-I

EMERGENCE OF THE STUDY

Introduction

Education is an important instrument of socio-cultural change and economic development. It enhances the knowledge and skills of individuals and thereby contributes to the socio-economic and cultural development of the nation. It provides opportunities to develop inborn potentials and talents of the individuals and modify their behavior for future development. It helps individuals to walk with the development of the science and technology and make them competent to adjust with the ever-changing world. It inculcates values in individuals and enables them to realize their highest self and goal. Schumacher said, ‘Development does not start with goods, it starts with people and their education, organization and discipline. Without these three all resources remain latent, untapped and potential (Biswa: 2008, 19). The World Bank report, 1991 wrote, ‘By improving people’s ability to acquire and use information, education deepens their understanding of themselves and the world, enriches their mind broadening their experiences, and improves the choices they make as consumers, producers, and citizens. Education strengthens their ability to meet their wants and those of their family by increasing their productivity, and their potential to achieve a higher standard of living. By improving people’s confidence and their ability to create and innovate, it multiplies their opportunities for personal and social achievement’. Furthermore, it refines the sensitivities and perception of an
individual that contributes to the national cohesion, and inculcates in them scientific temper, independence of mind and spirit that contributes to the spirit of socialism, secularism and democracy.

Education plays an important role in social change. Its impact on development is also inevitable. It improves the perception of an individual towards society. As a matter of fact, socio-economic development always remains one of the most important objectives of our national education system. Education provides an individual to live not only in his immediate world but also to live in the world beyond his daily experiences and thus it provides national and international viewpoint (Ibid). Kothari Commission (1964-66) in its report stated that ‘A nation is built in its classroom.’ Role of education in development of human faculties was explained by many Indian scholars like M. K. Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Aurobindo Ghosh. According to Gandhi, the aim of education was to draw out the best in man, his body, mind and spirit. It brings out the best in an individual harmonizing the head, hands and hearts. These human faculties, on the other hand, play an important role in deciding the fate of a nation. People with their best faculties or talents may contribute to the development of the nation may it be social, political or economic. Contrary to that, a nation with its untapped, untrained and unskilled individuals may have to face diverse of problems like-underdevelopment, unemployment, insurgency and so on. Lack of education creates the problem of unemployability, unemployability creates unemployment and unemployment generates poverty and underdevelopment. Unemployment and underdevelopment on the other hand, generates several problems such as social unrest, drug abuse, and insurgency and thereby create the ground for
further underdevelopment. To avoid this vicious circle of problems, and to enhance the development of the nation in general and individuals in particular an appropriate and effective education system is highly demanding. The increasing trend of public expenditure in education throughout the world demonstrates the response of the nations to this truth. For instance, Morocco increased their public expenditure on education from 5.5% to 5.6% of GNP during 1997 to 2007. Hungary increased from 5.0 to 5.8%, Australia from 5.2 to 5.4%, Korea Republic from 3.8 to 4.4%, Brazil from 4.0 to 5.2%, Greece from 2.8 to 3.5%, Ireland from 4.9 to 5.7%, Burundi from 3.5 to 5.2% during the same period (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010). Education also enhances the health status of the individuals. Improved health status in turn, can greatly improve the learning capacities of an individual which brings more productivity and earnings.

In fact, education literates people and empower them to play a significant role in social, economic, political and cultural development of a country. Socio-economic and cultural development of a nation in turn, allows further development of education system by providing higher levels of resources for educational expansion (Tilak:1994, 77). Education accelerates economic system of a country by facilitating higher participation of the skilled labour force in developmental activities. World Bank Report, 1991 has stated that ‘An additional year of schooling has raised farm output by nearly 2% in the Republic of Korea and 5% in Malaysia. And in family-owned enterprises in urban Peru, education appears to be more critical to earnings than physical capital.’ It also documented that one year of additional schooling increases individual earning by 6% in South Korea, it increases male earning by 16% and female earning by 18% in Malaysia;
female earning in Philippines by 18%. An additional year of primary schooling results in 17% increase in male earning and 13% increase in female earning in Thailand. Similarly an additional year of secondary schooling increases male earning by 8% and female earning by 12% in Indonesia and by 7% (male) and 25% in Thailand.

**Importance of Primary Education**

Creation of a sound primary education system appears to be a basic component of any strategy for social, political and economic development of a country. In fact, it is primary education, which develops the basic innate abilities of a person to live a full personal life as an individual and as a member of a family and an economically productive as a worker and a socially useful life as a citizen (Haq, 1975). Education at this stage moves the children into a coherent moral, intellectual and effective universe (Faure, 1972) creates awareness among them about their past and helps in developing a conception of the future. Education at the primary level acquires special importance and it provides an opportunity for capturing and nurturing talents at the early stage of growth, thereby contributing to the development of a national pool of ability (Islam, 1975).

Many studies regarding the role of schooling in economic development have shown that primary education plays a vital role in national economic development in developed as well as developing countries. Further, Schultz (1963) points out that primary schooling since it entails the lowest cost per year of schooling. The education at this level has a pervasive value in reducing cost and in improving the productivity of the economy, as the rate of return is higher
in this stage than in any alternative investment. It would be more appropriate in
the context of the situation in the developing countries to say that more and better
elementary schooling should be relevant to the needs and realities of life in the
country, where the rate of illiteracy is very high and the per capita income is low.

In a country in which the level of economy is low if the level of schooling is
raised substantially and rapidly, it becomes a substantial source of growth
assuming of course, that the education provided is of the type and quality most
relevant to development and growth of the nation. It is seen that primary
education contributes to the productivity of the labour force, and at the same
time, it creates in enlightened and responsible citizens. The value of primary
education as an instrument of social change lies in its capacity to contribute
towards equalization and expression of economic opportunities in promoting
educational and social mobility in creating social concern and civic
responsibility, and in inculcating cultural and moral values.

Primary education is the basic foundation of all higher education. In this stage, an
individual first learns to read, write and do mathematical calculation. We can
expect the future progress of our country only from a well-planned and
implemented primary education. At this stage child's cultural, emotional, ethical,
intellectual, moral, physical, social and spiritual development also takes place.

Primary education empowers the individual to become self-reliant and enables
them to participate in the process of national development. It develops the human
efficiency and competency and contributes to the overall economic growth and
development. Primary education raises the productivity and earning potential of a
population and improves the quality of lives (Psachoro Poulos, 1993, world Bank, 1993, Barrow, 1991). It is the indicator directly associated with economic development and indirectly with poverty alleviation and population growth.

Widespread illiteracy among people has hindered their access to information. Without basic literacy, it is much more difficult to promote better understanding of our changing social scenario. The knowledge of primary education can produce a literate and numerate population who can deal more or less satisfactorily with their problems encountered in daily life and serves as a basis on which a society is to be restructured and further education planned. It can bring a positive effect on the productive capacity of a society according to their own ability. Recent research by Bridsall and Londono (1998) confirms that there is a high correlation between country levels of income inequality and inequality in the distribution of literacy. Thus, primary education advances human capability, economic opportunity and political participation. It fructifies multiple dimensions of freedom from fear and want, it generates self-confidence, and supports orientation towards future, offers coping mechanism in terms of crisis (Amartya Sen). Without a quantitative and adequate development of primary education, the process of development of the country will come to a grinding halt.

It is in this context that universal primary education is viewed as an imperative factor in preparing the future citizens for the task of national development. So, at least with regard to primary education, one can safely say that it should be made universal as early as possible and that no stone should be left unturned to achieve this goal. In fact, at the level of government policy, educational planners
throughout the world have been giving a high priority to the achievement of universal primary education. This is well in line with the directive Article 26 of the United Nations ‘Universal Declaration of Human Rights’. It has been proclaimed in the article that “Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory”.

It may be observed that most of the developed countries like, U.K., Soviet Russia, U.S.A., Japan have already attained a high level of schooling. It is also true that developing countries in general have not succeeded in their efforts to bring each and every child to school. However, it is important to mention that most of the countries irrespective of their economic status and ideologies have taken the provision of universal primary education in the form of a constitutional guarantee.

**Constitutional provisions of Primary Education in India**

In India, primary education has been given special importance in several articles.

Article 15 (1) (Fundamental Right): Prohibits discrimination against any citizens on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth or any of them.

“The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them”.

Article 15 (4): lays down for special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
Article 29 (1) states that any section of the citizens residing in the territory of India or any part thereof having a distinct language, script or culture of its own shall have the right to conserve the same,

Similarly Article 29 (2) states that no citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.

Article 30 (1) lays down that all minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice.

Article 30 (2) lays down that the state shall not, in granting aid to educational institutions, discriminate against any educational institution on the ground that it is under the management of a minority, whether based on religion or language.

Article 45 of The Directive Principles of State policy makes Provision for free and compulsory education for children upto 14 years of age.

“The State shall endeavour to provide, within a period of ten years from the commencement of this Constitution, for free and compulsory education for all children until they complete the age of fourteen years”.

Article 45 (Directive Principles) also make Provision for Early Childhood Care and Education to Children below the Age of Six Years,

“The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

8
Article 46 (Directive Principles) lays down the provision for the promotion of Educational and Economic Interests of Scheduled Castes, Schedule Tribe and Other Weaker Section.

“The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation”.

Article 350A facilitates for Instruction in Mother-Tongue at Primary Stage.

“It shall be the endeavour of every State and of every local authority within the State to provide adequate facilities for instruction in the mother-tongue at the primary stage of education to children belonging to linguistic minority groups; and the President may issue such directions to any State as he considers necessary or proper for securing the provision of such facilities”.

83rd Constitution (Amendment) Act, 1997

Thereafter, on the basis of the reports of States Education Ministers, a proposal was made to amend the constitution of India to make primary education as fundamental right from 6 to 14 years of children in the constitution (83rd Amendment) Act and was introduced in the Rajya Sabha on July 28, 1997.

The bill proposed to insert following new articles into the Constitution of India.
21A (1): The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.

(2): The right to free and compulsory education referred to in Clause (1) shall be enforced in such a manner as the state may, by law, determine.

(3): The state shall not make any law, for free and compulsory education under clause under Clause (2) in relation to the educational institutions not maintained by the state or not receiving aids out of the state funds.

Article 35 (2): The competent Legislature shall make the Law for the enforcement of the right to free and compulsory education referred to in Clause (1) of article 21A within one year from the commencement of Constitution (83rd Amendment) Act, 1997.

Article 45 of the Constitution shall be omitted from the constitution.

Clause (k) shall be inserted in article 51A of the constitution to provide opportunities for education to a child between the age of six to fourteen years of whom such citizen is a parent or guardian.

The 83rd Constitution Amendment Act was amended, and reintroduced as Constitution (93rd Amendment) Bill in the Parliament with the following changes:
1. Insertion of article 21A: “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine”.

2. Revision of Article 45: “The State shall endeavour to provide early childhood care and education for all children until they complete the age of six years”.

3. Insertion of Clause (k) in article 51A “It shall be the duty of every citizen of India, who is a parent or guardian to provide opportunities for education to his children”.

The 93rd constitution Amendment Bill, 2001 was passed in the Lok Sabha on November 27, 2001 and by Rajya Sobha on 14th May, 2002.

However, a drastic change came in the education system of the country in 2009. Right to Education Act was passed by the Parliament of India on 26th August, 2009 which aimed at providing free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years. The act came into force with effect from 1st April, 2010.

**Rationale of the study**

Education has always been considered as the key instrument for the development of human being and nation. Education, in its broadest sense, is the most important input for empowering people with skills, knowledge, attitude and efficiency that leading to overall qualitative development of life. Primary education is the basic foundation of all higher levels of education and development. It is the stage
where children formally start to learn reading, writing and arithmetic. This education continues to play a fundamental role in enhancing their skills and knowledge that helps in overall growth and development of children in particular and nation in general.

Making primary education accessible, universal and relevant has been a goal of India since independence. In article 45 of the Indian constitution it clearly states “The State shall endeavour to provide within a period of ten years from the commencement of this constitution for free and compulsory education for our children until they complete the age of fourteen years.” It means that enrolment of children should be universal up to completion of primary stage. Many attempts have been made to fulfill the constitutional obligation enshrined in Article 45 of the Directive Principles of State Policy. A nationwide policy named National Policy of Education 1986 has been formulated which has fixed revised time targets for achieving Universal and Free Education up to the age of 11 by 1990 and up to the age of 14 by 1995. To achieve the targeted goal the government of India launched various schemes ranging from Operation Black Board to District Primary Education Programme (DPEP) but still it is elusive. Despite all the efforts and assets, providing universal primary education in India remained far behind. As per the Census report of India, 2001 the literacy rate of the Country was only 64.83% whereas the male and female literacy rate of the state was 75.26% and 53.26 % respectively.

In Assam, several acts were passed since the long. Amongst them, Assam Primary Education Act, 1926, Assam Primary Education Act 1947, Assam Basic
Education Act, 1954 Assam Elementary Education Act 1962, Assam Elementary Education Act, 1968 and Assam Elementary Education (Provincialisation) Act 1974 are notable. Still in Assam the literacy rate is only 63.25% (2001 census). Hence another ambitious project known as Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2001) was taken up nationwide to achieve the goals of universal enrolment, universal access and universal retention. It has set 2007 as the deadline for providing primary education in India and 2010 as deadline for providing useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the 6 to 14 years of age group. The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan is also focus to improve the quality of education with regard to various measures in terms of providing physical facilities, training of teachers, modernizing teaching learning practices etc.

So, it is an urgent need to conduct an in-depth study of the present existing primary education system of India to ensure ‘education for all’. However in-depth study of such a large number of population is not possible. Therefore, the researcher delimited the present study to Kokrajhar district of Assam which has only 9,05,764 population. Moreover, the literacy rate of Kokrajhar district is only 52.55% (as per 2001 census) which is lower than the overall national and state literacy rate.

Kokrajhar district is situated in the westernmost part of Assam and it is now the headquarter of the newly formed Bodoland Territorial Council. The district is mainly dominated by Bodo community. Bodos are known as aborigin of Assam belongs to Mongoloid group under the Tibeto Burman speech family. The Bodo language has been introduced as the medium of instruction in primary level since
1963 and it also included in the 8th schedule of the constitution of India through amendment in the parliament in the year 2003. Now it can also be used as the Associate official language of Assam. It is observed from the review of related literature that various studies have been conducted on primary education taking different areas with different objectives. It is unfortunate that no research work has been carried out on any aspects of primary education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar district.

Thus considering all these aspects it is felt a need to carry out a research on primary education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar district. That is why the present investigation, “A Study of Primary Education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar District” is designed. It is an attempt to answer certain question relating to primary education in general and of the Bodos in particular in Kokrajhar District. Some of the questions are “How is the development of primary education in Kokrajhar district? What is the Status of primary education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar district in respect of Physical facilities, in respect of Teacher and Student, in respect of Teaching aids and Materials, in respect of Methods of Teaching, in respect of Text Book, in respect of Curriculum, in respect of Co-Curricular activities, in respect of Time Period or Work Load, in respect of Evaluation etc.? What is the participation of the Bodos in education (primary education)? What are the problems of primary education in the district? The present study is conducted with a view to answering the above questions. It is hoped that the outcomes of the study will throws light on many areas of primary education of the Bodos which are yet to explore and helps in policy making to bring
significant improvement in the field of primary education in general and of the Bodos in particular.

**Title of the Study**

Keeping in view of the rational of the study the title of the present study is entitled as - 'A study of Primary Education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar District'.

**Objectives of the Study**

The present study is undertaken with the following objectives:-

i. To study the development of primary education in Kokrajhar District.

ii. To study the present status of primary education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar District.

iii. To examine the participation of the Bodos in education.

iv. To find out the problems of primary education in the District.

**Operational definitions of the terms**

i. **Primary education** in the present study refers to education that is imparted in provincialised lower primary schools (class I to class IV) of Assam.

ii. **Primary school teachers** here mean teachers teaching in class I to class IV.
iii. **Status** means status in respect to physical facilities, in respect to teacher and student, teaching aids and materials, methods of teaching, text book, curriculum, co-curricular activities, time period or workload, evaluation procedures and others.

iv. **Participation of education** means enrolment of students in lower primary schools

v. **Bodos** means the aborigine of Assam belong to Mongoloid family of Tibeto-Burman language group whose language is included in the 8th schedule of the India’s constitution in 2003.

**Delimitation**

The present study is delimited to primary education of the Bodos in Kokrajhar District. It will be undertaken only the lower primary level of education (from class I to IV)
REFERENCES


