CHAPTER III

INEQUALITIES IN THE STATUS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

Racial, ethnic and social educational inequalities around the world have received a lot of attention at the research level with different lines of research emphasizing the different factors. Indian society has long been stratified along the axes of caste, ethnicity and religion. A large number of studies report the inequalities both in enrolment and attainment of Primary education in India (Desai, 2008). As such, educational imbalances in India deserve particular attention because of traditional disparities. These disparities are based on misbelieves which rapidly transform into class inequalities through differential educational attainment. Children who do not attend primary school are overwhelmingly either from poor household or from unprivileged social groups. The majority of such non attendees are girls. In such a situation, UNESCO’s mission ‘Education For All’ by 2015 is a distant mere dream in India. Against this backdrop an analysis has been made to examine the inequalities in educational development particularly primary education among the districts of Assam.

3.1 Scenario of Primary Education in Assam: Spatio-Temporal Perspectives

The analysis deals with the development of educational scenario of primary schools of Assam in respect of enrolment, infrastructural facilities and the status of teachers. In order to get access to universal primary education for all children in the age group of 6-14, several initiatives across the globe have been undertaken from the last part of twentieth century. To embark on this journey, UNO developed the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) in the year 2000. In line with this, the Government of India also launched its flagship programme Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) with a goal of universalisation of elementary education in 2002.

In Assam too, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan started functioning from 2002. Under SSA, several novel initiatives like development of school buildings, pure drinking water, proper sanitary system, mid-day meal etc. were undertaken. As a consequence, enrolments in primary education have increased substantially in the following years. In Assam the
enrolment trend of the Govt. and Govt. recognized primary schools during the period of 2004 to 2010 shows positive growth trend during the periods 2004-2005, 2006-2007 and 2009-2010 and negative growth trend in the periods 2005-2006 and 2007-2009. The total enrolment of primary school was 32,32,547 in 2004, which has increased to 35,10,665 in 2005. But in 2006, it has again decreased from 35,10,665 to 31,41,277. In 2007 it again increased to 32,45,754. But in 2008 the enrolment of primary school again decreased to 23,67,302. The rate of decrease is more in between 2007 and 2008 than the previous years. In 2009 the enrolment has again come down to 22,98,928. During the period of 2009-2010 the enrolment has increased to 26,55,582.
ENROLMENT TREND OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICTS (Grade I-IV), ASSAM 2004-2010


Fig. 3.1 Enrolment Trend in the districts of Assam
Again, the total enrolment 31,41,277 of 2006 has increased to 32,45,754 in the year 2007. But in 2008 it has again decreased to a number of 23,67,302. Again, in 2009 the total enrolment 2367302 of 2008 has decreased to 22,98,928 in 2009 (fig. 3.1). But in 2010, the enrolment has again increased to 26,55,582 from 22,98,928 of 2009. In sum, the enrolment trend from the year 2004 to 2010, it is found that the enrolment of Grade I-IV in the Govt. and Govt. recognized schools of Assam has decreased from 32,32,547 to 26,55,582 (Appendix VIII). But during this period the enrolment in the private schools has increased to a many folds (DISE 2006-2010).

In the district level enrolment analysis it is observed that almost in all the districts the enrolment decreases during the period of 2004-2009 in govt. schools with a few exceptions. But the rate of decreases is not uniform in all districts. The rate of decrease in enrolment is low in the districts of Dhubri, Nalbari, Nagaon, Karimganj and Cachar. But the rate of decrease is more in the districts of Jorhat, sonitpur, Golaghat, Dibrugarh and Sibsagar. The reason may be the proliferation of private schools; because nowadays most of the parents and the guardians have a notion that their children would get better teaching, guidance and other facilities in the private schools rather than the schools run by the Government.

According to Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen, like the literacy programme the public should be involved in the development of primary education. Then only the radical change will be possible in primary education. Some necessary strategies must also be adopted for universalisation of primary education. Learning in the primary school should be joyful and participatory. In such an institution parents would be eager to enroll their child. So, there is a great demand for good school. It is for this reasons in Assam we have seen the establishment of Axom Jatiya Vidyalayas, which are offering alternative schooling system. Within a very short time more than 200 such schools have started all over Assam. There is another type of school which is called ‘Raijar Vidyalya’ (People’s School). These schools stress on training of teachers, joyful learning and generation of curiosity. Such schools motivate children to attend school regularly. In Assam there are more than 5 lakhs children learning in these schools (Barkataky, 2013).

For the study of spatio-temporal variations of the primary education in the state of Assam for the period of 2006-2010, several essential parameters like total enrolments,
One of essential parameters of primary education is the enrolment. In case of enrolment growth rate, the district Sonitpur shows the highest growth rate with 10.59%, followed by Karimganj 7.19% and Sivasagar 7% in Govt. schools whereas Goalpara has scored the lowest with 0.20%. Surprisingly, eight districts have scored negative growth. But this trend varies in case of private schools as the annual growth rate in enrolment of private schools is higher than that of Govt. counterparts. Among all the districts covering the enrolment in private schools, Darrang has recorded the highest growth rate with 9.53% followed by Cachar with 4.75% whereas Tinsukia and Dibrugarh have witnessed negative growth with -24.75% and -23.14% respectively. In respect of girls’ enrolment, Sonitpur has recorded the highest growth rate 10.79% followed by Karimganj with 8.09% and Sivasagar with 7.47%. On the contrary Dhupri has experienced the lowest growth rate with 0.7%. Furthermore, the enrolment of government school for the year 2006 was 25,83,638 which has decreased to 25,73,056 in 2010. On the contrary, the Enrolment in private schools has increased from 53,876 in 2006 to 1,41,386 in 2010. But in case of girls’ enrolment an encouraging trend is observed. The girls’ enrolment have increased from 12,68,120 in 2006 to 14,63,779 in 2010 (DISE 2006-2010).

Good environment impacts the teaching-learning process of a school significantly. In the domain of environment some amenities like pucca building, pure drinking water, and separate toilets for boys and girls etc. to name a few. In case of number of schools having these facilities in the state, Kokrajhar has experienced the highest growth with 7.14% whereas Sivasagar has recorded the lowest growth being 1.06%. In respect of drinking water facilities, Dhemaji has recorded the highest growth rate with 10.61% followed by Dima Hasao with 9.93%, Cachar with 8.51% and Dibrugarh with only 4.05%. On the contrary Hailakandi shows the lowest growth rate with 2.39%. With regard to pucca building, Dima Hasao has recorded significant annual growth rate with 10.65% followed by Dhemaji with 8.99%; whereas Goalpara with 0.18% and Bogaigaon with 0.09% have shown the dismal picture of growth of pucca building. Another important aspect of amenities is the single
teacher and the single classroom. This factor acts as a deterrent in imparting quality education. In the case of single classroom, Cachar has topped with 608 numbers of schools whereas Morigaon has experienced the lowest with 87 numbers of schools in the year 2010. Similarly, in case of single school teacher Karbi Anglong has scored the highest with 620 numbers of schools whereas Sivasagar has scored the lowest with 58 numbers of schools in the year 2010.

An inevitable parameter in the teaching-learning process is the teachers. Quality, quantity and the training of teachers play a vital role in the process of education. In respect of number teachers in Govt. primary schools, Boigaigaon has recorded the highest annual growth rate with 7.24% followed by Kokrajhar with 6.94% and Sonitpur with 6.88%, while Nalbari with 0.96% and Sivasagar with 0.16% have witnessed the lowest annual growthrate. In contrast, all other districts have experienced an annual growth of around 15% in case of private school teachers. Quality of teachers is judged on the basis of educational qualifications or training. In respect of graduate teachers, Morigaon recorded the highest with 17.56% followed by Dima Hasao with 16.72% and Jorhat with 16.60%. Taking all the parameters into account, it can be said unambiguously that all the parameters contribute considerably for the overall development of the educational scenario of Assam and thereby making an effect on the status of primary education of the state.

3.2 District wise inequalities in the status of Primary Education

The study of inequalities is an important aspect of any geographical theme as both physical and cultural attributes vary widely over the time and space. The situation is true to the status of primary education across the globe which has been examined by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on the basis of Education For All Development Index (EDI) for primary education considering Grade I to IV. In the present study, the status of primary education in Assam has been analysed by calculating the Education For All Development Index for all the districts during 2007-08. For this purpose, data from Census of India, 2001 and Education Management and Information System (EMIS), 2007-08, Sarva Siksha Abhiyan, Assam have been used (Appendix=VII). To carry out this exercise, the Education For All Development goals have been discussed at first followed by calculation for the component of Education For All Development Index (EDI) and ultimately finding out the Education For All Development Index for the districts of Assam in general and the specific Social Groups of Assam, namely
Tea Labour Community, Char Community, Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste in particular. The relative status of Primary Education of the aforesaid social groups have been examined on the basis of four districts namely Sonitpur, Barpeta, Kokrajhar and Morigaon having the dominance of Tea Labour Community, Char Community, Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste population respectively. For further in-depth analysis of enrolment and achievement level four Community Development Blocks namely Behali, Chenga, Kachugaon and Mayong have been selected from respective districts.

3.2.1 Education For All development Index

The Education For All (EFA) is a worldwide novel mission of UNESCO aiming to meet the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015, which is centered around six goals as mentioned below:

1. Expanding early childhood care, especially for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged children.
2. Providing free and compulsory primary education for all.
3. Ensuring the learning and life-skills for young people and adults.
4. Achieving atleast 50 per cent improvement in levels of adult literacy by 2015, especially for women.
6. Improving the quality of education.

While each of the six EFA goals is individually important, it is also useful to have a way of indicating progress towards EFA as a whole. The EFA Development Index (EDI), a composite of relevant indicators, provides one way of doing so, at least for the four most easily quantifiable EFA goals, namely Universal Primary Education meant for goal 2, Adult Literacy for goal 4, Gender Parity and Equality for goal 5 and Quality of Education for goal 6 (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010). Out of these four indicators, the Adult Literacy Rate which is used as a proxy to measure progress towards first part of goal 4 has to be avoided because of its limitations. Firstly, the Adult Literacy Indicator being a statement about the stock of human capital is slow to change, and thus it could be argued that it is not a good leading indicator of yearly progress. Secondly, the existing data on Adult Literacy are not entirely satisfactory.

In order to evaluate each country’s progress with regard to the EFA goals set in the Dakar Framework for action, UNESCO has developed the Education For All Development
Index (EDI). The EDI measures four of the six EFA goals, selected on the basis of data availability. Each of these four goals is evaluated using a specific indicator. Each component of these indicators is assigned an equal weightage in the overall index. Therefore, the EDI value for a given country is thus the arithmetic mean of the four indicators. Since they are all expressed as percentages, the EDI value can vary from 0 to 100% or, when expressed as a ratio, from 0 to 1. The higher the EDI value, the closer is the country to achieve Education for All (EFA).

**Components of Education for All Development Index**

It has already been mentioned about four quantifiable goals of Education For All which can be measured by its related components. They are Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), Gender Specific Indicators (GEI), and Survival Rate at Grade IV or V and adult literacy. In this exercise, instead of four parameters three parameters are taken into account ignoring adult literacy due to paucity of data. The results towards calculating the Education for All Development Index according to the components have been discussed below.

### 3.2.2 Universal Primary Education

The UPE goal implies both universal access and universal completion of Primary Education. It means complete elimination of gender disparity in primary education. Access and equity go together for making UPE a reality. The indicator selected to measure Universal Primary Education achievement in the EDI is the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER).

**Net Enrolment Ratio**

Net Enrolment Ratio is the ratio of the number of children of official school age who are enrolled in primary school to the total population of children of official school age. This reflects the percentage of primary school age children who are enrolled in primary school and each value varies from 0 to 100% or in ratio of 0 to 1.

In order to calculate the Net Enrolment Ratio (NER), population from age-group 5-9 years have been taken from Population Census 2001 in this study. Although the relevant age-group of primary school from Grade I to IV matches with the age-group of 6-10 years but non-availability of data compels the investigator to confine to the age-group of 5-9 years only. Data on enrolment have been collected from the Education Management and Information System (EMIS) of SSA, Assam. As the enrolment data refers to 2007-08, the village level population data have to be estimated for 2007-08 by employing the decadal
population growth rate. In order to maintain a balance between the selected age-group and
the standard of primary education the enrolment of Grade I to Grade IV have been
considered. The NER thus found is expressed in ratio.

3.2.3 District Wise inequalities of Net Enrolment Ratio

The central and the respective state Governments have initiated several programmes
to increase the enrolment of primary education. Yet, the 100% enrolment of school aged
children is still a distant cry. It is observed that there are wide variations of Net Enrollment
Rate (NER) among the districts of Assam. Among all the Districts of Assam Nalbari Shows
the Highest NER of 0.78, while Goalpara shows the lowest, being 0.57. Table 3.2 reveals
the inequalities of NER among the districts of Assam. On the basis of the NER value the
districts have been grouped into three groups, i.e. low, medium and high. The ranges have
been fixed as < 0.65 as low, 0.65-0.70 as medium and > 0.70 as high. Accordingly, the
districts Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Barpeta, Morigaon, Nagaon, Sonitpur, Dhemaji
and Tinsukia fall under the low category of Net Enrolment Rate. Again Dhubri, Darrang,
Karimganj, Hailakandi, North Cachar Hills (Dima Hasao) fall under the medium category of
NER. Furthermore, Nalbari, Kamrup,Karbi Anglong,Cachar, Golaghat, Jorhat, Sibsagar,
Dibrugarh, and Lakhimpur fall under the category of high Net Enrolment Rate (fig.
3.2).The overall Net Enrolment Ratio for Assam is 0.66. An observation at a glance gives an
understanding that enrolment is associated with literacy level. With comparatively better
status of literacy level Nalbari, Kamrup, Cachar, Golaghat, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh and
Sonitpur show high enrolment rate. Again, Goalpara, Kokrajhar, Bongaigaon, Barpeta,
Morigaon, Darrang with poor literacy level show lowest Net Enrolment Ratio. In addition to
literacy level other socio-economic conditions may also influence the enrolment.

3.2.4 Inequalities of Net Enrolment Ratio among Identified Social Groups

However, the enrolment scenario of the identified Social Groups dominated villages
are quite depressing compared to the Net Enrolment Ratio of the respective districts. Table
3.3 shows that the Net Enrolment Ratio of the Sonitpur district is 0.63 , while in the Tea
Garden Labour Community dominated villages in the district, it is found only 0.59.
Likewise, the district NER of Barpeta is 0.60 but Net Enrolment Ratio in the Char
Community dominated villages of Barpeta is found to be only 0.55. Again in the Scheduled
Tribe dominated villages of Kokrajhar, the Net Enrolment Ratio is found to be 0.60 against
the district NER of 0.64.
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<tr>
<th>Sl No.</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Grade I Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Grade II Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Grade III Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Grade IV Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Estimated population in 2008 (5-9 Yrs)</th>
<th>NER</th>
<th>Enrolment GPI</th>
<th>Literacy GPI</th>
<th>GEI ASR at Grade IV</th>
<th>EDI Lit. Rate</th>
<th>Per capita GDDP (in Rs.)</th>
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| Assam  | 750038     | 672286                  | 642391                   | 596913                    | 266128                  | 3966496                              | 0.66 | 0.95         | 0.66         | 0.81                    | 0.79          | 0.76                     | 63.25 | 24056                  |

Data Source: Census, 2001 and EMIS, 2007-08, SSA, Assam; Statistical Hand Book of Assam, 2009  
GPI- Gender Parity Index, GEI- Gender Specific Index, ASR- Apparent Survival Rate, NER- Net Enrolment Rate, EDI- Education For All Development Index  
GDDP- Gross District Domestic Product
Table 3.2: Education For All Development Index in the identified Social Groups dominated villages of the selected districts of Assam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Districts</th>
<th>Different Social Groups and total population</th>
<th>No. of primary schools</th>
<th>Grade I Total Enrolment</th>
<th>Grade II Total enrolment</th>
<th>Grade III Total enrolment</th>
<th>Grade IV Total enrolment</th>
<th>Estimated population i n 2008 (age group 5-9yrs)</th>
<th>ASR at Grade IV</th>
<th>NER</th>
<th>Enrolment GPI</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sonitpur</td>
<td>* 1870 **232 Tea Labour community 202561</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>4882</td>
<td>4693</td>
<td>4544</td>
<td>3599</td>
<td>17718</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Barpeta</td>
<td>*1073 **260 Char Community 218297</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>5926</td>
<td>5543</td>
<td>5341</td>
<td>4225</td>
<td>21035</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kokrajhar</td>
<td>* 975 **441 Scheduled Tribes 281384</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>6978</td>
<td>6362</td>
<td>5707</td>
<td>4996</td>
<td>24043</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>0.58</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Morigaon</td>
<td>*636 **91 Scheduled Caste 87016</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>3758</td>
<td>2751</td>
<td>2699</td>
<td>2624</td>
<td>11832</td>
<td>0.70</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data Source**: Census, 2001 and EMIS, 2007-08, SSA, Assam.  
GPI- Gender Parity Index, GEI- Gender Specific Index, ASR- Apparent Survival Rate, NER- Net Enrolment Rate, EDI- Education For ALL Development Index  
* No. of Village in the districts  
** No. of Social Groups dominated Villages.
Figure 3.2: Net Enrolment Rate of Primary Education in the districts of Assam
While in Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district, the NER is found to be 0.59 against the district Net Enrolment Ratio of 0.61. It is observed that in spite of the introduction of several Government programmes for increasing enrolment, the enrolment in the unprivileged Social Groups dominated areas are not increasing at par with the other areas (Fig.3.8). The reasons may be low social rank, widespread prevalence of illiteracy, particularly in female literacy, miserable economic condition and unfavourable home environment.

3.2.5 Gender Parity and Equality

Equal access to education is the foundation for all other developmental goals. Recent years have witnessed some positive developments with respect to girls’ enrolment but despite these positive trends, gender disparity does not seem to be declined significantly over the years. United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) serves as the lead agency for the United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative (UNGEI) to achieve gender parity and equality target in education.

Measuring and monitoring the broader aspects of gender parity and equality in education is difficult (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2007). No such measures are available on an internationally comparable basis. Gender, an important EDI component is measured by a composite index, the gender specific EFA index (GEI). Ideally, the GEI should reflect the whole Gender related EFA goal, which calls for eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieving gender equality in education by 2015. This can be expected with a focus on ensuring girls’ full and equal access to this developmental process and consequent achievement of good quality primary education. There are thus two sub goals, namely gender parity (achieving equal participation of girls and boys in primary education) and gender equality (ensuring the educational equality among boys and girls alike).

3.2.6 Gender Parity Index

The Gender Parity Index (GPI), when expressed as the ratio of females to males in enrolment ratio or the literacy rate, can exceed unity when more girls/women are enrolled or literate than boys/ men. For the purposes of the index, the F/M formula is inverted to M/F (transformed) in cases where the GPI is higher than 1. To find out GEI, the primary GPI and transformed GPI are calculated by using the aforesaid model. In the present study, the GPI
for enrolment in grade I-IV has been calculated using EMIS data 2007-08, SSA, Assam. An observation in the enrolment scenario of Assam shows that the girls’ enrolments are decreasing in every subsequent Grades. The situation seems to be encouraging in all the districts of Assam in case of the gender parity index in enrolment (Table 3.1).

3.2.7 District wise Inequalities in Gender Parity in Enrolment and Literacy

The success of Universal Primary Education depends upon the 100 per cent girls’ enrolment in the primary education. The share of girls’ enrolment is much lower than that of boys. But now, the situation is improving after the introduction of several programmes by Sarva Siksha Abhiyan to encourage the girls’ enrolment. Literacy rate is the basic indicator of a country’s educational development. In Assam, a discrepancy was prominent in literacy rates between men and women with 64.28 per cent and 56.03 per cent respectively in 2001. It has increased to an overall literacy per cent of 73.18 in 2011. But among the literates only 67.27 females are literate in the state. Female literacy is considered to be a more sensitive index of social development compared to overall literacy. Gender disparity in literacy is a deep-rooted social problem of developing countries. Widespread gender gap in literacy hampers the development in all fronts of the social developments. In this exercise, the Gender Parity Index in literacy of the different districts has been worked out from the Population Census, 2001. Gender Parity in literacy shows wide variations among the districts of Assam (Table 3.1). The highest GPI in literacy is found in the district of Jorhat (0.78) followed by Kamrup (0.76). On the contrary, Dhubri and Tinsukia show the lowest GPI in literacy (0.61). Likewise, Gender Parity in Enrolment is also found in wide variations among the districts of Assam. In all the districts of Assam, Gender Parity in Enrolment is found to be above 0.90. The Gender Equality Index (GEI) based on Enrolment GPI and literacy GPI has been worked out for the districts as GEI= 1/2 (enrolment GPI) + 1/2 (literacy GPI). As seen in the Table 3.1, the highest Gender Specific Index (GEI) is found in the districts of Jorhat (0.87) and Kamrup (0.87). While the lowest GEI is found in both the districts of Goalpara and Karbi Anglong (0.77). On the basis of the Gender Equality Index the districts have been grouped into three groups, i.e. low, medium and high. The ranges have been fixed as < 0.80 as low, 0.80-0.85 as medium and > 0.85 as high. Figure 3.2 reveals that the districts Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Goalpara, Bongaigaon, Sonitpur, Karbi Anglong, Hailakandi and Tinsukia fall under the category of low Gender Equality Index. Again, Nalbari, Darrang,
Figure 3.3: Gender Equality Index of Primary Education in the districts of Assam
Morigaon, Nagaon, North Cachar Hills (Dima Hasao), Cachar, Karimganj, Golaghat, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Sibsagar and Dibrugarh fall under medium range of Gender Equality Index. On the contrary, out of 23 districts only two districts namely Kamrup and Jorhat claimed GEI value above 0.85 and occupied high level of Gender Equality Index.

3.2.8 Variations in Gender Equality Index among the Social Groups

The Gender Equality Indices (GEI) found in the identified Social Groups dominated villages of different districts have depicted a dismal picture (Table 3.2). The GEI in the Tea Labour Community dominated villages of Sonitpur district is found to be 0.64 against the district GEI of 0.79 indicating very low female literacy and low girls’ enrolment in the Tea Garden areas. In the Char Community dominated villages of Barpeta district, the GEI is found to be 0.65 against the district GEI of 0.79. The reasons for this poor GEI in the Char Community dominated villages may be illiteracy among the parents, harsh socio-economic conditions due to frequent floods and heavy soil erosion. The situation is a bit improved in the Scheduled Tribe dominated villages of Kokrajhar district where the GEI is found to be 0.71 against the district GEI of 0.79. In comparison to the district GEI the situation is not said to be satisfactory in the Kokrajhar district also (fig. 3.7). Again, in the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district the Gender Equality Index is found to be 0.74 against the district GEI of 0.80. The slight improved scenario of the GEI in the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district may be comparatively high literacy, improved socio-economic conditions and stable social environment.

3.2.9 Quality of Education

Among the feasible indicators available for a large number of countries, the survival rate to Grade 5 was selected as being the best available indicator for the quality of education component of the Education For All Development Index (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010). Although the Enrolment is increasing over the years, the retention or survival scenario of the primary education is not so satisfactory which makes policy makers puzzled.

3.2.10 Survival Rate

The Grade specific Enrolment over a period of five years are considered in estimating the retention or survival rate at the primary level and it gives a fairly good information about the retaining capacity of the education system. In this study, Apparent Survival Rate (ASR) has been used. The Apparent Survival Rate presents the share of enrolment in Grade-II and
subsequent Grades in relation to the enrolment in Grade-I in a year. The rate is considered as crude since it is based upon the enrolment data of one year only. It, however, reveals interesting and useful information about the retaining capacity of the system (DISE, 2007).

3.2.11 District wise Inequalities in Apparent Survival Rate

In the context of the present study, an inequality Apparent Survival Rate is seen with regard to Grade and gender among the districts. It reveals that the enrolment decreases with the increase of Grade level. Table-3.1 shows the Apparent Survival Rate from Grade-I to Grade IV in different districts of Assam. The highest Apparent Survival Rate is found in the districts of Jorhat (0.93) and Kamrup (0.93) followed by Hailakandi (0.90) and Sibsagar (0.90). On the contrary the lowest Apparent Survival Rate 0.59 is found in Dhubri district. On the basis of the ASR value, the districts have been grouped into three groups, i.e. low, medium and high. The ranges have been fixed as < 0.80 as low, 0.80-0.90 as medium and > 0.90 as high. Accordingly, the districts Kokrajhar, Dhubri, Bongaigaon, Goalpara, Darrang, Morigaon, North Cachar Hills (Dima Hasao), Karimganj, Golaghat and Lakhimpur fall under the category of low Apparent Survival Rate (fig. 3.3). Again, Barpeta, Nalbari, Nagaon, Karbi Anglong, Cachar, Sonitpur Dhemaji, Dibrugarh and Tinsukia fall under the category of medium range of Apparent Survival Rate. Furthermore, Kamrup, Hailakandi, Jorhat and Sibsagar have claimed the high category of Apparent Survival Rate. It is observed that districts having the high literacy level have acquired the high survival rate; while the districts having poor literacy level are placed in the low survival rate category.

3.2.12 Inequalities in Apparent Survival Rate among the Social Groups

The Apparent Survival Rate found in the identified social Groups dominated villages of different districts are very poor (Table 3.2). The ASR in the Tea Labour Community dominated villages of Sonitpur district is found to be 0.74 which is far lower than the district ASR of 0.86. While in the Char Community dominated villages of Barpeta district, the ASR is found to be 0.71 against the district overall ASR of 0.80 depicting low survival rate in the Char Community dominated villages. The reasons for these low Survival Rate in the Tea Garden and Char areas are illiteracy among the parents, miserable economic condition and poor household amenities. Parents in these areas prefer their children to be engaged in household activities rather than sending them to schools. The situations of Kokrajhar and
APPARENT SURVIVAL RATE IN PRIMARY EDUCATION (GRADE I - IV)
ASSAM, 2007-08

Legend
APPARENT SURVIVAL RATE (in Ratio)
LOW < 0.60
MEDIUM 0.60 - 0.90
HIGH > 0.90

Data Source: Census, 2001 and EMIS, 2007-08, SSA, Assam.
Figure 3.4: Apparent Survival Rate of Primary Education in the districts of Assam
Morigaon districts are also not satisfactory. In the Scheduled Tribe dominated villages of Kokrajhar district, the ASR is found to be 0.72 against the district ASR of 0.78; while the ASR in the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district is found to be 0.70 against the district ASR of 0.79. The reasons for improved scenario of the ASR in selected Social Groups dominated villages of Kokrajhar and Morigaon district may be for comparatively better socio-economic condition and improved literacy level.

3.2.13 Inequalities in EDI among the districts

In the above discussion of the components of Education For All Development Index it is found that there have been wide variations of the components among the districts of Assam. By summing up the three components of EDI namely Net Enrolment Rate, Gender Specific Index and Survival Rate in terms of ratio the EDI for all the districts of Assam have been found out as follows:

\[ \text{EDI} = \frac{1}{3}(\text{NER}) + \frac{1}{3}(\text{GEI}) + \frac{1}{3}(\text{Survival rate to grade IV}) \]

It is revealed (table-3.1) that the Education For All Development Index is found to be the highest in Jorhat district with a ratio of 0.84 followed by Kamrup (0.83). On the contrary the lowest EDI ratio is found in the district of Dhubri (0.68). The overall EDI for Assam is 0.76. On the basis of the EDI value the districts have been categorized into three categories i.e. low, medium and high. The ranges have been fixed < 0.75 as low, 0.75-0.80 as medium and > 0.80 as high. Accordingly Dhubri, Kokrajhar, Goalpara, Bongaigaon, Barpeta, Darrang, Morigaon, North Cachar Hills, Karimganj and Tinsukia districts fall under the category of low EDI (fig. 3.6). While Sonitpur, Lakhimpur, Dhemaji, Nagaon, Karbi Anglong, Golaghat and Hailakandi districts fall in the category of medium level EDI. On the contrary Nalbari, Kamrup, Cachar, Jorhat, Sibsagar and Dibrugarh districts have claimed the level of High Education For All Development Index. Table 3.1 shows that the districts having the high EDI value are acquiring the high ratio of NER, GEI and ASR. The districts having the high EDI are comparatively developed than the other districts in respect of socio-economic conditions. A correlation analysis between Literacy level and Education For All Development Index is found to be \( r = 0.693544 \) indicating positive relation and signifies that the literacy has a strong role in the overall development of educational scenario of a state (fig. 3.5). The districts having the high literacy rate acquired the high EDI also.
Figure 3.5: Correlation between Literacy and EDI in Assam

Education and literacy are directly linked to economic development. In general the higher the level of economic development, the greater are both the quality and quantity of education (Gautam, 2010). In the present study the quality of primary education has been assessed with the help of Net Enrolment Ratio, Apparent Survival Rate and Gender Equality Index which ultimately shown as Education For All Development Index (EDI).

Although Gross National Product (GNP) is an appropriate measure of economic development, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is the most available published official data for the country and so the same is used widely in measuring the economic development. GDP is the total monetary value of all goods and services produced within a country during a given year. GNP includes the total domestic and foreign output claimed by the residents of the country. It comprises of GDP plus factor incomes accruing to residents from abroad minus the income earned in the domestic economy accruing to persons abroad (Gautam, 2010). To find out the correlation between quality of education and economic development at district level, Education For All Development Index (EDI) and Per Capita Gross District Domestic Product have been considered. The correlation between Education For All Development Index and Per Capita Gross District Domestic Product is found at $r = 0.381662$ indicating a positive relationship (fig. 3.6).
While comparing the present findings at the national context, it is seen that Assam is placed a little behind the country’s EDI which stands at 0.77 (in 2007) as calculated by UNESCO (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2010). As stated in the Report, India lags far behind in the global context occupying 105th rank in EDI among 125 countries in the world which falls under the category of Low EDI country. However, as against four parameters adopted in the UNESCO’s calculation of EDI, the present exercise could consider only three of the selected parameters which stand as a limitation of the study.
Figure 3.7: Education For All Development Index in Primary Education among the districts of Assam
3.2.14 EDI among the Social Groups and associated causes

Regarding the situation of EDI in the identified Social Groups dominated villages of different districts, it is found far below than the overall EDI of respective districts. In the Tea Labour Community dominated villages of Sonitpur district the Education For All Development Index is found to be 0.65 against the district EDI 0.74. In these selected villages the NER, GEI and ASR are found to be very low. Hence, the EDI remain very low in the Tea Labour Community dominated villages of Sonitpur district. Likewise in the Char community dominated villages of Barpeta district the EDI is found to be 0.64 against the district overall EDI 0.73 indicating low NER,GEI and the low Apparent Survival Rate in the Char Community dominated villages. The situation of Scheduled Tribe dominated villages of Kokrajhar district is also not satisfactory. Here the EDI is found to be 0.68 against the district overall EDI 0.74. In this area, the NER is found to be very low. Hence, the EDI is remaining at low. Again, in the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district the EDI is found to be 0.68 against the district overall EDI of 0.73 indicating low status of Education For All Development Index. Figure 3.8 displays a comparative picture of district wise level of Education For All Development Index.
In the analysis of the components of Education For All Development Index, the ratios of all components are found in low in the identified Social groups dominated villages of selected districts. Particularly in the Tea Garden Labour Community and Char Community dominated villages, Net Enrolment Ratio, Gender Equality Index and Apparent Survival Rate are found at very low (Figures 3.9, 3.10 and 3.11). However, compared to the Tea Garden Labour and Char Community dominated villages all the components of EDI are found relatively at high in the Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Kokrajhar and Morigaon district respectively due to their increased ratio of NER, GEI and ASR. Hence, the EDI is found relatively at high among the Identified Social Groups in the villages of Kokrajhar and Morigaon districts (fig. 3.12).

Figure 3.9: Net Enrolment Ratio in the districts and in Social Groups dominated villages

Figure 3.10: Gender Equality Index in the districts and in Social Groups dominated villages
The reasons for the low EDI in the Identified Social Groups dominated villages are manifolds and differ from each other (fig. 3.12). Tea garden labour community of Assam represents around 20% of the total population of the state accounting more than 45 lakhs tea garden labour population in the state. About 17% of the workers of Assam are engaged in tea industry. Among them, around 50% of the total workforces in the tea gardens in Assam are women. The tea garden labour colony in Assam has a unique identity. It is basically an industrial village cluster and is always kept underdeveloped so that tea Management Company could get cheap labour easily. The welfare schemes for the labour in the tea gardens are in a very poor condition. Majority of the tea gardens do not have proper educational facility, health facility, drinking water, sanitation etc. In recent days due to Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, many tea garden labourers are receiving a free mid-day meal service and other facilities in their schools. A survey commissioned by Assam Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan during 2002 shows that 25% of children in the age group of 6-14 are out of schools, while 43% are among the tea garden labour Community. The Tea Garden Education Committee constituted by Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan in 2003 reports that in the tea garden areas classes are held in very poor quality buildings with inadequate desks and benches. Majority of schools are closed during plucking time since both the teachers and the students work in the garden during that time. As child labour is highly encouraged in tea gardens, in majority cases children leave school to work in the tea garden for a nominal amount of money. Most of the parents are illiterate in the tea garden area. Social environment is not conducive for educational development in the tea garden area.

![Apparent Survival Rate](image.png)

**Figure 3.11:** Apparent Survival Rate in the districts and in Social Groups dominated villages
areas. Most of the male members of families are addicted to country liquor. Hence, students do not get help from the family members in their study. Among the many possible reasons for low EDI in the Tea Labour Community dominated villages only a few have been cited above.

![Education For All Development Index](image)

**Figure 3.12: EDI in the districts and in Social Groups dominated villages.**

The reasons for low EDI in the Char community dominated villages are many and differ from the other areas. The Char-Chapori areas are rich in population as there is extremely high population growth. With the rising population pressure in the area, the per capita availability of cultivable land has been decreasing. Along with the decline in the cultivable land and increase in population, the vicious circle of poverty in the area almost roots permanently. Notwithstanding persistent efforts in the struggle of life, large numbers of people of the area are still in the acute poverty. In the Char Community dominated villages of Barpeta district, there are 66.78% families who are living Below the Poverty Line (Socio-economic survey, 2002-03). These people are deprived of even basic necessities of life. The people accumulating food for survival compel their children to engage in earnings implying the child labours. Large numbers of Chars in Assam as well as district Barpeta have been washed away by the erosional activities of the river Brahmaputra. Consequently, thousands of people have lost their rights on land and become homeless. School catchement also changed frequently due to soil erosion in the char area. Status of women in the society is very low in the char area, for which female
literacy is extremely low. As a result, the educational environment vitiates mostly in the Char areas for which the EDI remains at low in the Char Community dominated villages.

The scheduled Tribes dominated villages of Kokrajhar are socio-economically very poor. The villages are mostly inhabited by the Bodo Community and newly settled Adivashi people. Villages are marked by low literacy level, low female literacy, lack of social infrastructural facilities, predominance of agricultural activities and lack of economic opportunities. Most of the villages are Forest villages. The tribal people have the natural tendency to live in an isolated atmosphere. They show less inclination towards developmental activities which keep them apart from the modern education. People are generally poverty-stricken and a large numbers of families live Below Poverty Line. Low social rank, poor economic conditions, low literacy, low female literacy keep them in low level of education in the Scheduled Tribes dominated villages of Kokrajhar district. Moreover, the area experiences multi ethnic conflicts for last several years. As such the EDI remains low in the Scheduled Tribe dominated villages of Kokrajhar districts.

The economic and educational status of Scheduled Caste people of Assam is very low. Scheduled Caste people are generally living in the river banks or near the low lying areas where they can easily have their livelihood. Most of the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district are located in the low lying areas near the water body locally known as Beels. These Beels are used by the nearby villagers as fishing ground for their livelihood. Fishery and pottery are the main occupations of the Scheduled Caste people of Assam. Due to low income and competition in these two occupations, nowadays they have shifted to other occupation also. Most of the villagers are wage labourers due to dearth of cultivable land. The economic conditions of these villagers are very poor. Low social rank, low level of education, low level of female literacy, acute poverty in the Scheduled Caste dominated villages of Morigaon district keep them at the low level of EDI.