

# Attitude of Tea Garden Workers towards Higher Education of their Children: An Analytical Study in Golaghat District of Assam

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**Abstract:** *The tea industry of Assam contributes a lot to the national economy. The introduction of tea plantations in Assam dates back to British colonial rule. The Government of Assam has taken various welfare schemes for socio - economic upliftment of this community from time to time. Despite these schemes, the educational status of Tea Tribe community is very backward as compared with other communities of Assam. Attitudinal problem among parents towards education of their children may hinder the educational attainment of the tea - tribe community. The present study is an attempt to analyse the attitude of the tea garden workers towards higher education of their children in Golaghat District of Assam. The objectives of the present paper are - a) to analyse the level of education aspired by the tea garden workers for their children, b) to examine the attitude of parents (tea garden workers) towards higher education of their children, to examine whether there is significant difference in attitude of single parent (tea garden workers) and co - parents (tea garden workers) towards higher education of their children and to examine whether there is significant difference between literate parents and illiterate parents in respect of their attitude towards higher education of their children. 50 tea garden workers were taken as sample of the study. An attitude questionnaire was used as tool for primary data collection. It was found that 28 percent of tea garden workers showed favourable attitude and 72 percent of tea garden workers showed unfavourable attitude towards higher education of their children; there is no significant difference between single parent and co - parents; and between literate parents and illiterate parents in respect of their attitude towards higher education of their children.*

**Keywords:** Attitude, Tea Garden Workers, Higher Education

## 1. Introduction

India is the second largest tea producer after China. The tea industry of Assam contributes a lot to the national economy. Assam tea is famous for its flavour and aroma and it is savored not only national market but also in international market with times. The introduction of tea plantations in Assam dates back to British colonial rule. In 1823, Robert Bruce discovered wild tea plants growing in upper Brahmaputra Valley. In 1833, a tea garden was established by the Government in Lakhimpur District of Assam. In 1839, the Assam Company was formed to undertake the commercial production of Assam tea. The second important tea company named as the Jorhat Tea Company was formed in 1859. To carry on research on cultivation and manufacture of tea, the Toklai Research Station was established in 1911 in Jorhat. The industry has many ups and down now since its initial stage and at present, the Assam tea has a significant share and international status in the world tea market. More than half of India's total area comes under tea cultivation in Assam and Assam's tea production is more than half of India's tea production. Assam alone produces average 630 - 700 million kg. tea per year. The Government of Assam has taken various welfare schemes for socio - economic upliftment of this community from time to time. Despite these schemes, the educational status of Tea Tribe community is very backward as compared with other communities of Assam. Various research studies identified that there are so many causes responsible for poor participation in education as well as educational backwardness of the children of the tea tribe community. Attitudinal problem among parents towards education of their children may hinder the educational attainment of the

tea - tribe community. On this background, the present study is an attempt to analyse the attitude of tea garden workers towards higher education of their children in Golaghat District of Assam.

Attitude plays a dominant role in shaping social behavior, both at the individual and the group levels. The success of educational programme depends upon the attitude of parents towards it. Unless parents themselves have a strong conviction about the need and urgency of education, they can hardly influence the attitudes and behavior of their children. Parents have some religious, social, economic beliefs which have affected their attitude towards education. The foremost task is to develop a favorable attitude amongst parents towards education so that they can generate interests among the children. On this background, the present study is an attempt to analyse the attitude of tea garden workers towards higher education of their children in Golaghat District of Assam.

### Objectives

The objectives of the present paper are as follows -

- 1) To analyse the level of education aspired by the tea garden workers for their children.
- 2) To examine the attitude of parents (tea garden workers) towards higher education of their children.
- 3) To examine whether there is significant difference in attitude of single parent (tea garden workers) and co - parents (tea garden workers) towards higher education of their children.
- 4) To examine whether there is significant difference between literate parents and illiterate parents in respect of their attitude towards higher education of their children.

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## 2. Review of Related Literature

The review of literature pertaining to present study is as follows -

**Bosumatari and Goyari (2013)** examined the factors responsible for school drop - outs and low literacy rate among girls in tea garden areas and found that female literacy was less than that of male workers. Early marriages of girls, negligence of girls' education, economic backwardness and unavailability of educational infrastructures etc. are important reasons for this low literacy rate as well as for school drop - outs problem.

**Deb Nath and Nath (2014)** found that poor educational status of the parents, engagement of the children in minor jobs, lower rate of female education, poor literacy rate of women, gender disparity, inability of children to cope with the education system, lack of confidence among children, lack of proper schemes of garden management and government to motivate children towards formal and higher education are other major causes of poor educational status of the children of tea garden workers.

**Roy (2021)** analysed the problems faced by the children of tea garden workers in the area of education and identified that lack of basic facilities in the schools, poor health of the children, long distance from home to schools, lack of transportation to reach schools, financial problem, non - supportive teachers in the schools, lack of parental support, negative attitude of community member towards girl's education, engagement of children in their little siblings rearing and domestic works are the major problems related to their education.

**Sahu and Bhuyan (2022)** found that the children of the tea - tribal community dropped out before completion of their school education; financial problem of the family, children working as child labour, early marriage of the girls, negative attitude of parents towards education of their children are responsible for low educational status of the tea - tribal community.

**Begum and Islam (2022)** highlighted the education of the children of tea tribe community of Assam. This study was based on secondary data. This study revealed that the educational status of children of the tea garden workers is very impoverished and the challenges of their education are - unavailability of educational facilities, poor socio - economic condition and poor living condition of family, high rates of dropout from schools, poor academic performance of the children, low enrolment rate in all levels of education, illiteracy of the parents and lack of awareness regarding education.

## 3. Methodology

For this study, descriptive survey method is used. Both primary and secondary sources were used for data collection. Golaghat District has a significant contribution towards the development of the tea industry of Assam. A large number of small tea growers provided considerable amount to the economy of Assam. There are 74 tea gardens in Golaghat District of Assam which was taken as population of the present study. Out of these gardens, 10 gardens were selected randomly and 5 tea garden workers from each garden were selected as sample of the study. Attempts were made to include single parent, co - parents, literate and illiterate parents among sampled tea garden workers. An attitude questionnaire was used as tool for primary data collection. Quantitative data was analysed by using SPSS.

In the present study, the investigator has attempted to study the attitude of parents towards education of their children. An attitude questionnaire was administered among 50 parents, out of which 21 were single parent and 29 were co - parents; 28 were literate parents and 22 were illiterate parents. The attitude questionnaire consisted of 24 items. In case of positive items the maximum score for 'strongly agree' was  $24 \times 5 = 120$ , for 'Agree' it was  $24 \times 4 = 96$ , and like was for 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' the scores were  $24 \times 3 = 72$ ,  $24 \times 2 = 48$ ,  $24 \times 1 = 24$  respectively. In case of negative items, the scoring system was reversed. The maximum score for 'strongly agree' was  $24 \times 1 = 24$ , and likewise for 'Agree', 'Undecided', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly Disagree' the scores were  $24 \times 2 = 48$ ,  $24 \times 3 = 72$ ,  $24 \times 4 = 96$  and  $24 \times 5 = 120$  respectively. Thus, with regard to undecided, the maximum score was  $24 \times 3 = 72$ . In the present study, it was considered as the neutral point.

## 4. Analysis and Discussion

Objective wise analysis was done in the following way:

### a) Level of Education Aspired by the Tea Garden Workers for Their Children:

Level of education aspired by the parents reflects goals of parents set for his/her children. It is very important for academic achievement as well as educational development of children. If the aspiration level of the parents is low then, they don't have any interest regarding the future educational scope for their children. If the aspiration level of the parents is high, they will provide educational facilities and support to their children.

Table 1 shows the level of education aspired by the parents for their children.

**Table 1:** Level of Education Aspired by the Tea Garden Workers for Their Children

SL. No.	Level of Education Aspired by the Tea Garden Workers	Number of Responses	Percentage of Response by Parents (%)
1	Up to primary level	2	4
2	Up to middle level	10	20
3	Up to High School level	11	22
4	Up to Higher Secondary level	5	10
5	Up to Graduate	2	4
6	Up to Post Graduate	5	10
7	As much as can be afford	3	6
8	As much as the child wants	3	6
9	As much as the child can	4	8
10	Can not say	5	10
Total		50	100

The table 1 shows that 4 percent tea garden workers desire to continue education of their children up to primary level, 20 percent desire to continue education up to middle level, 22 percent up to high school level, 10 percent up to higher secondary level, 4 percent up to graduate level, 10 percent desire to continue education up to post graduate level as much higher as possible, 6 percent desire as much as they can afford, 6 percent desire as the much as the children want, 8 percent tea garden workers desire as much as the child can and 10 percent tea garden workers cannot say about their desire to continue education of their children. Most of the tea garden workers have no idea about the

educational ladder. They are not aware of different levels of education.

**b) Attitude of Tea Garden Workers towards Higher Education of their Children**

To find out the extent to which tea garden workers are favorably or otherwise disposed towards higher education, the investigator calculated the percentage of the total scores, showing favorable and unfavorable attitude towards higher education. Table 2 shows percentage (%) of favorable and unfavorable attitude of tea garden workers towards higher education of their children.

**Table 2:** Showing the Percentage (%) of Favorable and Unfavorable Attitude of Tea Garden Workers towards Higher Education of their Children

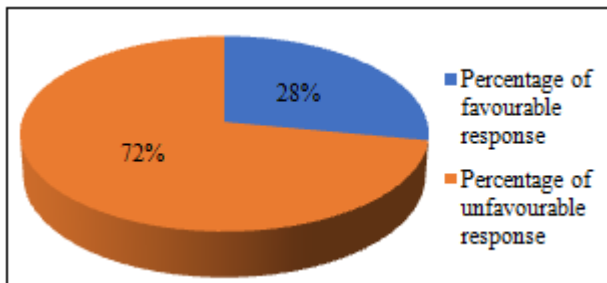
No. of Tea Garden Workers	No. of Tea Garden Workers Scored Above Neutral Point (72)	No. of Tea Garden Workers Scored Below Neutral Point (72)	Percentage of Favourable Response (%)	Percentage of Unfavourable Response (%)
50	14	36	28	72

From the table 2, it is clear that among 50 tea garden workers, 14 tea garden workers scored above 72 and 36 parents scored below 72. By calculating the percentage of the total cases it is found that 28 percent of tea garden workers showed favourable attitude towards higher education and 72 percent of tea garden workers showed unfavourable attitude towards higher education of their children.

**c) Attitude of Single Parent (tea garden workers) and Co - parents (tea garden workers) towards Higher Education of their Children**

It was examined whether there is significant difference in the attitude of single parent and co - parents towards higher education of their children. The obtained attitude scores of 21 single parent and 29 co - parents were grouped into a frequency distribution. Table 3 exhibits it.

Attitude of tea garden workers towards tea garden workers education of their children is shown in figure 1.

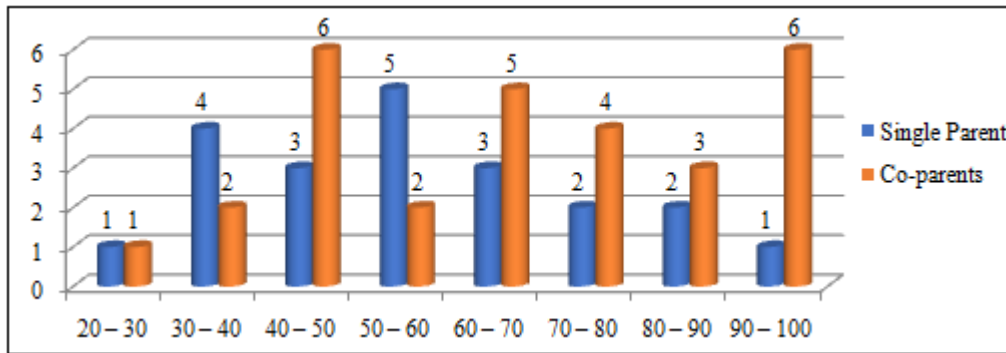


**Figure 1:** Pie diagram showing the attitude of tea garden workers towards higher education of their children

**Table 3:** Distribution of Single Parent and Co - parents According to their Scores on Attitude towards Higher Education of their Children

Scores	Single Parent	Co - parents	Total
20 – 30	1	1	2
30 – 40	4	2	6
40 – 50	3	6	9
50 – 60	5	2	7
60 – 70	3	5	8
70 – 80	2	4	6
80 – 90	2	3	5
90 – 100	1	6	7
Total	21	29	50

Attitude of single parent (tea garden workers) and co - parents (tea garden workers) towards higher education of their children is shown in figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Distribution of Single Parent and Co - parents according to their Scores on Attitude towards Higher Education of their Children

In order to verify the difference between single parent and co - parents in respect of their attitude towards education, the mean scores of the single parent and co - parents on the

criterion variable was computed by calculating Critical Ratio (C. R.) value. The table 4 shows the Critical Ratio (C. R.) values and the results of analysis done.

**Table 4:** Significance of the Difference between the Mean Scores of the Single Parent and Co - parents According to their Scores on Attitude towards Higher Education of their Children

Sample	N	Mean	S. D.	$\sigma_D$	C. R.	Level of Significance
Single Parent	21	54.6	18.65	5.27	2.50	Not significant at 0.01 level
Co - parents	29	67.8	18.65			

From the table 4 it is seen that the mean scores of the single parent is 54.6; standard deviation is 18.65. Similarly, the mean scores of the parents of co - parents is 67.8 and standard deviation is 18.65. The C. R. value is found to be 2.50 which is less than 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between single parent and co - parents in respect of their attitude towards higher education of their children.

To find out the significant difference between literate parents and illiterate parents with regard to their attitude towards higher education of their children, the attitude scores of 28 literate parents and 22 illiterate parents were grouped into a frequency distribution.

**Table 5:** Distribution of Literate Parents and Illiterate Parents according to their Attitude Scores towards Higher Education of their Children

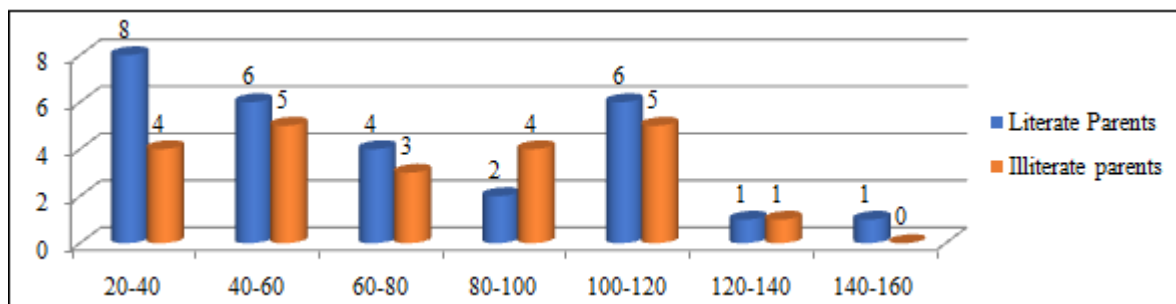
Scores	Literate Parents	Illiterate parents	Total
20 - 40	8	4	12
40 - 60	6	5	11
60 - 80	4	3	7
80 - 100	2	4	6
100 - 120	6	5	11
120 - 140	1	1	2
140 - 160	1	0	1
Total	28	22	50

**d) Attitude of Literate Parents and Illiterate Parents towards Higher Education of their Children**

To examine the attitude of the literate parents and illiterate parents towards higher education of their children, chi ( $\chi^2$ ) test is administered on the hypothesis that literate parents and illiterate parents have no significant trend of attitude towards higher education of their children.

The chi ( $\chi^2$ ) value is found to be 12.2 which is less than the table value 13.277 for 4 d. f. at 0.01 confidence level. The null hypothesis is accepted that literate parents and illiterate parents have no significant trend of attitude towards higher education of their children.

Distribution of literate parents and illiterate parents according to their attitude scores towards higher education of their children is shown in fig.3.



**Figure3:** Bar diagram showing distribution of literate parents and illiterate parents according to their attitude scores towards higher education of their children

In order to verify the difference between literate parents and illiterate parents in respect of their attitude towards education of the children of tea garden workers, the mean

scores of the literate parents and illiterate parents on the criterion variable was computed by calculating Critical Ratio



(C. R.) value. The table 6 shows the Critical Ratio (C. R.) value and the results of the analysis done.

**Table 6:** Significance of the Difference between the Mean Scores of the Literate Parents and Illiterate Parents in respect of their Attitude towards Higher Education of their Children

Sample	N	Mean	S. D.	$\bar{D}$	C. R.	Level of significance
literate Parents	28	73.23	35.8	9.76	0.424	Not significant at 0.05 level.
Illiterate parents	22	77.37	32.0			

From the table it is seen that the mean of the literate parents is 73.23 and standard deviation is 35.80, the mean of the illiterate parents is 77.37 and standard deviation is 32.0. The Critical Ratio (C. R.) value is 0.424 which is less than 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore it is accepted that there is no significant difference between literate parents and illiterate parents in respect of their attitude towards higher education of their children.

## 5. Suggestions

In the light of the significant findings, the following suggestions can be made for raising awareness and develop positive attitude towards higher education among tea tribe community of Assam.

- 1) To improve the standard of living of the tea tribe community, government should adopt and implement well planned welfare schemes.
- 2) The teachers should have positive attitude towards the students of the tea tribe community. The higher educational institutions should provide proper atmosphere so that it will motivate the students of tea tribe community.
- 3) Some activities should be included in higher educational curriculum according to the needs and aspiration of the backward and low intellectual ability students.
- 4) For academic development of students of the tea tribe community continuous evaluation system, mentorship programmes should be properly implemented in higher educational institutions.
- 5) The higher educational institutions should involve parents of the students' of tea tribe community in various activities so that all parents are aware of their children's academic achievement.
- 6) The higher educational institutions should provide special counselling and vocational guidance to the students' of tea tribe community.

## 6. Conclusion

Tea tribe community is an integral part of Assamese society. There should be involvement of the entire community in educational development of their children. Parental economic status and education is a powerful predictor of academic achievement of students. It comes to light that parents are not optimistic to employment opportunities after completion of higher education. Poverty still remains as one of the significant causes of low educational status of the students of tea tribe community. There should be close co-operation between all the stakeholders of educational system, higher educational institutions, educational administrators, educators, teachers, the parents and the community for achieving a better life in general and for employment opportunities of the students' of tea tribe community.

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