



SOCIO ECONOMIC STATUS AND SOCIAL FREEDOM AMONG THE COLLEGE GOING GIRL STUDENTS OF SC/ST COMMUNITIES IN THE RURAL KAMRUP DISTRICT OF ASSAM

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ABSTRACT

Women are considered as the backbone of the nation. But the status of women in India has always been low as compared to women in advanced countries. Most of the women are lack of self confidence. They are not even free from male domination. Scheduled caste and scheduled tribes are most disadvantageous among these women.

This study attempted to find out the relationship between socio economic status and social freedom of sc/st girl students of rural kamrup district, Assam. The research method used in this study was descriptive method. Multistage and stratified random sampling was used for the selection of the sample of the study. A total no. of 340 college going girl students of sc/st communities were selected for the study. The tools used for the study was Socio Economic Status Scale by Ashok Kalia and Sudhir Sahu and Women Social Freedom Scale developed by L.I Bhusan. Major findings of the study are there is significant relationship between socio economic status and social freedom and there is no difference between sc/st categories in terms of social freedom.

KEYWORDS: socio economic status, social freedom

INTRODUCTION

Women are considered as the back bone of any nation. Prosperity of the nation depends upon the prosperity of its women. But in India, the situation of women has not been satisfactory. Their status has always been low as compared with women in advanced countries. For centuries women has been treated as weak, obedient and shy. They were victims of wide spread illiteracy, purdah, child marriage, dowry system, which led to decline in women's status inside and outside home. Majority of women live a life of dependency that does not possess any self identity. Even the educated women are not free from male domination. They are still lack of self confidence.

According to 2011 census, 48.6% of women of India live in rural areas. They suffer many social and cultural discrimination, especially gender specific discrimination in access to health, education and employment.

Again scheduled caste and scheduled tribes are among the most disadvantaged socio economic group of India. According to Ministry of Minority Affaires Report 2014, over 44.8% of scheduled tribe and 33.8% of scheduled caste population in rural India are living below the poverty line.

Higher education ensures economic security and opportunity



particularly for women in India. It is the most powerful means to develop and solve the current economical and social crisis in India. But unfortunately the number of scheduled caste and scheduled tribe enrolment is considerably low in higher education. The scheduled caste comprise only 10.2% of the enrolment with 10.3% male and 10% female, while the scheduled tribe enrolment is extremely low at 4.4%, with male and female almost as per, according to an All India Survey on Higher Education, conducted by Ministry of Higher Education.

CONCEPT OF SOCIAL FREEDOM:-

Social freedom means the will of women obtaining freedom from social customs, traditions, religious rituals etc. Social freedom is the desire to be free from social taboos, conventions, rituals and roles which impose conventional roles and restrictions on women.

The role of women in present society is changing. It is a challenge of 21st century women to come out of the conservatism of the Indian society. Women also have the equal right to enjoy freedom in terms of social, personal and professional life. With the growth of education and vocational opportunities women have become more conscious about their status, rights of equality and freedom. Hence the present study is an attempt to find out the socio economic status and social freedom of college going sc/st girl students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:-

Present research makes an attempt to study the following objectives-

- (1) To study the socio economic status of college going girl students of sc/st communities.
- (2) To study the relationship between the socio economic status and social freedom among the college going girl students of sc/st communities.
- (3) To study the difference between sc/st group in terms of socio economic status and social freedom.

Delimitations of the study:-

The present study is delimited as mentioned below:-

- (1) The study is restricted to rural Kamrup district.
- (2) The study is restricted to only BA degree level girl students.

Area of study:-

Kamrup district:-

Kamrup district consists of wide plains through which the mighty river Brahmaputra makes its way flowing a steady course from east to west.

Kamrup district (rural) is formed by bifurcation of kamrup district in 2003. The district along with Nalbari and Barpeta together form the kamrup region.

According to 2011 census kamrup district has a population of 13, 08,862. Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 15.67%. Kamrup has a sex ratio of 946 females for every thousand males and a literacy rate of 56% and female literacy rate of 43.99% and among the st people male literacy is of 55.60% and female literacy is 45.39%. In kamrup district various castes, community are living together since long back. But they are not equally developed so far their socio economic conditions, social status and education are concerned.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:-

Signe Thomas (2013), of Florida University found that a higher level of economic freedom is associated with an increase in women's socio economic status. There is a significant relationship between women's socio economic status and economic freedom. Janki B. Kanjiya and Dr. Gandharva R. Joshi(2013) found that there is negative correlation between social freedom and depression among women. Muzamil Zan(2014) conducted a study to assess women's desire for social freedom(DSF). In his study age, dwelling, marital status, educational status, family status and personal income of women have shown highly

significant impact on their general DSF, desire for freedom from parents/husband, desire for freedom from sex and marriage, desire for freedom from customs, taboos and rituals and desire for economic freedom and social inequality. Khatri(1970) found that educated urban girl in particular manifest greater freedom in their mate selection based on love. Arora(1972) and Doshi(1971) in their studies found that educated Indian women aspire for greater freedom, equality and enjoyment opportunities. Rekha Devi Raju(1991) says that educational level of women and type of household influence her decision making role while discussing the economic status of rural women. She says that castes affect their role and rural and tribal women do not have economic freedom to spend what they earn. Wage of such women are collected by their husband. Pooja J. Chatrala (2017) found that there is significant difference between the mean score of the women social freedom among the married and unmarried women college students. The unmarried women college students are having more social freedom than unmarried women college students. Jan (2009) indicated that with the increase in age of women their decision making power had also increased. Urban, educated, working and married women held more decision making power than rural illiterate, non working and unmarried women. In nuclear family set up women held more decision making power than joint families.

METHODOLOGY:-

Sample of study:-

Multistage and stratified random sampling methods were used for the selection of the sample of the study. A total no. of 340 college going girl students of sc/st communities are selected from the total no. of 1139 sc/st girl students. 200 girls from sc community and 140 girls from st community were chosen for the study by adopting the method of proportionate random sampling.

Tools of data collection:-

Following tools were used by the investigator for the collection of data:-

- (1) Socio economic status scale developed by Ashok Kaila and Sudhir Sahu.
- (2) Women social Freedom Scale developed by L.I. Bhusan.

Analysis and interpretation of data:-

The analysis of the data was done according to the objectives formulated.

Objectives no. 1. To study the socio economic status of sc/st girl students.

Table 1: Socio economic status of sc/st girls

SES GROUP	SC		ST		TOTAL	
	COUNT	%	COUNT	%	COUNT	%
LOW (UP TO43)	83	41.5	61	43.6	144	42.35
MODERATE(44-50)	49	24.5	36	25.7	85	25.0
HIGH(51 and above)	68	34.0	43	30.7	111	32.65
TOTAL	200	100.0	140	100	340	100

From the above table we found that 41.55% of sc students are of low SES, 24.5% are of moderate SES and 34% are of high SES category.

Table also depicts that out of 340 sample 144 i.e 42.355 are of low SES 85 or 25% are of moderate SES and 111 or 32% are of high SES category.

Objective no.2. To study the relationship between socio economic status and social freedom.

Ho: There is no significant relation between socio economic status and social freedom.

Table 2: Relation between socio economic status and social freedom

N=340

	MEAN	STD.DEVIATION	PEARSON CORRELATION
SES	46.88	5.778	0.487*
SF	13.47	1.742	

*Correlation is significant at 0.01 level

The above table shows the relationship between socio economic status and social freedom of sc/st group. Here the Mean and SD of socio economic status of the sample group is 46.88 and 5.778 respectively. And the Mean and SD of social freedom is 13.47 and 1.742 respectively. Correlation is 0.487 and it is significant at 0.01 level. It shows that there is a significant relationship between socio economic status and social freedom. Hence we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between socio economic status and social freedom. Signe Thomas (2013) of Florida University also found that there is significant relationship between socio economic status and social freedom.

Objectives 3. To study the difference between sc/st group in terms of socio economic status and social freedom.

Ho: There is no significant difference between sc/st group in terms of socio economic status and social freedom

Table 3: Difference between socio economic status and social freedom of sc/st girl students

caste	N	Mean	Std Deviation	Std Error of Mean	t
SES SC	200	47.40	6.27	0.6	2*
ST	140	46.14	4.91		
SF SC	200	13.36	1.62	0.17	1.41**
ST	140	13.63	1.89		

*Significant at 0.05 level

**Not significant at 0.05 level

The above table shows that the calculated value of t of SC and ST group in terms of SES is 2 and the table value of t at 5% is 1.96. Hence we reject the null hypothesis. It means that there is difference between Sc and ST group in terms of socio economic status.

But the t value of SC and ST category in terms of social freedom is 1.41 which is less than the table value (1.96). Hence it is not significant at 0.05 level and we accept the null hypothesis. It means that there exist no difference between SC and ST category in terms of social freedom.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY:-

The major findings of the study are as follows:-

- 1) 41.5% of the sc students of sample population are of low SES category, 24.5% are of moderate category and 34.0% are of high SES category.
- 2) In case of st students, 43.6% are of low SES, 25.7% are of moderate SES and 32.0% are of high SES

category.

3) There is a relationship between socio economic status and social freedom though the relationship is low.

4) Although there is difference between sc/st category in terms of socio economic status, there is no significant relationship between sc and st category in terms of social freedom.

CONCLUSION:-

Women occupy an important place in the family and are a vital force in the socio economic progress. To improve the status of women in the society, social justice and gender equality is necessary which is possible with her social freedom. When all men will respect women, they will get real freedom, when women will not be seen as weaker sex and not exploited because of her weakness, they will get real freedom. When women will not be seen as an object but treated with dignity they will get real freedom.

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