



HEALTH AND HYGIENE OF NAMASUDRAS IN WEST BENGAL: AN ANALYSIS

ADARINI KANJILAL BISWAS ¹

¹ ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY, SAROJINI NAIDU COLLEGE FOR WOMEN.

ABSTRACT

The Namasudras are very strong scheduled caste group in West Bengal. They stood second position in the scheduled caste population of West Bengal; they share 17.40% to the total scheduled caste of the state according to the census 2001 of West Bengal. Namasudras are the indigenous group of the state. As it is mentioned earlier that Namasudras in West Bengal are very strong among the scheduled caste of the state; so they are very sound in education in comparison to the other group of scheduled caste in the state. In the following table literacy percentages of Namasudra people are shown from 1961-2001 census of West Bengal.

KEYWORDS: HEALTH, HYGIENE, BARRIERS.

INTRODUCTION

The Namasudras are very strong scheduled caste group in West Bengal. They stood second position in the scheduled caste population of West Bengal; they share 17.40% to the total scheduled caste of the state according to the census 2001 of West Bengal. Namasudras are the indigenous group of the state. As it is mentioned earlier that

Namasudras in West Bengal are very strong among the scheduled caste of the state; so they are very sound in education in comparison to the other group of scheduled caste in the state. In the following table literacy percentages of Namasudra people are shown from 1961-2001 census of West Bengal.

TABLE NO.1: LITERACY OF NAMASUDRA AND SCHEDULED CASTE PEOPLE IN VARIOUS YEARS OF WEST BENGAL:

Sl No.	West Bengal	1961	1971	1981	1991	2001
1.	SC	13.58%	17.80%	24.42%	42.21%	59.04%
2.	Namasudra	21.03%	26.86%	35.87%	56.18%	71.93%

The Namasudra people in West Bengal are to some extent developed in the field of education in comparison to the other community group among scheduled caste of the state. Their present literacy rate of Scheduled Caste is 71.93%, according to the census 2001. In the census 1961 of West Bengal their literacy rate was 21.03%, 26.86% in 1971, 35.87% in 1981, 56.18% in 1991 and 71.93% in 2001. The present literacy rate of the group is higher than the state level scheduled castes literacy rate. It is also reveal from the table above that the literacy rate of the Namasudra people is higher than the all census report in West Bengal, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991 and 2001. This progress in the field of education reveals that the Namasudra people in West Bengal are very conscious about their rights, duties and responsibilities towards their life, society and to the country as well.

It is also reveals from the above table No that in each census the literacy rate of scheduled caste remains below than the Namasudras in the state. According to the census-1961 the literacy rate of SCs was 13.58%, whereas Namasudra people literacy rate was 21.03%. Again in 1971 the SCs literacy rate was 17.80% and Namasudra people literacy was 26.86%. In 1981 the participation of

SCs in education was 24.42% and Namasudra people literacy was 35.87%. In this year the difference literacy rate was observed 11.45, but in 1991 this difference increased up to 13.97. In this year literacy among all scheduled caste was found 42.21%, but Namasudra literacy was observed 56.18%. It reveals that growth rate of Namasudras in education is better than all scheduled caste literacy growth.

Finally, in 2001 census of the state Namasudra literacy is recorded maximum of 71.93% and all scheduled caste literacy rate is observed 59.04%. So, it is found from the above table that trend of development of Namasudras in education is very good in the state.

Namasudras in West Bengal are not only sound in education, but they are very sound in their economics and political fields also. In this regard it may be mentioned that Das. B (1986) expressed that in Bengal during the period of King Gopal and other Kings of his dynasty and Raja Sitaram they were economically sound. They belonged to the Aristocratic community in culture and dignity and magnitude of their livelihood was high. But afterward due to political changes and violence of untouchability incited during the reign of Raja Ballov Sen, who was a strong

supporter of Brahmins and caste distinction, forced the Namasudras to accept the inhuman rules. But the Namasudras opposed to accept the inhuman rules. The King with all powers operated his force against them and drove them away from their ancestral land tortured mercilessly and announced all over his state that

Namasudras are 'Chandals', 'Charal' and untouchables. Thus they were placed in the lowest class of the Hindu society. So, from that time onward though they were considered lower caste of the society and migrated to different places of India, but they could maintain their life style above than any other sub-caste of schedule

TABLE NO 2 .DECADAL WISE GROWTH OF NAMASUDRA AND SCHEDULED CASTE PEOPLE IN EDUCATION IN WEST BENGAL:

Sl No.	West Bengal	1961-71	1971-81	1981-91	1991-2001
1.	SC	4.21%	6.62%	17.79%	16.83%
2.	Namasudra	5.83%	9.01%	20.31%	15.75%

The above mentioned table No reveals the decadal growth of education among Namasudra and scheduled caste In West Bengal in various censuses of the West Bengal, It is seen from the table that growth rate of Namasudra literacy in West Bengal in the early censuses was very fast, but later on it came down. It is found from the table that decadal variation of growth rate among Namasudra people in the state was 5.83% in 1961-1971, whereas all scheduled caste rate was only 4.22% in the same year. In the same way 9.01% among Namasudra and 6.62% among all scheduled caste is found in the year 1971-1981, 20.31% among Namasudra and 17.79% among scheduled caste in 1981-1991. It also reveals that growth rate of Namasudra people in education always remain above than the state level scheduled caste literacy growth so far the above table is concerned. But suddenly in the decade 1991-2001 growth rate of Namasudra all scheduled caste people in education was came down. It is seen from the above table that in this decade Namasudra people growth rate came down into 15.75% and all scheduled caste people growth rate came down into 16.83%. Decadal growth of education of Namasudras in west Bengal.

The above table expresses that the district wise participation of Namasudra people as well as scheduled castes people in education in the census 2001. In the table highest literacy i.e. above 70% among the Namasudra people found in the districts are Puruliya 85.40% whereas scheduled caste literacy percentage of the district is only 45.15%, than 73.19% among Namasudra in Kolkata and 70.54% among scheduled caste. The districts having more than 60.00% literacy of Namasudra people are North 24 Paragana 69.35%, Midnapur 67.27%, Birbhum 66.54%, Howrah 67.10% and Hugli 68.08%, Darjiling 61.34%, Nadia 61.81%, Burdwan 64.19%, Bankura, 62.44% and Murshidabad 61.16%. Again the districts having below 60.00% are Uttar Dinajpur 54.62%, Jalpaiguri, 57.01%, Koochbihar 53.19%, Daxin Dinajpur 53.09% and Maldah 55.87%. The above table also reveals that almost all the districts having higher literacy of Namasudra in education in comparison to the state level scheduled caste literacy percentage. But it is only four districts of the state having higher literacy among scheduled caste in comparison to the Namasudra people. The districts are North 24 Paragana 70.79% of scheduled caste, w/here as Namasudra people's literacy is 69.35%, than Koochbihar

66.30% among scheduled caste and 53.19% among Namasudras, Jalpaiguri 61.87%, and 57.01% and in Darjiling 62.43% among scheduled caste and 61.34% among Namasudras.

The table above again explains that Namasudras in West Bengal are comparatively stronger in the field of education in comparison to the few scheduled caste group as well as all scheduled caste people. As it is found from the history that Namasudra in Bengal were very strong group, so they could keep their developmental trend in the present time social system also. Actually though they have been recognized as the scheduled caste or lower group people in the society, but they keep themselves above in every aspects than the scheduled caste in the West Bengal society. But in some cases, still they are living at the lowest level social structure due to their low socio economic condition and due to the social system imposed over them by the so called higher caste people in the society. The people of this group living under that sector are still can't able to get even minimum facilities required by them.

However, majority of this group of people are living in rural areas of the state, and maximum of them are still dependent on agriculture and daily wages. During the field visit of the researcher, it is found in some cases that there are some family in the district Nadia and North 24 Paragana, they are to think regularly about their food; and in that situation their reply was that in such situation they can't think of sending their children to the school, though govt, has introduced free and compulsory education to the all people irrespective of caste, creed, community, sex, race and languages. Because of these mentioned reasons some of the districts of West Bengal still could not show the education level high of the scheduled caste and Namasudras. But there are some districts which are developed in many sides; consequently they could show their education level very high position. But development of a state does not mean to develop one group or few group in some fields, development means progress of all people in all side. so far their health and hygiene is concerned hardly any study has been taken up which pursued the resources to take up the present study with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- (1) To study the status of health and hygiene of the of Namasudras Children.
- (2) To study the Mental Barriers of the Children of the Namasudras in West Bengal.
- (3) To study the Economic status of the Namasudras Children in West Bengal.
- (4) To study the Health problem of Namasudras in West Bengal.

The data has been collected through documentary survey and field survey (where the Namasudra population is highly located).

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:**i) Health and hygiene related problems:**

They could not avail suitable health and hygiene here as they used to have in East Bengal. So they had to come out of their long time food habit.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY:**TABLE NO.3: PROBLEM RELATED TO HEALTH AND HYGIENE:**

State	Always	Sometimes	Never
West Bengal	170 (56.66%)	108 (36%)	22(7.34%)

Majority of the Namasudra people of West Bengal are undergoing the problems of health and hygiene 56.66% people of West Bengal face the problems of health and hygiene always. 36% people face it sometimes. 7.34% face the problem never.

ii) Mental Barriers:

The people had to face various mental problems primarily when their old, usual habits changed in the camp life,

which called for disaster in their life instead of development.

TABLE NO.4: PROBLEM RELATED TO MENTAL CONDITION:

State	Always	Sometimes	Never
West Bengal	18(6%)	110(36.66%)	172(57.34)

Majority of the Namasudra people of West Bengal are undergoing the problems of mental condition 6% people of West Bengal face the problems of mental condition always. 36.66 % people face it sometimes. 57.34% face the problem never.

iii) Economic Problem:

People of this community were economically weak from the beginning. Presently they are in the same economical problem.

TABLE NO.5: PROBLEM RELATED TO ECONOMY:

State	Always	Sometimes	Never
West Bengal	188(62.66%)	94(31.34%)	18(6%)

Majority of the Namasudra people of West Bengal are undergoing the problems of economy 62.66% people of West Bengal face the problems of economy always. 31.34% people face it sometimes. 6%face the problem never.

iv) Health problem:

Health problem is another side of the backward people. Illiteracy, superstitions damages the health system of the

people of this area. Various water-related diseases and malnutrition are the causes of their health problem.

TABLE NO.6 PROBLEM RELATED TO HEALTH:

State	Always	Sometimes	Never
West Bengal	148(49.34%)	108(36%)	44(14.66%)

Majority of the Namasudra people of West Bengal are undergoing the problems of health 49.34% people of West Bengal face the problems of health always. 36% people face it sometimes. 14.66% face the problem never.

CONCLUSION:

In the Present chapter, the necessary data gathered through various means and sources have been narrated to fulfil the objectives fixed for the study. data of the study have analyzing and interpreted with the help of various Government documents, books, Census report, Guruchand followers, Namasudras people the attitudes towards education of Namasudra students ,parents and community members of West Bengal, the problem faced by the Namasudras in West Bengal and suggestion to the

Namasudras students.

REFERENCES

1. Naik,J,P-Students History of Education in India,1800-1973,Macmillan India Limited,New Delhi 1945,p-17
2. Adams 3rd Report.

3. By Act ii, of 1857 for Calcutta, by Act xxii, Of 1857 for Bombay, and by Act xxvii, of 1857 for Madras.

4. The IMPERAL GAZETTER of India,W.W.Hunter CSI CIF LLD. Director of statistics to the Government of India Volim Vi India ,Second Edition .Trubner and Co,London,1886

5. W.L. Owen, District Superintendent of Police, to the Magistrate of Faridpore, 18 March 1873, Judicial, GB, March 1873. Prog. No. 179; also, Magistrate of Faridpur, to the Commissioner of the Dacca Division, No.340, 8 April 1873, Judicial, GB, May 1873, Prog.No.57

6. Naresh Chandra Das, Namasudra Sampraday 0 Bangladesh, in Bengali, (Calcutta, 1368B.S.) p.15; Mahananda Haldar, Sri Sri Guruchand Charit, in

Bengali, (Calcutta 1943), pp.567-574 details see Chapter V.

7. N.K. Dutt, Origin and Growth of Caste in India, (Calcutta, 1969) , Vol. II, p.132.

8. Upendranath Barman, Rajbansi Kshatriya Jatir Itihas, in Bengali (Jalpaiguri, 1941), Vol.1, pp.1,51-52.

9. Sashibhushan Nandi Barman ,Kayastha Puran , in Bengali Second Edition, edited by Girishchandra Vidyalankar, (Calcutta, 1335 B.S.), p.339

10. Census of India, 1911, vol.V, Part I, p.440.

11. Home (Political), G-I, A April 1911, Prog. No. 20.

12. Bengalee, 2 October 1910.

13. Census of India, 1901, Vol.VI, Part I, pp.370, 379.