



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: D
HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY
Volume 14 Issue 2 Version 1.0 Year 2014
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

A Historical Investigation into the Growth and Development of Education in Tripura (1862-1971)

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GJHSS-D Classification : *FOR Code : 210399, 219999*



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A Historical Investigation into the Growth and Development of Education in Tripura (1862-1971)

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Abstract- Tripura is a small hilly state of northeastern region of India. Before it was amalgamated with India, it was a princely state. The rulers of Tripura wanted to modernize their state and hence they feel the necessity of modern education. In the year 1862, first time the step towards modern education was taken by establishing a school. From that time onwards, the journey of modern education was started and before Tripura became a full-fledged state on 1972, the growth and development of education in Tripura reached towards a satisfactory level. This writing is a historical investigation into the growth and development of education from the inception of modern education in Tripura from 1862 to 1971.

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I. POLITICAL HISTORY

Tripura though was an independent Princely State but from 18th century onwards, she began to lose her possession on her own territory. The rulers of Tripura were subdued by the Mughals in 1722 and were forced to cede the greater part of their plain territories known as 'Chakla Roshnabad' and pay tributes for the retention of the rest. Thus Tripura, so long a mighty kingdom covering a wide area, gently submerged into mere forgetfulness by turning itself into a mere province within the Mughal Empire. However, the British policy towards Tripura was to some extent different from the general feudatory policy of Mughal rule.

The English East India Company came to be in possession of Chakla Roshnabad under the grants from Nawab Mirzafar and Mirkasim, which was eventually included and confined in the Dewani, granted to the Company by the Mughal Emperor Shah Alam in 1765 A.D. Interestingly when the British came into contact with Tripura they found a peculiar form of Government as well as administration existing in Tripura. The whole territory of the state was divided into two parts – the hills and the plains. In the hill, the ruler was independent, but in the plains, which were known a 'Chakla Roshnabad', the ruler was mere a Zamindars under the Nawab of Bengal.

Therefore, during the colonial rule, Tripura remained divided into two parts – the hills –, which was

commonly called by the British as 'Hill Tipperah' (after 1920 as Tripura) and the 'Chakla Roshnabad'. According to the Traverse Survey of the Survey Department, Chakla Roshnabad covers an area of 533.77 square miles (J.G. Cumming, December, 1996). The Zamindari of Chakla Roshnabad enclosed the vast areas of the districts of Tipperah (Comilla), Noakhali and Sylhet of the then Colonial Bengal (Government of Tripura, 1997).

Tripura continued to be a Princely State until it merged into the Union of India on 15th October, 1949. However, after the partition of India in 1947, the Zamindari of Chakla Roshnabad went into the hand of erstwhile East Pakistan and the land of Tripura was confined only in the hilly region. From the Independence of India and her partition (15th August, 1947) to the amalgamation of Tripura with the Indian Union (15th October, 1949) the period of two years were considered as the 'Period of Regency'.

The year 1947 is historically remarkable, not only from Indian perspective but from the viewpoint of Tripura too. India attained her independence in the year in lieu of partition, which was never enthusiastically accepted by the "nationalist" Indians. The long deserving independence never came to the Indians in a form of delight or pleasures rather it brought a nightmare for them in the form of 'partition', especially for the peoples of Punjab and Bengal. These two states of Independent India witnessed the worst effect of partition in the form of mass butchery of common people due to communal riots and refugee. However, the unfortunate event on the part of Tripura was that, though the state was an independent princely state, she had to face the adverse effect of partition of India in the form of displaced persons and refugee. Maharaja Bir Bikram Kishore Manikya Bahadur though decided to amalgamate Tripura with the Indian Union before her independence but even before her amalgamation (15th October 1949) Tripura had to face the adverse consequence of migration. These flows of immigrants increased during the 50s' and reached its zenith during the independence movement of Bangladesh in the year 1971 and which ultimately changed the demographic pattern of the state, as well as its resource use pattern.

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II. DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF EDUCATION UNDER ROYAL ADMINISTRATION

In 19th century when Bengal was flooded by the wave of modernization, the current of that wave also touched the shore of Tripura. The rulers of Tripura wanted to make their state a modern one and that initiative was first taken by Maharaja Birchandra Manikya. The process of transferring Tripura into a modern one was instigated by him from the year of 1862, by establishing the first school in Tripura for the common people. Hence, it become evident that the "modern educational system" was absent in Tripura before 1962.

It is evident from 'Rajmala' of Sri Kailashchandra Singha that, in 18th century almost all the rulers of Tripura were illiterate and were totally dependent on the educated Bengali officials for running the administration of their state (Singha, 1390 Bangabda). It was after Maharaja Rajdhar Manikya education entered into the Royal house. The Royal members were trained in their palaces by the Bengali private tutors. However, to run their zamindari in Chakla Roshnabad and to make official correspondence with the colonial rulers of Bengal, the rulers of Tripura were totally depended on the knowledge and capacity of those educated, especially English educated Bengali people. But there was no sign of any development in the field of education before 1962.

Hence, the literacy rate of the state was also in its infant stage. Based on the Bengal Administration Report for the year 1874-75, it has been depicted in the "Tripura District Gazetteers", that in the year 1874-75 in Tripura there are about 103 boys undergoing instruction at the two existing schools in Tripura. In the next year, two more schools were opened and in all 173 boys were on the rolls but only one-half were regular in their attendance (Menon, 1975). In the year, 1879 there were about 25 nos. of schools in Tripura and it increased to 31 at the end of 1881. However, due to infrastructural penury and administrative negligence the number of schools came down to 27 in the next year (Menon, 1975). The educational structure of the state was so vicious that, "with the exception of the schools at the sub-divisions, all the rest are mere Pathshalas" (Report on the Administration of Bengal 1885-86, 1887). Up to 1889-90 mismanagement of schools continued.

However, during the year 1890-91 some arrangements for the betterment of educational institutions were made, which ultimately increased the number of schools from 16 to 19 (Menon, 1975) whereas, in the year 1885-86 only the numbers of Primary schools in Bengal were 50,703 (Report on the Administration of Bengal 1885-86, 1887). Table No. 1, depicts subdivision wise educational structure of the state of the year 1894-95. The table depicts the deteriorating conditions of education in Tripura, in the last quarter of the 19th century. It also reveals the literacy growth of the state.

Table No. 1 : Educational account of the state Tripura (1894-95)

Sub-division	Number of Schools			Students			Race of Students								Average daily attendance of	
	For boys	For girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Thakurs	Manipuris	Tripuris	Kukis	Bengali Hindus	Bengali Muslims	Christians	Others	Boys	Girls
Sadar	10	0	10	448	0	448	56	64	33	0	184	85	11	15	342.89	0
Sonamura	8	0	8	189	0	189	2	0	31	0	61	82	0	13	132.41	0
Bilonia	5	0	5	137	0	137	0	0	0	0	54	83	0	0	95.36	0
Kailashahar	12	0	12	306	0	306	0	174	0	15	65	50	0	2	234	0
Total	35	0	35	1080	0	1080	58	238	64	15	364	300	11	30	804.66	0

Source: (Government of Tripura, 2004)

Table No.1 also depicts an interesting fact regarding the women education in Tripura. There was no trace of any female students during the period. Hence it can be assume that female education was not appreciated by the rulers of Tripura.

The Census Report of 1901 reveals that the educated people in Tripura were very few in number. In the year 1901 while the total numbers of aborigines were 91,679, the total numbers of literate aborigines were 258 (Table No. 2) and while during the year total population

was 1, 73, 325, the total numbers of literates were 4274 (Table No. 3) i.e. only 2.47 percent (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995). Hence, the literacy rate in Tripura at the dawn of 20th century was very poor.

Table No. 2 : Educational Statement of the census 1901

Total Population	1,73,325	
Name of the Tribes	Population	Educated Tribes
Chakma	4,510	10
Tripura	75,781	107
Kuki	7,547	04
Halam	2,215	Nil
Lushai	135	Nil
Mog	1,491	137
Total	91,679	258

Source: (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995)

Table No. 3 : Educated people in Tripura (On the basis of the Census 1901)

	Total Educated	Bengali Educated	English Educated
	4274	3511	324
Educated Tribal	258		

Source: (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995)

The above tables also depict that, only 0.28% of the tribal population were educated and other than the aborigines, the people those who were educated were Bengalis. Now the question may arise who were those educated Bengalis in the tribal hilly state like Tripura? The answer is, they were invited, educated intellectuals of colonial Bengal. The progressive rulers of the state wanted to make their state modern and in this process of modernisation they invited educated intellectuals of colonial Bengal. Thus, a large numbers of educated intellectuals begin to immigrate into the State especially from Bengal. While, the total number of Bengali people living in Tripura in the year 1901 was 59,689 (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995), it was enumerated that 43,894 people migrated to Tripura (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995), though in the Imperial Gazetteers of India Vol. XIII the number of immigrants were 40,000 (The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. XIII, 1908).

It is already mentioned that Maharaja Birchandra Manikya had instigated the process of modernisation, which was accordingly followed by the later progressive rulers of Tripura. Those progressive rulers of Tripura could realise that to run the administration and other services smoothly and also to satisfy the British requirements they had to depend on educated intelligentsia and the educated aborigines were only a few in number for the administrative machinery of the state. As those progressive rulers of Tripura had a deep attraction towards Bengal, they begin to invite those educated Bengali people into Tripura and provide them every facility.

In 1890, Rai Umakanta Das Bahadur was appointed as the Minister of Bir Chandra Manikya. Babu Nilmani Das, one of the officers of the Government of Bengal, was appointed as the Diwan under the King. Babu Nilmani Das organized the revenue system and judicial administration of Tripura on the pattern of the

system prevalent in the Bengal provinces. Rai Bahadur Mohini Mohan Bardhan compiled the Tenancy Act and laws for the protection of the properties of minors. Ishan Chandra Gupta, Dewan of Chakla Roshnabad, compiled the criminal and judicial laws. Therefore to modernize the administrative system, revenue, and judiciary etc. the ruler of Tripura was totally depended on the educated intelligentsia of British Bengal provinces. However, as the educated Bengali people from the adjoining territories immigrated into the state Tripura the educational scenario of the state began to change.

According to the Imperial Gazetteers of India, Vol. XIII, only 2.3 percent of the population could read and write and the number of pupils increased to 3125 (3008 boys and 117 girls) in the year 1903-04. The number of educational institution was 103 in Tripura (The Imperial Gazetteer of India Vol. XIII, 1908). Accordingly, it became necessary for the rulers of Tripura to invite those educated immigrants to strengthen the weak educational institutions.

As the educated Bengali immigrants began to immigrate into Tripura, the number of literacy increased but the census report 1901 reveals that though the number of male literacy increased significantly, the female literacy growth rate was quite insignificant (Table No. 4). One of the reasons behind this insignificant growth rate of female literacy was that, during the period those who migrated from Bengal to Tripura were moved by the easy earning in Tripura. The officials, government employees, farmers and the working class came to Tripura for employment only, not with the intention of settling in the State permanently and therefore, they left their family members at home. The new comers do not at once entirely leave their residence in British territory, they keep their families and friends there, and make in Hill Tipperah only Khamar Baris or farmhouses in which they live for the purposes of carrying on their cultivation (Annual Report on the General Administration of the Political Agency of Hill Tippera for the year 1886, No-407, dated, 7th July, 1887, para-34).

Table No. 4 : Number of peoples (according to their religion) those who were educated in different languages in Tripura in the year 1901

Total Population			Number of peoples those who were educated in different languages.														
			English			Bengali			Hindi			Oriya			Others		
Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
173325	92495	80030	324	316	5	3511	3378	133	111	110	1	15	15	0	313	304	9
<u>Hindu</u> 119192	63147	56045	291	286	5	2503	2403	100	73	72	1	15	15	0	64	62	2
<u>Muslims</u> 45323	24734	20589	31	31	0	990	961	29	38	38	0	0	0	0	108	108	0
<u>Buddhist</u> 5999	3200	2799	0	0	0	10	8	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	134	129	5
<u>Christian</u> 137	76	61	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0
<u>Animist</u> 2673	1337	1336	0	0	0	6	4	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	3	2

Source: (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995)

For the first time one girls' school was opened within the campus of Imperial palace by the Queen Maharani Tulshibati. In 9th April, 1894 the school with the name 'Agartala Balika Vidyalaya started her journey. The school was completely aided by the Queen's personal treasury. At first, only the girls from royal families got their education from the school but later, girls from various places took admission. However, if we see table no. 4 than it depicts that initially the school was unable to increase the number of female literacy in the state, though it was an outstanding effort on the way of women education in Tripura.

Conversely, the educated people those who migrated to Tripura from British Bengal were really in search of good jobs with respect and honour. In addition, the changing political scenario of Colonial India due to British Government repressive administrative policy, political mischief, freedom struggle and communal disturbances pushed the Bengali people to immigrate into the hilly princely state Tripura. If we follow the decadal variation of population in Tripura of the various census reports, than we find that, it was very high during the period from 1901 to 1949 (Table No. 5). This high growth rate of population in Tripura was only due to the huge numbers of immigrants from various parts of colonial India and especially from Bengal. While the number of immigrants in the year 1901 was 43,894, in 1911 was 81,663, in 1921 was 96,386 and 1931 was 1,14,383 respectively, the numbers of immigrants only from Bengal were 48,042 in 1911, 46,061 in 1921 and 67,946 in 1931 (Debvarma, 1997). In addition, a large number of Bengali people from Assam immigrated into the state. Hence, the Bengali immigrants became huge factors behind the literacy growth rate of the state.

Table No. 5 : Population of Tripura according to various Censuses.

Year	Population	Decadal variation	% decadal variation
1901	1,73,325		
1911	2,29,613	56,288	32.48
1921	3,04,437	78,824	32.59
1931	3,82,450	78,013	25.63
1941	5,13,010	1,30,560	34.14
1951	6,39,029	1,26,019	24.56

Source: (Paul, 1964)

In the year 1914-15, the numbers of schools increased to 154 and among them only 12 nos. of schools were made for the girls. Hence, though the number of male literacy increased in Tripura during the period the female literacy did not increase in the same proportion (Table No. 6). In addition, if we compare both the table no. 6 and 7, then we find that in 1918-19 the total literacy growth decreased though the numbers of administrative divisions in the state were increased. In both the tables, though we find that the number of schools for the girls remained same but the number of female students and their attendance were downwards in the later year.

Table No. 6 : Educational account of the state Tripura (1914-15)

Divisions	Number of Schools			No. of Students			Average daily attendance of	
	For boys	For girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Sadar	50	2	52	2095	174	2269	1511.63	82.73
Kailashahar	18	4	22	901	55	956	690.97	46.20
Sonamura	20	1	21	1029	39	1068	802.3	34.99
Belonia	13	1	14	699	23	722	569.85	14.89
Khowai	8	1	9	215	12	227	160.46	8.42
Dharmanagar	16	1	17	555	48	603	419.06	32.01
Udaipur	11	2	13	241	35	276	167.42	21.11
Sabroom	6	0	6	189	11	200	157.10	7.80
Total	142	12	154	5924	397	6321	4478.62	249.15

Source: (Government of Tripura, 2004)

Table No. 7 : Educational account of the state Tripura (1918-19)

Sub-division	Number of Schools			No. of Students			Average daily attendance of	
	For boys	For girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls
Sadar	51	2	53	1643	105	1748	1191.31	64.06
Kailashahar	11	4	15	743	100	843	504.83	63.29
Sonamura	19	1	20	689	29	718	514.43	22.18
Belonia	10	1	11	517	23	540	351.5	14.07
Khowai	5	1	6	137	14	151	104.96	8.89
Dharmanagar	14	1	15	619	26	645	403.54	14.99
Udaipur	3	2	5	181	33	214	117.48	20.39
Sabroom	8	0	8	92	8	100	69.79	5.8
Amarpur	6	0	6	53	0	53	52.68	0
Kalyanpur	1	0	1	42	0	42	18.86	0
Total	128	12	140	4716	338	5054	3329.38	213.67

Source: (Government of Tripura, 2004)

In the process of modernization, many schools including primary and secondary schools were established. In the year 1922 (1332 T.E.) the number of schools were 168 and among them 6 nos. were of Primary English schools, and 5 nos. of English High schools. In the next ten years 56 nos. of new schools were established and among those new schools, there were 6 nos. of English High schools and 2 nos. of Primary English Schools (Debvarma, 1997). A bold step had been taken by the royal administration in 1931-32 when compulsory primary education was introduced in Agartala, under the State Act 2 of 1932 and later it was decided to expand its scope upto the valley of Howrah and to the linked areas of the Sub-divisional town (Menon, 1975). However, prior to her merger with the Indian union, Tripura had no facilities within her boundary for imparting collegiate education. Table No. 8. depicts the number of primary schools from the year 1907 to 1946.

Table No. 8 : Number of Primary schools in Tripura from 1907 to 1946

Year	Number of Schools	Number of pupils
1907-08	137	4,011
1916-17	125	4,842
1926-27	139	4,215
1936-37	111	5,110
1943-46	123	5,115

Source: (Menon, 1975)

However, during that period, the numbers of primary schools increased and at the same time, the growth of literacy went upward. Therefore, as the numbers of schools were increased during the period, to run those schools it became necessary to provide sufficient number of educated teachers. However, the number of literates among the aborigines were very low. Large numbers of pupils belonged to Bengalis. It is evident from a data (Table no. 9) given by Thakur Sri Somendrachandra Debvarma that, except the Tripuris, very few numbers of tribal people went into the schooling system. Until the thirties of 20th century, the 'Thakur' families represented the educated section of the tribals (Bareh, 2007). Table No. 10 depicts a clear picture of the literacy growth rate of the Thakurs (from 1924 to 1946).

Table No. 9 : Number of pupils attended the schools in Tripura (1922 – 1931)

Year	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929	1930	1931
Rajkumar	-	-	-	-	5	8	7	9	7	8
Thakur	137	138	181	166	179	180	170	176	324	122
Manipuri	814	782	793	635	578	614	611	660	574	840
Tripuri	473	577	533	463	500	583	732	753	671	1219
Reang	33	21	48	29	28	30	22	42	14	11
Kuki	45	24	26	66	12	42	25	18	2	-
Lushai	-	-	-	-	27	21	-	-	5	4
Bengali Hindus	2276	2340	2587	2531	2647	2786	2947	3284	3410	3673
Muslims	1666	1598	1657	1619	1788	2005	2243	2312	2330	2873
Christians	1	3	4	1	11	3	5	3	2	3
Chakmas	-	-	-	-	9	12	2	-	-	1
Others	131	87	143	49	42	47	84	88	63	152
Total	5576	5570	5972	5559	5876	6331	6848	7345	7402	8906

Source: (Debvarma, Re-print 1997)

Table No. 10 : Literacy growth rate of the Thakurs from 1333 T.E. to 1355 T.E. (1924-1946)

Year T.E.	No. of students in the School	Students staying in the Boarding	Students studying in the colleges of other States
1333	181	35	9
1334	166	35	9
1335	179	35	8
1336	180	35	8
1337	170	35	9
1338	176	34	11
1339	324	35	12
1340	122	29	*few
1341	163	28	*few
1342	213	28	*few
1343	282	32	12
1344	290	32	9+2

1345	216	30	10
1346	203	28	*few
1347	320	30	14
1348	279	24	19
1349	370	24	13
1350	303	30	13
1351	261	20	10
1352	254	17	12
1353	254	17	12
1354	275	17	11
1355	283	18	13

*few – not specified

Source: (Goswami, March, 2007)

It is also evident from the table no. 8 that though in 1930s' and 40's, the number of the pupils increased in Tripura but from the record given by Dwijendra Narayan Goswami (Table No.11) it can be stated that the number of literate aborigines decreased during this period.

Table No. 11 : Number of aborigines attended the schools in Tripura from 1341 T.E.-1355 T.E. (1932 – 1946)

Year T.E.	Tripuri	Reang	Kuki	Chakma	Lushai	Christian	Garos	Others
1341	1300	31	41	1	5	-	-	41
1342	1053	-	1	2	1	-	-	96
1343	977	13	1	1	1	-	-	44
1344	1007	18	-	-	1	-	-	56
1345	985	9	-	1	-	2	-	121
1346	917	9	-	1	1	5	-	112
1347	983	20	-	2	3	-	-	153
1348	845	19	1	1	6	-	-	139
1349	1023	39	1	3	6	10	-	239
1350	1104	45	17	4	12	-	-	108
1351	1102	29	25	3	2	8	10	107
1352	951	34	5	3	24	-	5	69
1353	820	17	5	3	14	2	-	80
1354	966	26	4	-	17	-	3	86
1355	973	21	4	-	19	2	-	86

Source: (Goswami, March, 2007)

Thus, it is apparent that, it was not the aborigines of the state but the people those who were

migrated were much more educated and the Bengalis were in the forefront of it. However, among the Bengalis

the Hindu Bengali people were more literate than the Bengali Muslims. It was the reason that most of the Bengali Muslims those who have immigrated into the state from the adjoining territories of Tripura were not educated and they belong to a very lower stratum of the society. However, it should be mentioned here that in Tripura maximum of those Muslims were Bengali except few Manipuris. In the Census Report 1310 T.E. (1901 A.D.), it was stated that in 1901, 2,503 nos. of Hindu peoples were Bengali educated and 291 nos. of Hindu people were English educated in Tripura, while only 990 nos. of Muslim people were Bengali educated and 31 nos. of Muslim people were English educated (Choudhury, Re-print 1995). Again in the year 1931 while 3.5% of the Hindu people were literate, only 1.1% of Muslim population were literate in Tripura (Debvarma, 1997), and as the majority number of immigrants were Bengali, hence, the person those who were literate especially belong to the Bengali immigrants.

During the period the number of English educated people in Tripura were also increased (Table No. 12) and it was only due to the immigration of English educated peoples from Bengal to Tripura.

Table No. 12 : Number of English educated persons in Tripura

Year	Number of English Educated persons
1901	324
1911	1208
1921	1707
1931	3087

Source: (Debvarma, Re-print 1997)

In addition, it is evident that the Bengali Hindu people were much more English educated than the Bengali Muslim people in Tripura in the year 1931. In the state 0.8% of people were English educated and among

Table No. 14 : Literacy in Tripura during 1951 – 1971.

Year	Total population	Total % of literates			% of literacy
		Male	Female	Total	
1951	6,45,707	76452	23632	1,00,084	15.5
1961	11,42,005	175060	56128	2,31,188	20.2
1971	15,56,342	322017	160065	4,82,082	30.9

Source: (Directorate of Statistics and evaluation, 1981)

Hence, the number of literate persons increased in Tripura in the year 1951. Male literates are one in five and females as few as 1 in 21 only. The proportion of literacy is higher in urban areas (Vaghaiwalla, 1951). However, table no. 15 depicts an interesting facts that the proportionate female figures in the age group 5-14 are much higher than the corresponding male figures. It was probably due to the proportionate improvement in the female literate displaced persons from East Pakistan.

them 0.14% of male and 0.1 % of female were English educated. Among the Muslims 0.4% of people and among the Hindus 0.9% of people were English educated. Among the male, 0.17% were Hindu and 0.7% were Muslim English educated people (Debvarma, 1997). Thus, we can affirm that the Bengali Hindu educated people migrated more than the Bengali Muslim educated people.

However, in the last half of Manikya rule in Tripura (1901-1949), the number of educated people increased in Tripura but unfortunately the female growth rate was quite insignificant (Table No. 13)

Table No. 13 : Literacy in Tripura during 1901 – 1941.

Year	Total % of literates	Male	Female
1901	2.5	4.5	0.2
1911	4.0	6.9	0.8
1921	8.2	14.3	1.1
1931	2.8	4.9	0.4
1941	7.9	12.7	2.5

Source: 1. (Choudhury, Re-Print 1995)

2. (Debvarma, Re-print 1997)

3. (Paul, 1964)

III. DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH OF EDUCATION AFTER TRIPURA JOINED THE INDIAN UNION

On 15th October, 1949 Tripura joined the Indian Union and from that time onwards Tripura made a remarkable improvement in the field of education. From the above table (table No.13) it is evident that the total literacy rate in Tripura was 7.9 percent in the year 1941. However, in 1951, the literacy was 15.5 percent and in the year 1971, it increased to 30.9 percent. The below table (Table No. 14) shows the clear picture of the literacy growth rate of Tripura (from 1949 to 1971).

Table No. 15 : Male and Female literacy by Age Groups per thousand (1951)

State & Natural Division		Aged					
		5-9		10-14		15 and upwards	
		1941	1951	1941	1951	1941	1951
Tripura	Male	4	21	10	48	95	139
	Female	2	6	4	10	15	31
Assam	Male	15	24	24	40	150	195
	Female	6	15	8	20	13	44
Assam Plains	Male	15	25	25	42	149	200
	Female	*	15	*	17	*	40
Assam Hills	Male	10	14	24	31	156	161
	Female	6	6	10	32	47	67
Manipur	Male	6	9	13	29	74	155
	Female	2	2	1	6	6	15

Source: (Vaghaiwalla, 1951)

It is also evident from the census report that the highest number of male literates (531) are in Class IV in the year 1951 and class VIII contains only 347 males. The report also reveals that Tripura enjoys only 20.8 percent male literacy among those aged 5 and upwards which is slightly greater than that of Assam Hills Division of Manipur but if we consider literacy only among those aged 15 and up wards, Tripura with 13.9 percent comes off worse than even Manipur or Assam Hills (Vaghaiwalla, 1951).

However, the above table (Table No. 15) also depicts that Tripura gives a better showing in the field of male literacy between the age 5 to 14. Male literacy in the age group 5-14 is the highest in Tripura of all States. The number of literate males per 1,000 who are aged 5-14 was 69 in Tripura against 64 in Assam and 38 in Manipur. The female literacy is also better in Tripura especially between the age 5-9. But as the age increased the female literacy growth decreased in comparison to other states of north east India. It was probably due to the unwillingness and unenthusiastic attitude of the parents towards the higher education of the girls.

But it is also true that after her amalgamation until 1965, 3nos. of multipurpose Higher Secondary Schools, 7nos. of class X High Schools and 3nos. of Junior High Schools only for girl student along with a considerable numbers of co-educational schools were established. In the year, 1963-64 full-fledged Women's College was also established. Due to the growth of women literacy rate, women's participation in the Government and semi-Government institution increased.

Actually, a systematic development of education in the territory was started after First Five Years Plan period and after that it obtained such an impetus year after year that the percentage of average of school going children increased. The below Table No. 16 depicts the clear picture of the above statement.

Table No. 16 : Number of Institutions and Students (1950-51 to 1964-65)

Year	Number of Institutions (Primary, Basic and non-Basic)	Students	Percentage coverage (6-11 Yrs)
1950-51	404	19,155	24.8
1955-56	1001	54,053	54.1
1960-61	1074	81,358	60.7
1964-65	1359	1,20,304	80.8

Source: (Menon, 1975)

According to Tripura District Gazetteers, 1975, by the end of the year 1964 there were altogether 1,333 primary schools including 600 Junior Basic Schools in this territory and of these 1,317 were under management of the administration and the rest under private management. The total enrolment at the primary stage of all types of schools was 1,15,369, the number of girl students being 42,087 forming over 36 percent of the total. The total number of teachers was 3411 and of them 1072 happened to be trained (Menon, 1975).

It is evident from the table no. 14 that the number of educated person increased in the year 1961 and the total number of literates was 231,188 of which 1,75,060 were males and 56,128 females, the percentage being 20.2. According to the Census of 1951, while there are 155 literates for every 1,000 of the population, in 1961 there are 202 literates for every 1,000 of the population. The sex ratio of literates were as follows: 296 out of every 1000 males and 102 out of every 1000 females were literate (Menon, 1975). The below table (No. 17) depicts the number of persons in the territory who had passed their academic, vocational and technical examination during 1960-61.

Table No. 17 : Number of persons passed their academic, vocational and technical examination during 1960-61.

Educational Standard	Total	Males	Females
Matriculation or equivalent examination	831	657	174
Higher Secondary	267	207	60
Intrmediate Arts & Science	467	373	94
B.A. & B.Sc (including Honours)	183	155	28
B.Com. (including Honours)	38	38	-
Post-graduate & under-graduate Teachers' Training Diploma Course (Baisc & Non-Basic)	177	156	21
Diploma course in Indian Music	8(15)	4(7)	4(8)

(Figure in the brekets indicate the students of other Institutions)

Source: (Menon, 1975)

As the year, passes by the literacy growth rate in Tripura began to increase and in the year 1971, 30.9 percent people of Tripura became literate. The below table no. 18 depicts that in the year 1971 both the rural

as well as the urban areas of Tripura achieved a satisfactory digit of literacy. An interesting fact also revealed from this table that the number of rural literacy also increased significantly during the period.

Table No. 18 : District wise literacy growth rates of Tripura (1971)

District	Persons	Males	Females	Growth rate of literate and educated persons 1961-71
West Tripura	Total	32.61	41.49	92.52
	Rural	26.99	35.95	
	Urban	65.56	73.72	
North Tripura	Total	32.17	41.32	110.65
	Rural	29.87	39.21	
	Urban	63.85	70.01	
South Tripura	Total	26.69	36.62	153.85
	Rural	24.60	34.41	
	Urban	57.52	69.38	

Source: (Bhattacharyya, 1974)

During the 1971 Census, rural population of the State is returned to be 1,383,982 out of which altogether 1,015,833 are found to be illiterate i.e., the rate of literacy worked out to 27.13 percent (Bhattacharyya, 1973). The Census of India 1971 also revealed that the rate of literacy among the rural male population has increased from 26.38 to 36.43 and rural female literacy rate has

increased from 7.16 to 17.27 percentage (Bhattacharyya, 1973). Hence, it become the established fact that during the period (1961 – 1971) the rural literacy has improved significantly in Tripura. The below table no. 19 shows the absolute number of rural population of Tripura classified as illiterates and according to their educational level.

Table No. 19 : Number of rural population of Tripura classified as illiterates and according to their educational level in 1971.

Illiterate / Educational level	Persons	Males	Females
Illiterate	1,015,833	455,966	559,867
Literate (without educational level)	2,306	1,809	497
Primary	253,010	165,029	87,981
Middle	102,076	76,646	25,430
Matriculation or Higher Secondary	15,554	13,131	2,423
Non-technical Diploma or certificate not equal to Degree.	1,751	1,544	207
Technical Diploma or Certificate not equal to Degree	249	237	12
Graduate and above	3,203	2,865	338

Source: (Bhattacharyya, 1973)

The growth of literacy among the tribal population was inadequate. In the year 1961 while the total number of tribal population was 3,60,070, the total number of literate tribals were 36,059 (10.01%) and among them 31,996 were male literate tribals (17.37%) and 4,063 (2.31%) were female literate in Tripura (Census of India, 1961). The indirect cause behind this

illiteracy among the tribals was the influx of Bengali immigrants into Tripura. The Bengali immigrants began to settle themselves in the plains as well as on the footsteps of the hills. As a result, the tribal peoples began to penetrate deep inside the hilly areas. Thus, they remain ignorant about the outside world. Only the tribes especially the Tripuris, Jamatias, Chakmas and

Halams, those who were living in the urban areas or semi-urban areas are taking the advantages of modern educational system. According to the Census of India 1971, the tribal populations in the urban areas are very negligible. Hence, due to the low literacy rate among the rural tribals of Tripura, the social mobility in the rural and hilly areas became restricted.

In higher educational sector, especially in the collegiate education, Tripura was far behind than the other states of India. Before her amalgamation with the Indian Union there was no facilities within her borders for

imperting collegiate education. But, during the year 1963-64 there were three Degree Colleges in Tripura viz., the Government managed Maharaja Bir Bikram College in Tripura, the Government aided Ramkrishna Mahavidyala at Kailasahar and another aided Degree College at Belonia. A full-fledged Polytechnic Institute for matriculates started functioning in 1958 at Narsingarh. In the year 1965, the first Engineering college was established in Tripura. The below table (Table No. 20) shows a statistical account of General Education in Tripura in the year 1971.

Table No. 20 : Total Number of Institutions for General Education in Tripura as on 31-3-70

State/ District	Primary (NonBasic)	Junior Basic	Senior Basic	Junior High	High	Higher Secondary	Schools for Professional & Tech. Education	Colleges for general Education	Colleges for Prof & Tech Education
Tripura	246	1098	198	17	14	70	6	6	9
West Tripura	99	459	82	10	8	38	4	4	7
North Tripura	74	323	55	6	2	17	1	1	1
South Tripura	73	316	61	1	4	15	1	1	1

Source: (Bhattacharyya, 1973)

Along with those colleges during the period (from 1949 to 1971) numbers of Industrial Training Intitute were established. Also various colleges like Teachers' Training college Craft Teachers' Training Institute, College and school of Music and Fine Arts were established. Also, initiative were taken to give proper education on Hindi, training classes for nurses were opened. The Education Directorate under its Social Welfare Section began to provide training in crafts, home-science, agriculture and poultry (Menon, 1975).

Together with the Government aided schools and colleges, a number of private schools began to emerge in the arena of education in Tripura. The educated displaced teachers from East Pakistan opened those private schools in Tripura, which were aided by the Relief and Rehabilitation Department of the administration and by the Education Department.

IV. CONCLUSION

Hence, the image of modern Tripura, which was once dreamed by the rulers of the state, came into reality with the help of education and before Tripura was declared as a full-fledged state in the year 1972, there were remarkable advancement in the field of education. Now naturally a question arises that how this advancement is possible in this small hilly state like Tripura and answer is the huge number of immigrants especially the Bengali immigrants who immigrated into Tripura in the first three quarters of the 20th century.

Modern educated Bengali immigrants influenced the educational system of Tripura. It is evident that the literacy growth rates of Tripura from the year 1901 to 1941 was not very impressive in contrast to the number of the increased immigrants. It was due to the illiteracy of the local tribal people as well as the

immigrant Bengali agriculturalists. Nevertheless, it is evident that in the last three consecutive census years of this study, the percentage of literacy rate in Tripura increased and ultimately crossed the growth rate of India. The reason behind this growth rate is that, after the partition of India, until the Bangladesh Liberation War, the period was full of political turmoil, hence, the influx was huge and those migrants belong from all stratum of the society.

The educated migrants increased the literacy growth rate of the state. Also due to the influx of displaced person, the population of Tripura increased, which ultimately paved the way to increase the number of educational institutions in the state. Before amalgamation, the Hindu Bengalis, those who immigrated into Tripura were engaged in the white colour jobs and business and thus concentrated in the urban areas while, the Muslim Bengali immigrants were poor, uneducated and thus concentrated themselves in the field of agriculture i.e. in the rural areas.

In the later phase of this study, also, it was observed that due to the influx of Hindu Bengali immigrants from erstwhile East Pakistan almost all the government and private jobs were occupied by them and thus the social-administrative structure of Tripura was completely dominated by the immigrant Bengalis. The rulers of Tripura for their own interests invited the educated Bengali immigrants to modernize the socio-economic and administrative structure of the State. However, this in turn became a nightmare to the tribal aborigines of the state and they began to lose their status in their own state.

Hence, the aborigines of the state Tripura suffered a lot due to the immigration. The process of modernisation, which was started by the rulers,

continued by the Government of Tripura with the help of the Central Government of India with a hope that it should provide benefits to the society. However, in Tripura, the fruits of modernisation were never tested and in fact never reached to every stratum of the society. The Bengali educated people with their advanced educational and scientific knowledge dominated the socio-economic structure of the state as a whole and on the tribal peoples of Tripura in particular. They got maximum opportunities in the Government jobs; they have their access of mobility and control the economy of the state. On the other hand, due to the lack of proper education and modern skill the aborigines of the state lost their social mobility.

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