

## **Problems Faced by Primary School Teachers in Assam: with Special Reference to Nalbari District**

**By**

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### **Abstract**

Education is a process of absolute elevation of individuality. It is a continual process to harmonize oneself with the moving world. So, education is closely connected with human life. It starts at birth and is constant throughout life and till death. It comprises all knowledge and experience obtained during infancy, childhood, adolescence, and youth. Education is the most influential agency in building character and ascertaining the destiny of the individual and the nation. Primary education comprises a ceaseless significant portion of the whole structure of education. After preschool or kindergarten period, primary education is the first formal stage of education. Primary education, also called elementary education, begins at about 5 to 7 and ends at about 11 to 13. The education that children take up from formal institutions provides the cornerstone of their physical, mental, emotional, intellectual, and social development. Primary education is necessary for all development of an underdeveloped state like Assam. The state of Assam is well known for its fettered education system since time archaic. There was a home-bred system of education in the medieval period of Assam. After the independence, the government has occasionally adopted several schemes for developing primary education in the state. In this paper, an attempt has been made to examine the problems of primary education in Assam with particular reference to the Nalbari District. The study also enquires about the enrollment and drop-out rate of students in the primary schools in Nalbari District. The study also suggested various necessary measures to solve the existing problems of primary schools in the selected area.

**Keywords:** Primary Education, Enrolment, Dropout, Assam.

### **Introduction**

Primary education also termed elementary education, is a child's first formal trot of education. It is the grounding stone in which the whole education system confides. Primary education becomes the highest precession not only for social justice but also for the entire national viability of a country. It can meet fundamental learning demands for sustained quality of life. There has been a substantial positive influence of the knowledge and quality of primary education on concourse social and economic prosperity. The Anmol Dictionary of Education defines primary education as "Education provided by a primary school or elementary school" (Anmol Dictionary of Education, 1998). Primary education has been acknowledged as the starting point for promoting gender equality and empowering women in society. As today's children are the destiny of tomorrow, to paradigm a stony infrastructure of human possessing, we claim to sheltered education at the keystone level, which means at the primary level. Primary education offers preliminary knowledge to children about listing, the configuration of words, environmental understanding, and ethics and values. 'The progress of primary education is an index of general, social and economic development of the country as a whole' (J.P. Naik, 2004). It is a primitive requirement for the economy's evolution, the transformation

of social practice, and the glossy processing of neoteric unsophisticated institutions. A person's quality of life mainly reclines on the primary education system, and one finds from the state (Konwar, 2007). Primary schools have been set up for immersing accountability to provide free and compulsory education to all children as speculated under Article 45 of the Constitution of India.

The primitive time of Assam was eminent for teaching and learning. Old Assam fascinated many exotic scholars. One of the famous scholars' Chinese travelers Hiuen Tsiang, came to Assam in the time of Bhaskar Varman in about the year 643 in Kamrup for the perusal of the various branches of learning. The Ahoms came to Assam in 1228 and reigned for about six hundred years. Even though the society of Assam in the Ahom period was antiquated, the Ahom kings bolstered and enhanced education for political, economic, and administrative objectives. Before the rule of the British, there was a simply home-bred education system. Since time has elapsed, these unpretentious institutions have been part and sector of Assam's cultural, social, and religious aspects. David Scott, the first dynamo of the East-India Company, pushed to thrive and exhibit the home-bred education system after he came to Assam in 1826. It is observed that Wood's Dispatch of 1854 placed the basis of the modern design of primary education in Assam. After the assistance of Wood's Dispatch of 1854, homespun primary schools received grants-in-aid. Together with these activities of the company, the Christian missionaries also commenced elementary schools in their virtuous interests. The Welsh Missionaries of 1841 also started many primary schools in undulating areas. Deputy Inspector of School Utsabananda Goswami began the first primary school for girls in upper Assam. The British government formed Assamese, the language of the law court and the schools in 1873. The number of primary schools increased from 204 to 1351 in 1871-72, with an enrolment of 38182 in 1882-83 in Assam (Barpujari, 2007). After the Government of India Act of 1919, the government of Assam desired to make primary education enforced in the state. The government of Assam imposed the Primary Education Act in 1926. For the development of primary education, the conqueror rulers were motivated by a political and official objective in Assam. The government has taken numerous steps for the feast of primary education after 1947 in Assam.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Several research studies relating to primary education have been steered in the country at the national, rural, and state levels. They may not be directly associated with the present study but have an indirect compartment in carrying out the present study.

1. Das, R.C. (1969) conducted a study of wastage & stagnation at the elementary level of education in the state of Assam with particular reference to the primary stage. The study divulged that the wastage rate at the preliminary location was lower than that in the middle level. Despite quick upsurges in educational expenditure, efforts, and facilities, the rate of wastage and stagnation remained constant. The primary level wastage and stagnation rate was higher among girls than boys.
2. Sarma Nirmala (1993) conducted a study on wastage and stagnation in the primary level of education among the tea-garden laborers of Jorhat and Sibsagar District of Assam. The study's main objective was to recognize the reason for wastage and stagnation and evolve counteractive measures to diminish wastage and stagnation. The researcher found that the dropout rate was high for boys than for girls. Nevertheless, the stagnation rate was higher for girls than for boys. The main reasons for wastage were Academic,

- economic, social, and Miscellancon in order of position, and the leading cause of stagnation were Miscellancon, Academic, Social, and Economics.
3. Ahmed A.A. (1992-93) conducted a study on some common problems of primary education in the charred area of Barpeta district of Assam. The main objective of this study was to examine the issues of primary education in the charr areas of Barpeta District and to recommend some remedial measures. The researcher revealed that there were so many problems with prior education in the selected district. The researcher recommended that qualified staff should be appointed, women teacher appointments should be increased, Proper construction of school buildings should be stressed, Improvement of the examination system should be made, there should be provision for free health service, and pupils should be fortified for games and sports by giving them various essential facilities.
  4. Brahma K. (2012) conducted a study of the primary education of the Bodos in the Kokrajhar district. The primary objective of this study was to review the present status of primary education of the Bodos in the Kokrajhar district. This study exposed that during 1771-1780 only one primary school was there under Gossaigaon educational block in Kokrajhar district. The researcher also detected that from 2005-2010, the total number of primary education institutions in Kokrajhar district increased.
  5. Rabha A.K. (2017) conducted a study on the problems of primary education among the children of the Rabha community of Assam with particular reference to the district of Goalpara. The main objective of the study was to examine the problem allied with primary education among the children of the Rabha community of Assam with particular reference to the district of Goalpara. The study revealed that parents' illiteracy is a crucial impediment to the accomplishment of primary education, and also, parents' livelihood prejudiced the affluence of primary education.
  6. Kowar P. (2018) studied the Status of Primary Education among the Kaibartas of Assam: A Case Study in Sivasagar District of Assam. The study's foremost objective was to determine the status of enrolment, attendance, and dropout in the Primary Schools of the Kaibarta villages in Sivasagar district of Assam. This study exposed that the enrolments of the sample schools have been abridged from 2011 to 2015. The total number of enrolments was 2107 in the schools in 2011, which declined to 1764 in 2015.
  7. Dr. Hoque, Md. Aynul (2018) showed a study on the progress of elementary education in Assam since Independence. This study's main objective was to discover the development of elementary education in Assam since independence. The study unveiled that the advancement of elementary education was very excellent quantitatively, an increase of 47% from 1950-51 to 1960-61. Students also had a hasty increase up to the 1990-91 decade.
  8. Handique Chumki (2021) studied elementary education in Assam, India- examining the trend and progress. The main objective of this study was to investigate the condition of elementary education in the state of Assam since 2007-08. The study revealed that the uppermost enrolment was perceived in the case of government schools of Assam, and the lowest is perceived in the case of private schools, with enrolment in private schools from class VI to VIII being the minimum.
  9. Gogoi Gitashree (2020) conducted a study on the existing status and the problems of primary education, particularly regarding Sivsagar District, Assam. The main objectives of this study were to find out the present level of primary education regarding infrastructural facilities, teaching methods, medium of instruction, curricular or co-curricular activities, and to find out the problems associated with primary education and give some suggestions for improving primary education. The researcher found some significant issues in primary education, such as a Lack of infrastructure facilities,

Problems of wastage and stagnation, financial problems, Lack of supervision, Lack of trained teachers, etc.

## Demography of Assam and Nalbari District- A Brief Picture

### *Assam*

Even if Assam has 2.4% of the country's total land area of the country it delivers shelter to about 2.6% of the country's total population. Assam is the chief and also uppermost populated state amongst the North Eastern States which signifies approximately 72.25% of the total population of the North Eastern Region of India. According to the 2011 census, the people of Assam is 3,12,05,576, of which 1,59,39,443 are male and 1,52,66,133 are female. The Sex Ratio of the state displays improvement from 935 in 2001 to 958 per 1000 males in the 2011 census. Most of the people of Assam live in pastoral areas. As per the 2011 census year, out of the total population of Assam, only 14.10% of people live in town areas, and 85.90% live in rural areas. The detail about the population of Assam is presented in the following Table no 1.

**Table 1:** *Population of Assam at a Peek*

Particulars	Unit	2001 Census	2011 Census
Population	Lakh	267	312
Decadal growth	Percent	18.92	17.1
Density	Per Sq. Km.	340	398
Sex Ratio	Females per 1000 Males	935	958
Literacy	Percent	63.25	72.19
a. Male	Percent	71.28	77.85
b. Female	Percent	54.61	66.27
Urban Population	Percent	12.90	14.10
a. Urban Male	Percent	53.41	51.39
b. Urban Female	Percent	46.58	48.61
Rural Population	Percent	87.10	85.90
a. Rural Male	Percent	51.43	51.03
b. Rural Female	Percent	48.57	48.97

**Source:** *Economic Survey of Assam, 2013-2014*

### *Nalbari*

Nalbari is an administrative district in Assam in India. The word Nalbari means a place of bulrush. The British Railway Engineers created the name in A.D. 1890-91. The previous name of Nalbari was Satra, Govindapur, Khata etc. There are 9 Taluks, 456 villages, and 11 towns in Nalbari district. Nalbari has 155248 families, a population of 771639, of which 396006 are males and 375633 are females. It is situated in the lower region of the Brahmaputra Valley and dividends its boundaries with Barpeta, Baksa, and Kamrup districts. The rate of total literateness of the Nalbari District, according to the 2011 census, is 79.89% as against 80.95% in 2001. The rural literacy rate is 78.44%, while the urban rate is 91.46%. Male literacy is 85.58%, Rural 84.38%, and Urban 95.24%. Female literacy is 73.85% consisting of Rural 72.14% and Urban 87.48%. The total literacy rate of the state as a total is 73.18%. The details about the population of the Nalbari district are presented in the following Table no 2.

**Table 2:** *Population of Nalbari district at a Peek*

Particulars	Unit	2001 Census	2011 Census
Population	Lakh	6.89	7.72
a. Male	Lakh	3.56	3.96
b. Female	Lakh	3.32	3.75
Decadal Growth	Percent	14.21	11.99
Density	Per Sq. Km.	683	733
Sex Ratio	Females per 1000 Males	932	949
Literacy	Percent	72.66	78.63
a. Male	Percent	80.95	84.36
b. Female	Percent	63.71	72.57

**Source:** 2011 census report

## Significance of the Study

Primary education has a noteworthy role in the complete field of education. It is measured as the groundwork stage of the life of a child. It assists a child to become a civic citizen of society. It offers nation-building of state education. It regulates the eminence of all stages of education. One's entire life depends on the acquaintance they fold during elementary. Primary education plays a very significant role in children's physical, mental, and emotional facets; hereafter, preserving good quality education is important. Teacher plays a boundless role in conveying knowledge to society. They have sacrificed themselves from the ancient period to the present to build a knowledge-based society. Teachers directed the students from the dimness of unfamiliarity to the light of knowledge and helped to keep the spotlight or civilization scorching. Primary school teachers have more obligations to educate the children. Because primary education is the commencement of the formal education system, and the quality of the total education system is reliant on the raw materials of pupils into dedicated and quick-witted human beings. However, sometimes, it is seen that primary school teachers face various problems connected to school life and real-life situations, directly hindering the education system. The researcher selected this topic to discover those problems and generate consciousness among the teachers.

## Objectives of the Study

The present study was carried out for the following purposes-

- i. To study the professional problems connected with primary school teachers in the Nalbari District.
- ii. To study the personal problems primary school teachers face in the Nalbari District.

## Delimitations of the Study

The delimitations of the present study are as follows-

- i. The present study has been delimited to the Nalbari district only.
- ii. The present study has been delimited to primary school teachers only.
- iii. The present study has only been delimited to 20 lower primary schools in Nalbari district.

## Methods

The descriptive survey method was used for the present study. The data required for the present study were collected from 40 teachers of lower primary schools in Nalbari District. In addition, secondary data were collected from various sources such as – government offices, institutions, census reports, and websites to accomplish the study's objectives.

## Sampling

Sampling is the method of choosing a sample from the total population. In the present study, the investigator has accepted a purposive sampling technique. There are nine subdivisions and four educational blocks in Nalbari. A total of three blocks have been chosen for this study.

## Tools

The standard and quality of research depend on using effective and dependable tools for the research work. The researcher usually uses two types of devices for the investigation. In this study, the investigator used a self-developed tool for the analysis.

## Analysis and Interpretation of Data

### *First Objective*

To study the professional problems connected with primary school teachers in the Nalbari District.

**Table 3:** *Responses of Teachers related to their professional problems*

Question No.	Question	Responses of Teachers		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Are you completely proficient?	13	27	32.5%	67.5%
2	Are you formulating a lesson plan before going to teach?	15	25	37.5%	62.5%
3	Do you attain any short-term course/ refresher program during the year/month?	12	28	30%	70%
4	Have there been language communication problems between teachers and students?	10	30	25%	75%
5	Do you face any problems in using teaching aids in the classroom?	25	15	62.5%	37.5%
6	Has there been a good relationship between teachers and parents?	9	31	22.5%	77.5%
7	Do you attain any remedial classes at school?	12	28	30%	70%

**Source:** *Investigators' Field survey*

Table 3 indicates that in question no.1, out of the 40 teachers, 13 respond in the yes category, and 27 respond in the no variety. That means 32.5% of teachers are completely proficient, and 67.5% are not. Question No. 2 shows that, out of the 40 teachers, 15 give a response in the yes category, and 25 give a reaction in the no category. It indicates that 37.5%

of teachers formulate lesson plans, and 62.5% of teachers do not formulate lesson plans before going to teach. Question No. 3 demonstrates that 12 teachers responded yes, and 28 answered no. It indicates that 30% of teachers accomplish short-term course/refresher programs, and 70% still need to accomplish a short-term course/refresher program during the year/month. Question No. 4 displays that out of the 40 teachers, ten responded yes, and 30 responded no. It specifies that 25% of teacher face language communication problems, and 75% of teachers do not face language communication problems with students in the classroom. Question No. 5 illustrates those 25 teachers (62.5%) out of 40 face problems using teaching aids in the school, and 15 teachers (37.5%) do not face any problems using teaching aids in the classroom. Question No. 6 indicates that nine teachers respond yes, which means 22.5% of teachers have good relations with parents, and 31 teachers provide a no response, representing 77.5% of teachers who do not have good relationships with parents. Question No.7 demonstrates that out of 40 teachers, 12 (30%) attain remedial classes at school, and 28 (70%) do not attain any restorative classes.

### **Second Objective**

To study the personal problems primary school teachers face in the Nalbari District.

**Table 4:** *Responses of Teachers related to their personal problems*

Question No.	Question	Responses of Teachers		Percentage	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Are you gratified with your teaching occupation?	25	15	62.5%	37.5%
2	Are you anguishing from any financial problems?	22	18	55%	45%
3	Do you get remuneration regularly?	35	5	87.5%	12.5%
4	Do you agonize over transport communication problem?	23	17	57.5%	42.5%
5	Do you need help understanding the lesson?	12	28	30%	70%

**Source:** *Investigator's Field Survey*

Table 4 indicates that in question no. 1, out of 40 teachers, 25 give responses in the yes category and 15 in the no category. That means 62.5% of teachers are gratified with their teaching profession, and 37.5% are dissatisfied. Question No. 2 indicates that out of 40 teachers, 22 give responses yes and 18 give no answers, which means 55% of teachers are anguishing any financial problem, and the rest of 45% are not anguishing any financial situation. Question No. 3 illustrates those 35 teachers out of 40 give responses in the yes category, and the other five provide answers in the no class. This means 87.5% of teachers get their remuneration regularly, and 12.5% of teachers do not earn their income regularly. Question No. 5 shows that 12 teachers gave their responses of yes, and 28 teachers gave their answers of no. This means that 30% of teachers find it challenging to understand the lesson, and 70% need help understanding it.

## **Major Findings**

The significant findings of the present study are discussed below-

- i. A virtuous teacher must have proficient training, including pre-service and in-service. Through this training, a teacher should develop their acquaintance and familiarize themselves with the modern expansion in the subject area. This training also advances the professional effectiveness of the teachers. Nevertheless, in the present study, the investigator found that in the area of Nalbari District, many teachers need to be more proficient.
- ii. Lesson plan is an outline of a particular lesson. A lesson plan is the instructor's roadmap of what students want to learn and how it will be done successfully throughout class time. Teachers should formulate lesson plans before going to explain any subject. However, the investigator found that more than half of the teachers do not develop lesson plans before teaching.
- iii. Short-term program/Refresher program is a training program in which teachers can advance their acquaintance or skills and learn about innovative expansions connected to their teaching career. In the present study, the investigator found an abysmal percentage of primary school teachers attain short-term courses/Refresher programs during the year/month.
- iv. Language is a medium of communication that assists us in prompting and conveying the thoughts, feelings, and emotions of two individuals. Due to variances in language time, it is understood that in the classroom teacher does not comprehend the student's vocal sounds, and the student does not comprehend what the teacher is going to teach. In this study, the investigator found that the least primary school teachers confronted language communication problems in Nalbari District.
- v. Teaching aids benefit the teacher to explain any subject matter effortlessly and help the student to learn quickly and interestingly. Teaching aids are very appropriate for little children. However, many teachers do not know the instructions on how to use teaching aids in the classroom, so they confront difficulties when they are going to teach with the help of teaching aids. In this study, the investigator found that many primary school teachers face problems using teaching aids when they are going to teach.
- vi. The progress of an educational institution not only hinges upon the other variables but also depends upon the bond between teachers and parents. A positive connection between teachers and parents improves children's academic achievement, social competencies, and emotional well-being. However, in the present study, the investigator found that the relationship between parents and teachers is unsatisfactory.
- vii. Remedial classes can be called extra or bonus classes and are a good way of helping the students to the fullest. In primary school also, remedial classes are essential. Because in this stage children are not mature and all subjects are new. To explain their elementary notion about the subject matter, restorative class is vastly needed. However, in this study, the investigator found that a few teachers accomplish remedial classes in primary schools in Nalbari District.
- viii. Teachers' gratification significantly impacts their lessons since they directly transfer knowledge to students. Teachers gratified with their occupation are more likely to teach effectively and adequately. Without gratification, a teacher cannot teach in the actual amount. However, in this study, the investigator found that most of the primary school teachers of Nalbari District are not gratified with their teaching profession.
- ix. an economic problem still occurs though the government tries to provide adequate remuneration regularly. In this study, the investigator found that most primary school teachers were anguished over financial problems. Therefore, it is said that the state of primary school teachers is not reasonable.
- x. In this study, the investigator found that a maximum number of primary school teachers get their salaries regularly.

- xi. In Assam, transportation communication problems dropping day after day. However, still, in rural areas, people face transport communication problems. In this study, the investigator found that though Nalbari is a city area, schools are located in remote areas away from the town, and teachers of those schools need transport communication problems.
- xii. Teachers need to comprehend subject matter intensely and compliantly to benefit students by generating valuable cognitive maps, re-counting ideas to one another, and addressing misapprehensions. However, in the present study, the investigator found that a minimum number of teachers need help understanding the lesson.

## **Suggestions**

Based on the present study's findings, the investigator has assumed some treasured suggestions for additional research. These suggestions are stated below-

- i. Proficiency leads to skillfulness. In this study, the investigator found that the minimum number of primary school teachers must be fully proficient in Nalbari District. This is straight pretentious on the primary education system. So, Government should provide training to the teacher.
- ii. Primary-level teachers should formulate lesson plans before teaching any subject in the classroom. Teaching primary-level students is not everybody's cup of tea. It is a very hard-hitting job to attract their attention. So, the teacher should make a striking lesson plan with their skillful activity.
- iii. For eliminating monotony in teaching, refresher/short-term courses are essential. It benefits the teacher in implementing new methods and techniques to make the teaching-learning process effective. It also helps the teacher to bring up-to-date knowledge. So, the teacher should accomplish a refresher program or any other short-term courses during the year/month.
- iv. In primary school, it is not conceivable to teach the children with the help of the lecture method. Teaching aid is essential to teach them correctly. So, the primary school teacher should know how to use teaching aids in the classroom.
- v. Many students need extra or bonus support. So, teachers should accomplish remedial classes at primary school because all subjects are new for the children. It may lead to wastage and stagnation if they feel tough on the issues.
- vi. The primary school teachers must have consistent meetings with parents to keep them rationalized with the info about the advancement of their children.
- vii. The government should implement different policies to give the teacher monetary sustenance.
- viii. The government should attempt to diminish the transportation communication problem.

## **Conclusion**

Primary education endorses the speedy development of acceptable and gross motor skills in children as they do abundant activities and play. This comprises whistling songs and saying basils that give children a sense of way and space. On the other hand, primary education permits children to improve their reading and math skills. Though the quality of education they get is contingent on the school selected. Therefore, parents and guardians must look for a significant aspect of quality. Besides this, education is an enduring paragon since it regulates a person's future. It makes a person an operative member of society because the knowledge gained at this level is like a form of acquaintance. School is a very protuberant thing in a child's

life. It communicates countless deals in their life. In primary school, the teacher plays a very noteworthy role in the appropriate development of the children. The government also takes the ingenuity to help the teacher. However, primary school teachers still need help to achieve primary education's goal. Because still, a massive number of teachers need to be fully proficient. So, they take numerous problems inside or outside the classroom, which undesirably influences the primary education system. By studying, the investigator found that several research was completed on primary education. However, still, in primary education, lots of problem ascends. In the present study, the investigator attempts to distinguish the issues of the primary school teacher because the accomplishment of an educational institution is contingent upon the teacher, and teachers can help the institution in progress by providing fruitful teaching. For productive education, a teacher must acquire adequate pedagogical knowledge, teaching skills, and positive attitudes toward the teaching profession. It can be attained through well-organized and active pre-service and in-service teacher training programs. After this study, the investigator can accomplish that the primary school teacher of the Nalbari district needs help. To remove these problems for teachers, the government should take charge of enlightening the quality of primary education.

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