

## Book Review

**Title of the Book:** Human Rights Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Issues and Challenges  
**Edited by:** Pranab Saikia  
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*-By Minakshi Goswami, a student of National Law University, Assam (LL.M. with human rights specialization).*

Human rights are the most basic, universal and inalienable rights that every person is entitled to by virtue of being human. Education on these human rights covers education, training and information imparted with the aim of building a universal culture of human rights. At the contemporary period the concept of human rights is gaining popularity; similarly there is also a rise in the abuses of human rights of people. Hence, the concept of human rights education holds much significance. Along with imparting knowledge about human rights and the mechanisms for protection of these rights; human rights education develops the skills needed to promote, defend and apply human rights in our daily lives. This book, titled '*Human Rights Education for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Issues and Challenges*' is a collection of ten selected research papers presented at a UGC sponsored National Seminar organized by Department of Education, Raha College.

The **first chapter** of this edited volume is a paper, titled '**Promotion of Human Rights Through Human Rights Education : Opinion of the B.Ed Students of Parijat Academy Teacher Education Institute, Dibrugarh**' is authored by **Dr. Asomi Chaliha**, Assistant Professor in Education, Dibrugarh University and **Rajen Mandal**, ex-student, Department of Education, Dibrugarh University. Realisation of the human rights would be very difficult

unless people know and claim these rights. Human rights education helps in creating awareness about these rights. In this paper, the two authors have confined their study to 50 B.Ed. students (session 2015-2016) of Parijat Academy Teacher education institute, Dibrugarh. The method of data collection used is self structured questionnaire containing 20 questions. The responses of the students are shown in percentage form for each question asked. In this paper a humble attempt has been made by the authors to identify the level of opinion of the respondent B. Ed students on the role of human rights education in the promotion of human rights.

**Chapter 2- 'A Study on Human Rights Violation of Women and Scope of Human Rights Education for its Improvement (With Special Reference to ST Women of Barkhetri Block of Nalbari District'** is authored by **Bhaskarjyoti Das**, ex-student of Gauhati University. This paper is an extensive study with the data beautifully tabled and well explained. With a brief introduction on what constitutes human rights, the young author views that woman, children and the backward sections of the society are more prone to human rights abuses. As the scope of the present paper is confined to women rights; the author tries to pen picture the actual position of women's rights in the country by citing the statistics of the Reports of National Crime Records Bureau. In this study the researcher has made a comparative study (between the two ST tribes, i.e. Boro and SaraniyaKachari) to find out the situation of ST women's human rights abuses in Barkheri Block of Nalbari District. The total sample used by the researcher is 80 (50 Boro and 30 SaraniyaKachari). The researcher has also made an attempt to highlight the level of human rights literacy amongst the sample population, their awareness on women's rights, types of violence that these women face etc. This work is finely concluded with a set of suggestions and a part

specifically explaining how human rights education will help in strengthening women.

**Chapter 3** of this book is a paper titled, **‘Economic Status of Tea Tribes Women of Khowang Development Block of Dibrugarh District’** co-authored by **Binoy Munda**, Research Assistant, Department of Education, Dibrugarh University; **Devajyoti Gogoi**, Assistant Professor in Education, Dibrugarh University and **Manashee Gogoi**, Assistant Professor in Education, Dibrugarh University. In this paper, the researchers have confined their study to analysing the economic status of tea tribes women of Khowang Development block of Dibrugarh District. Tea gardens are the most vital part of Assam economy and a huge majority of Assam’s population works in tea production. Assam contributes about 51% of the total tea produced by India and about 17% of the workers of Assam are engaged in the tea industry. However, the poor working conditions and discriminations that these workers are experiencing are well known to all. In this paper descriptive survey method is used to study the problem identified. In this work a sample of 60 tea tribes women (out of which 30 are from tea garden area and other 30 tea tribes women are from village area) are purposively selected. In this study a structured interview schedule containing 21 close ended questions was used as a tool for data collection. However, whenever the need was felt the researchers have also relied upon a few open-ended questions. The findings of this work are systematically put forward. The concluding part of this paper classifies illiteracy and lack of awareness to be the major reasons why the women workers of tea gardens suffer in all aspects of their life. Hence the last remark put forward in this paper is to create awareness among these underprivileged sections for their betterment and equal development with rest of the society.

**Chapter four** of this book, **‘Human Rights Awareness of Teacher- Trainees of Asom Sikshak**

**Prasikshan Mahabidyaya, Lankeshwar, Guwahati: A Study’** is co-authored by **Birina Boro**, Research Scholar, Gauhati University; **Debajani Borah**, Research Scholar, Gauhati University and **Sayanika Deka**, Research Scholar, Gauhati University. The authors of this paper introduce the subject matter of study with a beautiful description on the significance of peace in a society. Peace in a society is greatly affected when rights of people are been abused. Therefore, it is very important to raise the level of awareness of the masses on the inherent rights that every person is entitled to by virtue of being human. This paper is an attempt at measuring the level of human rights awareness among the teacher trainees of Asom Sikshak Prasikshan Mahabidyaya, Lankeshwar. The tool used for collection of data in this research is a self structured human rights awareness questionnaire containing 20 basic questions. In this work, 60 teacher trainees were asked to fill the questionnaire with ‘yes’ or ‘no’ responses. The responses collected are finely tabled and well elaborated by the author. For the convenience of understanding the researcher has also provided the percentage of people for both positive and negative responses.

**Dhruba Kalita** (Deptment of Education, Goalpara College) authored paper, titled **‘A Study on Education and Human Rights of Rural Women with Special Referenceto Goalpara District’** finds place as the **fifth chapter** in this book. The researcher of this paper views that development and progress of a society is possible through empowerment of its female section. However, the literacy rate of women belonging to the Goalpara district is not satisfactory and hence this paper attempts to measure the level of women’s awareness on vital matters of rights of citizens. The researcher, in this paper has relied upon questionnaire and personal interviews to collect the required data from 100 adult women chosen randomly. The author has tabled and analysed the data gathered

and have also highlighted the major findings of the study.

**Chapter six** of this edited volume is titled **‘Right to Education Act, 2009 as a Powerful Instrument to Remove Child-Labour from the Society with Special Reference to Dhubri District of Assam – A Study’**. Child labour has evolved as a contemporary social evil that has attracted the attention of government as well as the civil society organizations. A significant number of steps and initiatives are been taken in order to eradicate this evil from the affected societies. The passing of the Right to Education Act 2009 definitely had a lot of positive impacts towards achieving a child labour free India. The present paper authored by **Dwipmallika Das**, Part-time Lecturer in Education, North Gauhati College and **Smita Boro**, Pat-time Lecturer in Education, North Gauhati College is an attempt to weight the contributions of the Right to Education Act 2009 towards eradication of child labour. The area of this research work is confined to Dhubri District of Assam and the researcher has relied upon information schedules as a method of data collection. The authors in this paper have selected the representative sample by using the method of Non-Probability Sampling. In order to trace the impact of Right to Education Act in eradicating the evils of child labour; the researcher have made a comparative study on the percentage of children attending school six years prior to passing of the act with six years after the Act was passed. This paper also makes a comparison on the percentage of child engaged as labours six years prior to the passing of the Act and six years after the Act was passed. This paper is an extensive study on the impact of Right to Education Act towards elimination of child labour. The research value of this paper is further enhanced by inclusion of ten well founded and well justified suggestions that will prove helpful in eliminating the practice of child labour.

The **seventh chapter** of this book is titled **‘Status of Human Rights Education among Rural Women: A Study of ST and OBC Women in Two Villages under Raha Development Block, Nagaon, Assam’**. With a beautiful portrayal of the atrocities and discriminations that women have been experiencing since ages; the author in this paper rightly puts forward his argument as to why he confines the scope of this paper to women’s human rights literacy. The author of this paper, **Gajondra Mohan Dev Sarma**, is an Associate Professor in Geography, Raha College. The researcher in this paper has relied upon a self structured question schedule to interview randomly chosen 30 ST families and 30 OBC families of ‘Mikirati’ and ‘Lauphulabari’ village under Raha Development Block in Nagaon District, Assam. The researcher has made a successful attempt to put a clear picture of the economic and educational background, population, as well as the male-female ratio of these two villages before the prospective readers. Household and population pattern in both the two villages, male-female ratio, age structures, educational level, economic activities of both genders, nature and type of abuses of rights of women are beautifully put forward with the help of self-explanatory diagrams, charts and tables. In order to identify the literacy level of the ST and OBC women on human rights, the researcher has used a self structured questionnaire containing six most basic questions. The conclusions drawn from this question schedule shows the poor awareness of the respondent women on human rights concepts. After a detailed study on the level of human rights literacy amongst the women of ‘Mikirati’ and ‘Lauphulabari’ village; the author concludes his paper with three vital recommendations. Firstly, the author stresses on the need to organise public meetings, seminars and other such programmes on human rights education. Secondly, the researcher urges that government agencies, non-governmental organizations as well as

academicians must come forward and contribute their share in spreading human rights literacy among rural women. Lastly, human rights are for everyone. Enjoyment of these basic rights is possible only when people are taught to fight for their own rights and to respect the rights of others. Hence, education, or more specifically human rights education should be imparted to everyone irrespective of the learner's gender.

**Chapter 8- Human Rights Awareness among Women: A Study on Employed and Unemployed Women of Guwahati City** is authored by Minakshi Goswami, National Law University. The author views that imparting human rights education is not a mere intellectual exercise, but is a combination of education and training. Education helps in spreading human rights literacy and training makes the learners skilled enough to defend their own rights as well as the rights of others. The author in this paper also highlights the significance of human rights education for women and the international legal instruments that contain provisions relating to human rights education. This paper is an attempt to analyse the level of human rights literacy among employed and unemployed women of Guwahati City. A self structured questionnaire containing 11 questions has been used by the researcher to find out if at all there is any gap in the level of human rights literacy among employed and unemployed women. It is a simple random sampling wherein the questionnaires were distributed among 50 employed and 50 unemployed women.

**Chapter 9** is **Pinkumoni Kumari**, Part-time Lecturer in Education, North Gauhati College authored paper, titled **'Education on the Human Rights of Women as a Vehicle for Changing the Society with Special Reference to Kamrup (Rural) District a Study'**. Society is dynamic; which changes with time and advancements of civilization. Human rights, that holds much significance in a contemporary society is

also a product of evolution of mankind and their desire for peace and prosperity. Peaceful co-habitation is possible only when 'conflict of interest' is minimized and people are taught to respect each other's choices and decisions. Education is a vital means of bringing that change in the society. The author of the present paper, hence, studies how education can bring positive changes with regard to women's enjoyment of the basic human rights. In this paper, descriptive survey method is used. The researcher has relied upon simple random sampling to select 20 women each from six villages for the purpose of data collection. This is a well researched paper with tables and diagrams justifying the arguments of the author.

The **Tenth Chapter** of this edited volume, **'Awareness About Human Rights Among Post Graduate Student'** is authored by **Dr. Rita Rani Talukdar**, Associate Professor in Psychology, Gauhati University and **Sukanya Bora**, Assistant Professor in Psychology, Nono College, Nagaon. The research work of this paper is confined to three broad objectives, viz (a) identifying the level of human rights awareness among 20 post graduate students aged 20-25 years of Gauhati University; (b) comparing the level of human rights literacy among male and female students; and (c) to promote human rights education among the sampled students at the time of data collection. In this study, the researcher have employed the criterion based sampling (purposive sampling) in selecting the sample. The results of this study are properly tabled and explained in a simple way. This paper is not just based on empirical premises investigating the human rights literacy among post graduate students; but is also a well written paper that narrates the history of human rights education as well as the contribution of the United Nations in promoting human rights literacy.

All these ten research papers are based on primary sources of data collection and stands like a

mirror reflecting the actual position of human rights education in the country. A list of references is also added after every paper. This helps readers or people interested for further research on any related topic to rely on them and proceed with the work. Field studies, preparation of questionnaires, graphs, diagrams, and also references made to reliable sources from government departments like the Census reports, reports of the National Crime Records Bureau etc. increases the reliability of the findings of these papers. This book can be referred for study, research, policy implementation purposes. Further, the systematic and detailed studies made by the authors have successfully touched upon gravity of the issues of human rights abuses and the increasing demand of human rights literacy. This book can also be relied upon to carry on further investigations on these important areas of human rights education. All in all this book is a good option for readers and researchers at a fair cost.

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