



**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI
SHORT ABSTRACT OF THESIS**

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Programme of Study : Ph.D.

Thesis Title: A Study of Horizontal Education Inequalities in Bodoland Territorial Area Districts of Assam

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Thesis Submitted to the Department/ Center : HSS

Date of completion of Thesis Viva-Voce Exam : May 12, 2017

Key words for description of Thesis Work : Horizontal education inequalities

SHORT ABSTRACT

This thesis studies educational attainments of different socio-religious groups of population in a particularly political conflicts affected region of Bodoland Territorial Area Districts of Assam. While at the outset the focus is on educational attainments of different socio-religious groups of population in the BTAD, it is however investigated within the context of recurrent political (often violent) conflicts recorded in this region over a period of time. Motivation for taking up this research is two-fold. First BTAD of Assam has been at the center of discussion with respect to violent political conflicts between two or more socio-religious groups of population and the researcher being a Bodo himself had particular interest in studying this region. Secondly the human development achievements (including education) of BTAD are one of the lowest in Assam. While low human development achievements can be the result of various process of underdevelopment, a region such as BTAD has an additional characteristic of being affected by recurrent conflicts.

The economics of development literature and in the recent times, the human development paradigm has dealt with the issue of horizontal inequalities or group based inequalities in specific socio-economic settings. The linkages between political dimensions and other socio-economic dimensions of human development are of great research interest. We have taken help of this literature to understand the two way relationship between political conflicts and underdevelopment. While this thesis does not explicitly focus on the role of political conflicts, it does investigate the presence of horizontal education inequalities in a particularly conflict affected region.

We are asking whether there are significant horizontal education inequalities among the different socio-religious groups of population; and in view of the recurrent conflicts and ensuing political unrests in BTAD, is there an effect on educational outcomes of specific social groups of population. With the help of a probit model, we are also enquiring what are the factors influencing school attendance of children in conflict affected and not affected regions. The sources of information we rely on are the District Informative System for Education (DISE), Indian National Sample Survey Organization's unit level data and primary data collected from the households in two villages of BTAD (one conflict affected and another not-affected).

Analyzing DISE data we found that the conflict prone BTAD region is the most underdeveloped in terms of educational attainments. There is deterioration in quality of learning achievements of the children besides inability to retain them in school education system beyond the lower primary level. Our estimations based on NSSO unit level data show evidence of significant horizontal education inequalities in all the district categories and its level was the highest in BTAD. Among all socio-religious groups, educational attainments of the Muslim and ST were found to be lower than the other groups. Estimating based upon household level cross section data, conflicts are found to have statistically significant and negative impact upon educational attainments of the people. Both the levels of educational attainment and school attendance of children belong to the worst conflict affected groups were found to be significantly lower than other groups. We found evidences of significant and higher levels of horizontal education inequality in the most conflict affected region.

