



Statistics obtained during the field study on the choice of science and technology in the district of Purba Medinipur

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Abstract

The district of Purba Medinipur happens to be a rich field for any kind of research work because the attention of other districts and the states and also of the other countries of the world is now concentrated upon this region after the it was proved beyond doubt by the recent results of Madhyamik and Higher Secondary examinations that this place, once unknown to other parts of the world, is the place where the students of this district reading within the schools (secondary and higher secondary), colleges, both general and professional, and those outside the district and state that the pupils of this place possess some extra capacity to imbibe the essence of life and its education.

Keywords: statistics, science and technology, attitudes of secondary school students

1. Introduction

In view of the added acumen of the students of the district the present researcher was attracted to this district and not others of its near or far counterparts. This Purba Medinipur District is neither very urban nor also very culturally rural for there are very cultured towns like Tamluk, Contai and Haldia as there are also very rural areas like those of its south-western corner of Ramnagar, Egra and Khejuri blocks. Not only that, there are also Very undeveloped rural areas near these developed towns of Tamluk, Contai and Haldia blocks. The students who read in the schools and colleges of the district, when asked about their choice of subjects of education, mostly came out with the reply that science and technical subjects invariably have some edges over the other subjects of studies including the arts, commerce and vocational streams of studies. The positive trend to science and technology was affirmed by some detailed discussion with the students of Tamralipta Mahavidyalaya, Tamluk; Contai Prabhat Kumar College, Contai and the Haldia Government College, Haldia.

Tamralipta Mahavidyalaya is the oldest degree college of the undivided Midnapore District. Being nearer to Calcutta, the capital of India during the British Raj, Tamluk enjoyed some advantages over other educational institutions of the district and states. Many of this Tamralipta College's pass-outs are now serving in higher posts in the administration of the state and the county and quite a large number of them are also serving as eminent doctors, engineers and other technical hands in the countries abroad. The present researcher had the opportunity to talk to some of them and all these people holding higher posts in the administration and laboratories within the country and abroad have admitted that they could not rise to that eminent heights if they were to study other subjects than science and technology. The opinions of these academics were sought because they were also at one time students who had to take their timely decisions at two very

vital points of their academic career; (i) first after passing the Madhyamik Examination and again (ii) after passing the Higher Secondary exam.

2. Timely Decision

The people who were thus interviewed came from almost all strata of the society. There were people whose parents were extremely poor. There were also people coming from the middle class background. Only a few of them were found to have come from the rich and the solvent families. Some of the persons interviewed had not much difficulty in choosing their subjects of study (scientific or technological subjects) for they had people in the family who played decisive roles in the fixation of their choice of streams of their pursuit of education. Their family had also not much difficulty in providing the cost of their science education. But the case of the students belonging to the middle class and poor families had a tough time in making the decision. In most cases the choices were their own and at times they did not know if at all they would be able to complete their studies which they had chosen taking greater the risks in their own hands. It is also a fact that some of these respondents could not complete their science or technical education and had to either change the course midway or were forced to take up other menial jobs for survival. But the respondent from both the sides of successful academics, doctors and engineers and the drop-outs all admitted that science subjects were their first preference and it was their firm belief that if at all students are to sign in life in a financially developing but technically backward country like India they must follow science and technical subjects taking the risk of financial and other problems whatsoever.

3. The Minority Factor

A large number of the people of the district belong to the minority communities. An authentic statistics has been

calculated after detailed consultations with the students of this district belonging to the Muslims who come first in the series of minority population and a few of the other minority communities: the Buddhists, the Jains, and Anglo-Indians, but the few students of these sections of the people who were available for interviews expressed their likeness in favour of science and technical subjects. Some 10/11 families were visited where the students have either signed as bright students or are serving in higher posts in different fields. The facts that were available during the interviews sometimes with the students and academics themselves and at other times with their parents and siblings were all pointer to the fact that science and technology related subjects are far ahead of other arts, commerce or vocational streams so far as the matter of livelihood and job-satisfaction is concerned.

4. Science in the Growth of Haldia:

It was a great pleasure to be able to conduct the research work on such an important topic of the preference and spread of science and science related subjects and that in a district which has recorded its credit as the most advanced district in the state in education and academic activities. Its geographical location, its transport facilities, that is, its communication advantages with the state capital through the National Highway No. 41, its political involvement during the Independence movement of the country and its fast developing port at Haldia along with the growing popularity of Digha as a sea resort, etc. Through Haldia port the district is connected with the major sea-routes of the world and through National Highway No. 41 it is well connected with the other parts of the world. It was seen that with the Calcutta port gradually losing its importance, Haldia on the other hand became more and more important and the impact of the development all over the world oozed into the country through this district, particularly through the Haldia industrial town.

Some very wonderful characteristic features of the students of this district and they were also found to be fascinating. The student community of this district is constituted of children coming from different walks of life. The 25 blocks of this district under the four sub-divisions of Tamluk, Haldia, Contai and Egra are a home to people belonging to various religious groups of the Hindus, Muslims, Christians Jain and Parsees. Though Hindus constitute the major part of the population of the district, there are also Muslims who equally enjoy the educational facilities available in the government, government-aided, private and other religious educational institutions. Many of the students of all these communities are equal in every respect but only the economic factor, etc, made the probe very interesting and thoroughly enjoyable. It is a common knowledge that religion puts no hurdle in the way of education. It has been seen that the few students who read in the schools: particularly, the secondary and higher secondary schools, are properly aware of the high benefits of science-education and the spread and progress of the science and technology in the outside world. Many poor guardians were also found to be eager to see their wards reading the science stream. A large number of students: teachers, both of secondary and higher secondary schools, medical and engineering colleges and other vocational streams are from the Muslim community. Some people from the Sikh, Jain and

Parsee communities were also approached and they responded to the queries put to them with due gusto and their responses were mostly in favour of science education. A few elderly people were so much emphatic in their praise of science subject in comparison to other streams of studies that they cited many wonderful inventions made by the scientists of this country down the ages. It was a very nice experience to hear from the people in the remote areas of the rich past of these areas with their parents at home and the elderly people in the villages are engaged in various professions of agriculture, fishing, pisciculture, floriculture, etc, and the members of the majority community and the masons, hawkers, embroiderers, rickshaw-pullers, toto, bus, truck and lorry drivers, etc.

5. A Comparative Study

A comparative study of the outlook of the students of three important blocks of the district: Mahishadal, Contai and Bhawanpur (I & II) may be taken into account to ascertain the rate of difference in the attitude to science of the students of the district making a contrast between the urban and rural students. Mahishadal block is flanked by the two towns of Tamluk in the north-west and Haldia in the south. But it is the district, which, like Contai, is far ahead in the estimation of the people of other blocks in the districts because it has made very quick progress in the last few years. Mahishadal had a great role to play during the country's struggle for independence and Contai is recognized as the most educated block of the district. The students reading in the colleges of these two blocks are constituted of those students coming to study mostly from affluent middle class section of the society. Many of them study science subjects, but the few students coming from poor families are also almost at par with them. In some cases students from very poor and illiterate families have shone remarkably in science subjects afterwards becoming eminent doctors, engineers and scientists and they are at present serving the nation and foreign countries in various capacities.

The Bhawanpur (I & II) block of the district has made tremendous economic progress in the recent times. Side by side with agriculture and small business many people of the block have taken up the hair trade as their main occupation. The small-scale industry called the hair trade is the major livelihood of many families of the block at present. And those who do the brisk business dealing with human hair are from the Muslim community. They gather abandoned human hair from the people of the villages and they process the hair so collected with some small machines. Now these machines and these small factories are no different from the inventions of science and technology used during the Industrial Revolution in Victorian England that made England the most affluent industrial country in the world. The students of the urban towns of Contai and Mahishadal in most cases lag far behind the students of Khejuri and Ramnagar blocks where people see less fruits of science being used expect the minor agricultural apparatus of power tiller and the insecticide sprayer.

6. Conclusions

Statistics in the Secondary school students in science group

after verification as experience of the student regarding the science group in different school. Students who are will to read science are usually motivated by the following factors of science study. Education in science aims at developing well defined abilities in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. Learning science is a response to the curiosity and capacity to wonder present in every human being. Learning of science in the school enhances the spirit of enquiry creativity and objectivity. It aims at developing ability of knowing and doing something in a practical way. It also nurtures the ability to explore and seek solution of the problems related to environment and daily life situations. Science concerns itself with the fundamental knowledge of the universe, world, and its environment. The learners try to find out the basic principles which are applied in finding solution to problem in different branches of study. Science subject can be classified in different domains. But all of them explain phenomena on the basis of observation as well as experiment to arrive at the truth.

7. References

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