

# Nature of Assamese Self-Improvement Literature

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## ABSTRACT

*Self-improvement literature is a popular genre. The author of the self-improvement literature provides instructions for readers to solve the problems regarding self-improvement. Positive thinking and success are main themes of self-improvement literature. Self-improvement literature started as a genre in America. Assamese self-improvement genre is written in both original and translated. In 1903 Lakshminath Bezbaroa published the first assamese self-improvement book 'Kamat Krititva Labhibar Sanket'. Assamese self-improvement literature has its own nature and characteristics. The aim of the study is to explore the characteristics of Assamese self-Improvement literature.*

**KEYWORD:** Assamese, Self-improvement, Literature, Nature.

## I.INTRODUCTION

Self-improvement literature is a widely read popular genre. The author of self-improvement literature instructs methods to overcome the personal problem. Positive thinking, success, happiness, mental Health these are the main themes of self-improvement literature. The tradition of what is popularly called self-improvement literature is obviously a Western(American) tradition, but one could easily argue that its origins go way back in time, to what some authors call wisdom literature.<sup>1</sup>The early precursors of Self-improvement literature are the *Vedas*(1500 B.C.),the *Bhagavad Gita* (400-300 B.C.),the *Dhammapada*(5<sup>th</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> C.),*Koran*,*Bible*.<sup>2</sup>These oldest written books have some instructions with the goal of personal development. Self-improvement genre firstly originated in USA.It is generally accepted that self-improvement literature started in eighteen century with the publication of Benjamin Franklin's *Autobiography*<sup>3</sup>.Assamese self-improvement genre is written in both original and translated and these books are becoming an agent that provides support and guidance of reader.Assamese self-improvement books are written by many assamese writers. They are Homen Borgohain,Prahlad kumar Boruah, Devakanta Handique,Pradyut Kakoti, Runumi Sharma, Gautom Prasad Baruah,Mausam Gogoi,Naranarayan

Mahanta,Prakash Kalita and Bikash Kalita,Nirmala Devi ect.Now assamese self-improvement literature is developing like other genres of literature.Assamese self-improvement literature has its own Nature and history. The aim of this research work is to introduce and explore the characteristics and themes of assamese self-improvement Literature.

## II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of this research are-

- To Introduce the Assamese Self-improvement literature.
- ·To study the definition and characteristics of Assamese self-improvement literature.
- To analyze the theme and nature of writing of Assamese self-improvement literature.

## III. METHODOLOGY

The study is mainly based on Primary and Secondary data. Primary data includes the Assamese self-improvement books and the secondary data includes research articles and thesis, journals and internet sources.

The methodology followed in this study is analytical.

## IV. DISCUSSION

*Self-Improvement* means the act or process of improving oneself by one's own action. Oxford Dictionary defines Self-improvement as *the process by which a person improves their knowledge, status, or character by their own effort.* <sup>4</sup> According to Stine *human beings are always in search of ways to resolve personal problems or expand their mental, physical, social, and professional skills, resulting in the constant demand for self –improvement books.*<sup>5</sup>Self-improvement literature is a broad genre, where the author gives advice on personality and skill development, mental-health, moral values, ethics, and also instructs steps to solve the personal problems of life and gives the way to self-development by one's own effort. The main theme of this genre is happiness, success and positive thinking about life.

In real sense,Assamese self-improvement literature starts its first phase of development in the 20th century. First Assamese self-improvement writing was published in the first assamese magazine *Orunodoi*(1846). *Parisramar fal,Budhi bridhi hoar pas prakar upai,sonatakoisram bhal* are the self-

improvement writing published in *Orunodoi* magazine. The first Assamese Self- improvement book was *Kamat Krititva Labhibar Sanket* (1903) written by Lakshminath Bezbaroa. In 1915 Satyanath Bora published his self-improvement book *Sarathi*.

After independence social cultural, political changes played a vital role in Assamese self-improvement literature. The popularity and the number of Assamese self-improvement books increased after the independence period. Post-independence Assamese self-improvement literature can be divided into two parts as **original** and **translated**. 21<sup>th</sup> century was a turning period for the history of Assamese self-improvement literature. In this period the western self-improvement books are translated to assamese language. The western self-improvement writer Dale Carnegie, Samuel Smiles, Napoleon Hill, Bertrand Russell books are translated in Assamese. The name of Assamese translated self-improvement books we can take translator Prafulla kataki's self-improvement books *Swabalamban (Self-Help)*, *Charitrabodh (Character)*, *Mitya Yayita (Thrift)*, *Kartavya Bodh (Duty)*. Another one translator of assamese self-improvement literature is Aminur Rahman. He translated Dale Carnegie self-improvement books *Atma Vishwas, prerana aaru Safalata (How to make an Habit of Succeeding)*, *Prabhav Bistar Aru Bandhu labh (How to stop worrying and start Living)*. After independence era assamese original self-improvement literature got a rapid development. In this period all the pioneers of assamese original self-improvement literature are Homen Borgohain, Prahlad Kumar Baruah, Manik Das, Pradyut Kakoti, Mousam Gogoi, Goutam Prasad Baruah. In original self-improvement literature, it includes- Homen Borgohain's self-improvement books *Aatma dipo bhaba (1996)*, *Jibanar para ami ki bisaru (2001)*, *Pragyar Sadhana (2002)*, *Kam karar ananda (2007)*. Prahlad Kumar boruah was another prominent author of assamese self-improvement literature. Prahlad kumar Baruah's self-Improvement books are *Jeevan kala (2002)*, *Jeevane mok ki dile*, *Jeevan samudra (2005)*, *Tathapi Jiyai thakibo lagibo (2004)*, *Barnamay mon barnamay jeevan (2005)*. The Author of Assamese self-improvement books offer guidance for the readers. They provides technique and advice for wealth, happiness and positive thinking about life.

Assamese self-improvement literature has some of its own nature and characteristics. The theme and nature of writing of Assamese self-improvement literature is different from creative literature. The theme of the Assamese self improvement genre is related to real life of people and real things of human beings. Positive thinking, success, happiness, mental health are the main themes of self- improvement literature. So

this genre is not fiction. Assamese self-improvement literature is a nonfiction genre. The main aim of the genre is to give advice to readers for personal development. So this genre has a universal theme. All self improvement books gives a positive message to readers. The author of assamese self-improvement writer uses a simple language so, all catagories reader can understand the language.

Self-improvement literature gives advice to the reader for self-development process. The self-improvement writer use some real life example with the main theme. The author talks about his own life, life experience. Anecdotes from the life of author often used in assamese self-improvement genre. The author using quotes of philosopher or author. The author include motivational story and some example with the main topic of self -improvement genre.

## V. CONCLUSION

Assamese self-improvement literature is a developing genre. Although the self-improvement writing is published in *Orunodoi* magazine in 1846 but in real sense first assamese self-improvement book is *kamat kritittba Labhibar Sanket* published in 1903 by Lakshminath Bezbaroa. After independence era assamese self-improvement literature developing in two ways – original and translated. Positive thinking, happiness, Success, moral value, Ethics these are the main themes of assamese self-improvement literature. The main characteristics of Assamese self-improvement literature are Nonfiction genre, Universal theme, positive message, simple language, express the life experience of writer, include the story, example, quotation with the main theme.

## End note

[1] Merce Mur Ebbing, *US Self-help Literature and the Call of the East: The Acculturation of Eastern Ideas and Practices with Special Attention ti the Period from the 1980s Onward*, doctoral Dissertation, 2011, p.22

[2] *ibid*, p.22

[3] Merce Mur Ebbing, The origin and development of self-help literature in the United state: The concept of success and happiness, an owerreview, *ATLANTIS*, December, p.218

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