

CHAPTER – II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

In the Ph.D. research it is an important part to review various Books, Journals, Magazine, News Paper and other related publications as well to have accuracy in the study. The present study is not exception to it. Henceforth the following publications were reviewed during the study period. Women in India have been facing a position from good to worse and again from worse to comparatively better position since the ancient time to that of the modern time. These facts are given due weightage in the following publications and the scholar have tried to review them with utmost care to find out actual facts, information, happenings regarding women in India and after that it will be tried to find out the probable paths to eradicate such women related problems from our society and specially from the study area of the scholar.

The Topic “Women Empowerment – A study on Bongaigaon District 2002-2012” is a fundamental Research Work. In the process of study of this topic some publications and references has been reviewed. Some of them are as follows:

“A study of the Role of Women in the Socio-political sphere of Tapattary Anchalik Panchayat by Sobur A. under Tappattary Development Block of Bongaigaon District in Assam”, is very important research work for the present study. The first chapter of the dissertation includes an Introduction, significance of the study, objectives of the study, definition of Panchayat, History of the development of Panchayati Raj Institutions in India, History of the development of Panchayati Raj institutions in Assam, Need of people’s Participation in Panchayati Raj Institutions, Origin of Tapattary Anchalik Panchayat, Geographical Location, Area and Population, Educational Institutions and Literacy Rate and Area of the study. Here, as we have found, the study area does not cover the major portion of the Bongaigaon District.

In the second chapter of the Dissertation, the status of women is discussed through various sub-titles, These include the status of women in the Socio-Political sphere in Tapattary Anchalik Panchayat area, Marriage and dowry system, Role of women in Social sphere, Role of women in Politics of Tapattary Anchalik Panchayat since its inception, women’s Participation in Public meetings, Party membership, Participation in Election Rallies, Participation in various party programmes like Dharna, Protest etc., Political Representation. By analyzing these issues, the researcher indicated his affirmative

intention towards political empowerment of women of the area. But this discussion is not up to date and hence fundamental research is required in the light of present topic.

In the third chapter of the dissertation, achievement and problems of women in the said Anchalik Panchayat area is discussed. These include Socio-Political achievements and the problems of women. The achievements include gradual increase of Socio-Political, Cultural Participation as well as responsibility in family related issues and matters. The empowerment schemes of Government has also been discussed in the chapter through Block and Panchayat level administration. But it does not cover all caste-community people of the entire district. Hence, it needs independent study.

In the fourth and fifth chapter, the dissertation has discussed about analysis and interpretation of data and summary respectively. The summary has included major findings of the study with suitable suggestion and conclusion.

Thus, this selected dissertation will be helpful to know some contentious issues like Purdah system, superstitions, women participation in economic sphere, causes of illiteracy, political participation vis a-vis representation of women in the local political bodies like Panchayat and Zila Parishad institutions.

But the topic has confined its discussion only on Socio-Political sphere. It has not highlighted the status of women in tribal societies and Harijan Societies. Therefore, an independent and fundamental research work is necessary to cover the entire district and all caste- community people with broader outlook.

Another literature namely “AN INTRODUCTION INTO THE PROBLEMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN NORTH SALMARA SUB-DIVISION UNDER BONGAIGAON DISTRICT OF ASSAM” by MANIKA CHAKRABARTY, an M. PHIL DISSERTATION, 2007 will Provide valuable data, information about literacy rate of boys and girls in the North Salmara Sub-Division of Bongaigaon District. This dissertation will give us a clear picture of educational atmosphere and culture in the proposed research area. But the dissertation also does not cover male-female ratio as a whole and its impact on the Society and Political field in the district. So, to know the actual position of such facts, fundamental research is necessary.

“**Society and Politics in Assam**” by Narayan Kanwar, is a classic work to know about the socio-political traditions, Voting behaviour, Party Politics etc. in Assam.

In the first chapter of the book, the author has described the pre-colonial social system in Assam. It has also highlighted the class structure of Assam, various social groups, occupation of people, social norms and traditions, culture etc. This chapter has discussed the pre-colonial political scenario of Assam with special references to Ahom Kingdom and their administrative system, the Pike system, (Taxation on lower level people), the administrative hierarchy, division of the state into some administrative zones etc.

In the second chapter of the book, it has discussed about the Burmese attack on Ahom Kingdom. Subsequently they subjugated and ruled it with red hand. To get rid of this brutality, some Ahom aristocrat courtiers gave a deep thinking on the matter and thus invited the British to this land. By this way, the Britishers entered into Assam and fought war against the Burmese which came to an end with the signing of the famous ‘Yandaboo Treaty’ in 1826, Through this treaty, the Britishers established and expanded their colonial rule over Assam. This chapter mainly deals with the British colonial rule, their policy of suppression, divide and rule policy, administrative reforms and creation of new administrative units etc. Likewise the previous one, this chapter has also discussed on formation of new social groups, emergence of new classes in the Society, revolt against the British by Ahom royal families to recapture political power, the revolt of 1857 and its impact on Assam etc. The book has explained the popular uprisings in Assam during British rule and participation of people in the freedom struggle of India led by the Indian National Congress. It has discussed the sacrifice of freedom fighters which include both male and female. Kanaklata Medhi was one of the leading freedom fighter’s who lost her life in the wake of 1942’s Quit India movement. Thus we get the nature of colonial rule and popular movements against it from both male and female patriots of Assam.

In the third chapter of the book, the author has described the post colonial Assamese Society and political changes mentioning various contentious issues like formation of new government, the language movement, the movement against illegal foreigners led by All Assam Students Union (AASU), the minorities politics, the Assam Accord in 1985, the emergence of regionalism, extremism, tribal politics for separate statehood, formation of autonomous council for various tribes in Assam like the Bodos, the Karbi, the Dima-Hassao, the Rabha autonomous council and so on. Therefore, this chapter will help us to know about the Socio-Political scenario of Assam in post colonial period. But the chapter is silent about the separate statehood demand raised by one of the ethnic

group like Koch Rajbongshis in Bongaigaon District of Assam in the form of Kamatapur State. Again, the demographic pattern of the district has not been described in the book.

In short, it may be said that the above literature gives an overall pen picture of Assam but it has not mentioned about Bongaigaon district which need to be studied with much care to highlight the aspects of women empowerment and some other related issues which have direct or indirect influence on Assamese society. Hence, independent study is needed and thus the topic is selected accordingly.

In the review of literature section, another book namely ‘**Mahila Aru Rajniti**’ (**Women and Politics**) by **Das (et. al)** has focused on many important issues concerning women in Assam with special references to Indian great women leaders like Kasturba Gandhi, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sarojini Naidu, Annie Bechant, Mother Teresa, Vijaya Laxmi Pandit, Indira Gandhi etc. Besides, the book explained the following in various chapters.

In the first chapter, the authors have tried to describe the history of growth of human civilization, comments of politicians on Patriarchy and its application in most of the countries, emergence of women study in philosophy, literature and history. The chapter has also discussed the condition of Indian women in 19th century and in 20th century. It has paid attention on the development of women in social and legal field.

In the second chapter of the book, status of Indian women has been discussed. This chapter includes the status of women in the vedic age, Post vedic period, Medieval period, women status before independence of India, women’s position during the British period, women’s movement in 18th century A.D. in the form of Liberal movement, Radical movement and Socialist movement. The chapter has also described women status under the constitution of India in the form of Fundamental Rights from article 12 to 35. Moreover, the constitution of India has provided some legal provisions in the form of Public Interest Litigation on prostitution, Domestic violence prevention Act, etc.

In this chapter, the authors have given some database information on sex composition in census reports, Ratio of men and women in India, the problem of Gender inequality, problems on women education, economic political status of women, status of women in Assam, Demographic pattern etc. which are very much necessary in the empowerment of women process. But, the chapter has not given much importance on the

status of women in Assam. Again, the Bongaigaon district is totally not considered in this discussion. So, there needs a separate study on the selected topic.

In the third chapter of the book, the discussion has confined on women's movement and participation in freedom struggle of India. Here, the authors discussed about women's participation in regional phase, women's participation under Gandhiji's leadership, extremist group of women and brief life sketch of some women freedom fighters. This chapter is very encouraging one and it creates the sense of patriotism. But the women freedom fighters from Bongaigaon district has not found place in the book. This need to be studied to grow sense of boldness among women in the district.

The fourth chapter of the book deals with women's movement in Independent India, five years plan & women committee on status of women 1974, with facts and figures. It has included the formation of National women commission and its functions. So, this chapter will help us to know the various aspects on women and redressal of their grievances.

In the fifth chapter of the book, the authors has discussed about women and electoral process, party politics, under representation of women in decision making process, arguments in favour of and against women right to vote, percentage of women representation in legislative bodies in cabinet, economic empowerment of women in India and other countries etc. This chapter will be helpful to us to know the condition of women in India and abroad. But the chapter has not provided any aspects of political empowerment of women of Assam as well as Bongaigaon District.

In the last chapter of the book, the authors have explained the meaning and concepts of empowerment. This chapter deals with the study of constraints and opportunities of women empowerment with some suggestions.

From the above review of the literature, it is seen that this book will be helpful in the study of the present topic "Women Empowerment" a study on Bongaigaon District. But the literature does not cover any matter of Bongaigaon district nor it has mentioned any women related data and empowerment process of the same. Therefore, this gape may be filled by separate study on the issue. This will make the research work fundamental and authentic.

In the year 2003, a state level seminar was held and a journal was published by Ratnapith College, Bahalpur-Chapar namely "Women Empowerment", edited by Sri

Sudhir Chandra Ray, is an another informatics collection of papers in the seminar. The journal included an overall picture of status of women, their various kinds of plights, social barriers, religious bindings and lack of education to them. These matters were discussed and many suggestions were provided in the seminar. Later, the Chairperson of the seminar namely, Prof. Abdul Mannan of Gauhati University, Assam, explained the multifarious nature of problems of women in Assam and he suggested each and every higher educated persons in the seminar to keep a strong vigil on the women problems and try to solve them or help them, because without the eradication of woman problems, no society can go on the track of development. But again it is a partial type of journal because it has not mentioned plight of women in caste wise or region wise. It has not given due looked into the political participation and empowerment of women. So, there needs an independent study to give an overall vigil on caste wise and religion wise problems of women and aspects of empowerment in Bongaigaon District of Assam.

Several other books are also reviewed to get clear knowledge of the research work. 'The Marginal Nation: Trans-border Migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal' written by Ranabir Samaddar, is one of the precious publication to know some common problems created by migration from Bangladesh to West Bengal, Assam etc. The migration of 'Bangladeshi' people has created many problems in Assam, Specially in the Brahmaputra Valley. Bongaigaon district have also been carrying the load of these problems.

The book contains thirteen chapters. The author presents a study of the migration phenomenon of South Asia. As he stated, the migration has took place in the post colonial period. A large number of Hindus from West Pakistan migrated to India and some Muslims from India migrated to West Pakistan. Same was the case with East-Pakistan. Some Hindus came to India while some Muslims migrated to East Pakistan. Again most of migrated Muslims finding the miserable life in East Pakistan returned back to Indian States specially to West Bengal and Assam. Similarly, the Tamils of the Indian Origin in Sri Lanka migrated to India; Chakmas too migrated from Burma to India. The author has narrated the whole migration scenario in South Africa with utmost care including relevant data and information. In his book, it is seen that the author has not neglected the conceptual aspects of each perspective. By analyzing this book, we can come to several decisions like – compulsion of migration, psychological factors of migration, impact and consequences of migration, etc.

In his book 'Planter Raj to Swaraj: Electoral Politics in Assam' (1977) by Amalendu Guha, has nicely described the Socio-economic and historical aspects of colonial Assam in Particular and the North-East of India in General. In this book he has narrated the reasons of migration and its impact on the Assamese Society. During the colonial period, Assam was thinly populated with huge tracts of arable land. Due to the climatic effect, the Assamese people could not fully utilize the advantages offered by nature. On the other hand, the hard working peasants of East-Bengal worked hard to turn the uncultivated land into permanent granary.

In his another book titled 'Asom Namarey, Amiyo Namoru' (Assam will not die, we will not die too 1993) written in Assamese, he has explained the issue of migration and its consequences. The author has scientifically analysed the issue and showed that the migration is not a serious threat to the existence of Assamese community of the state.

Prof. Monirul Hussain too has argued on similar lines in his book 'The Assam Movement: class, Ideology and Identity'. In this book, the writer has analysed the background of the six years Assam movement which was started in 1979 and came to an end in 1985 after a historic pact signed between the central Government and the agitating organizations led by All Assam Students Union (AASU). This pact is known as 'Assam Accord.' He has also analysed the causes and consequences of the Assam movement, with new political equations in the state. He showed that all section of people in the society specially the minority people were affected due to this movement. Education system was hampered and women condition in the state was worsened. The movement has both positive and negative sides so far as the Assamese society is concerned.

Another Book 'Muslims in Assam Politics' (1997) written by Makhanlal Kar, mentioned about the years of Muslim Politics in Assam since 1200 to 1947. He begins with Bakhtiyar Khiliji of Bengal of 1205 and ends with the latest political scenario of Assam up to 1997. According to him, the history of Muslim migration to Assam can broadly be divided into two phases (a) from 1205 to 1900 and (b) from 1900 to 1970.

In the second phase of Muslim migration to Assam, he gives the clear picture of Muslim migration from erstwhile East Bengal (Now Bangladesh) to Assam. The flow of landless peasants to land abundant and depopulated province of Assam started. The migration created a serious concern among the Assamese Hindus. Thus the Government of Assam adopted the 'Line System' to save and to protect the demands of indigenous people

of Assam. Sir Sayed Muhammad Sadullah, the first premier of Assam and Maulana Abdul Hamid Khan Bhashani were the leaders of migrant Muslim who played vital role to solve the emerging problems of Assamese Hindus and migrant Muslims of Assam respectively. The author tried his best to make the book data based and informatics.

‘Family, kinship and Marriage among Muslims in India’, edited by Imtiaz Ahmed, is another book that explains the socio-religious rituals and traditions among Muslim Community in India. There are four learned articles in the book by different scholars. These articles provides much information regarding the specific myth of a monolithic community in the world. The scholar has tried to combine various ideas of Muslims community since 1970. Imtiaz Ahmed’s work is further carried on by scholars like Asghar Ali Engineer and Mushirul Hasan. The scholars have discussed about the family, kinship and marriage among the Muslims in India. However, he left some issues untouched like the ‘Indians’ of the Indian Muslim society is static and unchanging in the areas of religion and social life. The articles of the four scholars based on field studies throughout the Indian Muslim community discovered that Muslims themselves have heterogeneity inherent in their community. A.N.M Irshad Ali, in his paper on Kinship and marriage among the Asamiya (Assamese) Muslims has further highlighted the structure of the family life, kinship, extra-local kinship, marriage and ceremony among the Asamiya Muslims. He has mentioned some similarities of social and cultural rituals of this community people with that of the Assamese Hindu communities.

‘Politics in India, Issues, Institutions, processes’ – Edited by Akhil Ranjan Dutta is another publication which is reviewed to attain knowledge for our research work. The book contains 15 articles by different scholars. The first article of the book explains about ‘Indian Politics: Nature Legacies and Dynamics’, by Akhil Ranjan Dutta has explained various issues including legacy of colonial rule like legacy of Government of India Act, 1935, Legacy of steel frame, Armed Forces (Special power Act) 1958, Legacy of colonial Economy, Legacies of Freedom Struggle, Legacy of People’s Resistance, Legacy of Liberal Democratic Values, Legacy of Secular Politics, Class Dynamics, Caste Dynamics, the policy of Reservation and Its Rationale, other Dynamics like gender, Language, Ethnicity and Nationality, Global Economic Forces etc.

On the issue of ‘Gender’ the scholar explains that Indian Society is patriarchal in nature where the interest of women are subdued. However, women in the

country along with the progressive social forces continue to fight against the patriarchal atrocities. But the issue of women in Indian society in general and in politics in particular, continues to be puzzling and paradoxical. For example, the important cultural symbols in Hindu religion are mostly women i.e. Saraswati is the symbol of knowledge and wisdom, 'Lakshmi' is the symbol of resources and wealth, 'Durga' and 'Kali' are the symbols of power. Despite these symbolic positions attributed to women, Indian women have been neglected and suppressed in the domain of education; they have been deprived of resources and women have also been disempowered in political, social and cultural domains. On the other hand, inspite these suppressions a section of women continue to play important roles in all domains. For example, women like Indira Gandhi, J. Jayalalita, Kumari Mayavati, Mamta Benerjee, Meera Kumar, Sumitra Mahajan, Sushma Sawaraj etc. etc. have been very assertive and influential in Indian Politics. Brinda Karat of CPI(M) is rated as one of the most assertive voices in Indian Politics. The women have been given reservations of seats in the grassroots political institutions.

By and large, there is healthy participation of women in Indian Politics and the scholar has rightly pointed out these citing various examples.

Other scholars who have contributed to this book are Pankaj Jyoti Gogoi, Trishna Rani Bora, Archana Sarma & Rashmi Bhattacharya, Dibyajyoti Dutta, Joana Mehjabeen, Barasa Deka, Barnalee Choudhury, Barnali Sarmah, Pankaj Sarma & Chucheng Fa Gogoi, Dr. Jayanta Krishna Sarmah, Bondita Borbora, etc. They have written on various topics which are relevant to contemporary Indian Political System. One of such topic is 'Social Movements in India' by Bondita Borbora where she has tried to highlight nature of social movements with special reference to globalization. Another article namely 'Election and Electoral System' by Pankaj Sarma and Chucheng Fa Gogoi have tried to point out Indian election system.

Another book namely 'Contemporary Political Issues' which is written by Hiranya Talukdar is reviewed to acquire knowledge of the research work. The book contains six chapters which includes (i) Emergence of New World Order and Globalization, (ii) Human Rights-Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (iii) Environmental Issues – Pertaining to Population, Water, Sanitation, Urban Development and Pollution, (iv) Gender Issues – Question of Deprivation and the issue of Empowerment, (v) Terrorism State and

Non-State Factors and (vi) Development Issues-Removal of Poverty, Unemployment and Corruption.

In the first chapter, the author has described various issues like new world order, Globalization and its impact on human society, India and Globalization, etc.

In the Second chapter, the definition of Human Rights, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Role of our nation toward Human Rights etc. has precisely been discussed.

The third chapter has described some contentious environmental issues like elements of environment, Environmental Pollution, World Population, Population explosion and Pollution, Energy Crisis, Indian Population Pattern, causes of Water Pollution, Effect of Water Pollution, Sanitation, Urbanisation Environmental impact of Urbanisation, Preservation of Environment, Environmental Ethics etc.

In the fourth chapter 'Gender Issues' are discussed where it is extracted from M.K. Gandhi that God has made man and women one complete whole. In the scheme of nature, both of them are equal. The author has tried to describe the status of women in Indian Society in Various Periods, Women and Rights: International and National Perspective, Various Ways of Women Empowerment, Economic Reform and Indian Women etc.

The fifth chapter includes Terrorism where the author has explained Definition and Characteristics of Terrorism, Types of Terrorism, Causes of Terrorism, Terrorist Activities, Various forms of Terrorism in India, Evil Consequences of Terrorism, Legislation to combat Terrorism, Measures to remove Terrorism etc.

In the sixth chapter it is observed that the writer has discussed Developmental Issues in the context of Developed and under developed Countries. He pointed out that there is a vast gap between Developed and under developed Countries. He also discussed about Poverty, Unemployment, and their impact on Indian Society.

Thus, the author has tried his best of bring to light the contemporary issues in contrast to India and their impact on society. But he has discussed the issues in a limited area although there was a vast scope.

Another book on ‘Contemporary Political Issues’ by Rafique Zaman, Manash Pratim Baruah and Barnali Kalita is reviewed in this section. This book contains four units.

In the first unit, the authors have discussed about Environmental Issues in the contexts of Brundtland Commission Report and sustainable Development, Rio Declaration, Copenhagen Declaration etc.

In the second unit, the discussions are made on Meaning and Nature of Terrorism, Forms of Terrorism: State and Non-State, Terrorism and North-East India.

In the third unit, the topic of discussion is concentrated on Human Development and Human Security in the light of Human Development Index (HDI) and Human Poverty Index (HPI).

The fourth unit includes Issues of Gender, Gender Exclusion and Gender Justice, Beijing Declaration 1995, concept of Gender Development Index and Gender Budgeting. This unit has also discussed about Gender Justice in the Indian Perspective in the light of committee on Status of women in India 1971, Self-Employed women’s Association 1972, the National Commission for women – 1992, the National Human Rights Commission-1993, the State Human Rights Commission-1993, Major challenges to Gender Justice in India, Gender Development Index and United Nations Development Programme, Gender Budget in India etc.

Although, this is a small book covering just 136 pages, but this book provides some basic knowledge on the topic as mentioned above.

‘Higher Secondary Political Science’ a text book written by Rafique Zaman, Manash Pratim Baruah and Parbin sultana is also reviewed. This book has two parts. In the Part - A, the first chapter is titled as ‘Cold war Era in World Politics, the second chapter is ‘Disintegration of the second world and the collapse of Biopolarity, the third chapter is ‘US Dominance in world Politics’, the fourth chapter is Alternative centres of Economic and Political Power’, the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth chapter are titled as – South Asia in the Post cold war era, International Organisations in a Unipolar world, security in contemporary world, and Globalisation and its critics.

Likewise, in the Part – B, the chapters include ‘Era of One Party Dominance’, Nation Building and its Problems, Politics in Planned Development, India’s

External Relations, Challenges to the Restoration of Congress System, Crisis of the Constitutional Order, Regional Aspirations and conflicts, Rise of New Social Movements, Democratic Upsurge and Coalition Politics, Recent Issues and Challenges.

The book has discussed the above mentioned issues and topics in a systematic way. But the discussion has become brief so far as the topics are concerned.

‘Women and Politics’ by Mr. Nirmal Das, Iqbal Hussain Khan, Saptam Hazarika and Anamika Medhi Bharali. The book contains six chapters.

In the first chapter, the author has discussed about various issues like patriarchy as ideology and Practice, Emergence of Women studies, Women Studies in the light of Politics, Philosophy, History and Literature etc.

In the second chapter, the book has discussed about Status of Indian women in various ages and Periods. It has also discussed about women’s Movement, Women Status under the Constitution of India, Fundamental Duty to Respect Women, Domestic Violence Act for Women’s Status, Sex Composition of Population in India, Ratio of Men-Women in India, Problem of Gender Inequality, Women Education, Means for Development of Women Education, Economic Status of Women, Political Status, Status of women in Assam, Demographic Pattern, etc.

In the third chapter, discussion is done on Women’s Movement and Participation in Freedom Struggle of India with references and highlights of women’s participation in Regional phase, Extremist group of women.

In the fourth chapter, the author’s have discussed about women’s movement in Independence India while the fifth chapter contains the topic ‘Electoral Process’ in the light of women and political process, women franchise, women participation in Indian Politics etc.

The sixth chapter contains the issue of ‘Empowerment of women constraints and opportunities’. In this chapter, the authors have tried to discuss the issues like –Frame work for empowerment, phases and Aspects of Empowerment, Human Rights and United Nations Organization, Human Rights in India, etc.

By studying these issues one can easily get some basic knowledge on women and politics in India. The authors have tried their best to discuss various issues and relevant topics in a brief manner. Hence, to acquire first hand knowledge, the book might be helpful.

But if anyone wants to attain broad knowledge with sufficient up to date data and information, he has to go through other relevant publications.

A very very important book namely 'Political Theory' – An Introduction, Edited by Rajeev Bhargava and Ashok Acharya, is also analysed. This is a compilation of articles of various scholars. The book is divided into four parts. In the Part – I & II, discussion is made on – Political Theory, Liberty, Equality, Justice, Rights, Democracy, citizenship, Power, Sovereignty, State, Civil Society, Property, Gender etc. In part – III, the scholars have discussed issues like – Liberalism, Socialism, Nationalism, etc. While in Part – IV, Attention of discussion is concentrated on secularism, Affirmative action, Freedom of speech and the question of censorship etc.

This book is a fantastic collection of writings from various scholars in their respective fields. They all have endeavoured to provide information and reading materials with sufficient notes etc. Therefore, this book may be termed as an informatics and knowledge gaining one.

In his book 'Indian Government and Politics' Mr. Prakash Chandra has elaborately discussed many things which are related with Indian politics. The author has narrated the beginning, and characteristics of Indian Political system. Some other topics included in the book are – the constituent Assembly and Framing of the constitution, Extra-Constitution Factors, etc. The book is divided into three parts. Many important matters and constitutional provisions can be known by reading this book. One important matter that we all need to be known is about 'Fundamental Rights which are incorporated in the Part – III of the Indian Constitution which has guaranteed Right to Equality to all citizens irrespective of caste, creed, religion, language, Sex, region etc. under article – 14. Again the constitution has provided Right to Freedom under Articles 19 to 22, Right against Exploitation under Article 23 and 24. These articles have clearly Safeguards all citizens specially the women in India.

Indian Government and Politics gives us knowledge about constitutional remedies, Panchayati Raj System etc. and any person can be a gainer by reading this book.

One book namely 'Empowerment of Women in India' edited by Dr. M. Koteswara Rao. The research book contains 20 research papers with the title and scholars associated with these papers are – (i) Gender Dimension in Economic reform Programmes

Implication for Policy/Kurba, (ii) Gender related issues of urban informal labour market-A case Study of Kavali Town by G. Radha Reddy. (iii) Gender discrimination and poverty/A. Rajashekhar, (4) Women's participation in rural non-farm employment/Brahm Prakash, (v) Factors influencing the participation of females in RNFE/K. Srinivasa Rao, (vi) Women in farm and non-farm employment in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu/K. Pazhani, (vii) Employment of women in the farm and non-farm sector in Goa/Silvia Maria De Mendonca Noronha, (viii) Women Enterprise in the informal Sector in Punjab/Shakuntala Gupta and Disha Mittal, (ix) Globalisation and Empowerment of Women/P. Leela, (x) Need for Employment of Tribal Women/A. Sailaja Devi and M. Sundara Rao, (xi) Endowment, Entitlement and Empowerment Concept and Evidences from Tamil Nadu/S. Iyyampillai, (xii) Information Economy and Empowerment of Women/N. Narayana, (xiii) Views and Perceptions of DWCRA Beneficiaries – A case study/K. Sreelakshamma, (xiv) Empowerment of women through DWCRA Programme in A.P. – A case Study/K. Sreelakshamma, (xv) Empowerment of women through SWOT Analysis/P. Venugopal, (xvi) Welfare and Empowerment of women in India-some Reflections/M. Bapuji and M. Koteswara Rao, (xvii) Conditions of Scheduled Caste women in Social Sector – A case study of Ujjain Division of M.P./S. Murty, (xviii) Strategies of Empowerment of women in India- A Review/K. Chandra Kumar, (xix) Problems of Girl child labour in India – Some Issues/K. Chandra Kumar, (xx) Women Empowerment – A Theoretical Perspective/M. Koteswara Rao.

This research Oriented Publication expresses that the advent of globalization and economic development process have intensified the on going intellectual discussion on the gender development interface. Hence, this publication may be taken as roll model for achieving research knowledge and practical position of various section of women across the country. This book is highly useful for scholars and students of sociology and social work, Political science, and public Administration and other social sciences.

Another book namely 'Education and women Empowerment in India' – A comparative Analysis by Md. Tarique, is also reviewed to acquire research knowledge and to gain information about women education scenario.

This research paper has tried to find the relationship between inequality in education and women empowerment. The entire paper is divided into three parts. The first part is introductory that talks about the second and third goal of Millennium Development

Goal (MDG) Which is achieving universal primary education and promote gender equality and empower women respectively with certain indicators to achieve these goals. This part also gives a brief account of gender inequality in education and employment world wide. In the second portion, the importance of education in general and women education in particular has been highlighted. It talks about the gender inequality in literacy in India. A comparative analysis between different states of the country is being made with regard to the parameters like education dimension index and the same index if adjusted for inequality. Further the parameters like inequality adjusted HDI, education and income index have been taken for few countries to make a comparative analysis. To find the impact of inequality in education on various other parameters, a correlation matrix has been calculated. To know the level of women empowerment in various parts of the world, the variables like female share in national parliament, the percentage of female literacy and female labour force participation rate has been taken into consideration. The third and final part is given to concluding observation.

Thus, this research work has been reviewed to acquire some comparative information about women position and empowerment scenario.

One important book namely ‘Women and Empowerment : Approaches and Strategies’ by Sushma Sahay is reviewed to achieve more accurate knowledge on our respective research work. This book has discussed about many issues like – why Empower Women? Concept of women Empowerment, Frame work for women Empowerment, Organising women for Empowerment, Women’s Education and Empowerment, Economic Empowerment of Women, Summary and conclusions.

The empowerment of women by their increased participation in all aspects of Political, Social and Economic life has become important goals of democratic and participatory movements, as well as women’s organizations throughout the world. Beyond offering an understanding why empower women, concept and framework for women’s empowerment, this book seeks to discuss the approaches and strategies for empowering women by outlining the strategies, mechanism and tools that women are using for their empowerment. An important and timely contribution to a major ongoing debate on women’s empowerment, this book will create interest of all those involved with women studies, rural development and voluntary initiatives at the grassroot levels.

Another book namely 'General Sociology' written by Hiranys Talukdar, is reviewed to gain knowledge on research. The book contains four units with the headings- Culture, Social Control, Social Change, Socialization etc.

In the first unit, discussions are held on Meaning and definition of Culture, Sub-Culture, Cultural Diffusion, Cultural lag, Culture and civilization etc.

In the second unit, discussions are made on social control and its various variables. In this section, the writer has said that 'Social Control is an influence, which is influenced by Society. Again social control works to promote the welfare of the group as a whole.'

In the third unit, the discussion is held on social change where the author has explained meaning, characteristics and theories of social change. The author pointed out that by social change I understand a change in social structure, e.g. the size of a society, the composition or balance of its parts or the type of its organization. The term social change must also include change attitudes or beliefs, in so far as they sustain institutions and changes with them.

The forth unit is on 'Socialization' In this unit, discussions are centralized on meaning and agencies of Socialization, process of socialization, Impact of Socialization etc.

By and large General Sociology is a very good book. Anybody reads this book, may be beneficial.

Another book 'Politics in North-East India' by Dr. Krishna Ballabh Deka. This book contains four chapters. The chapter wise Headings are-profile of North-East India, Colonial Policy of Annexation and Administration, People's Resistance Against Colonial Rule, Migration and Demographic change during colonial period, etc.

The book has also paid focus on women uprising in North-East India and their contribution towards achieving freedom for our nation.

'Human Rights in India' by Dr. Ratul Chandra Kalita is one more book that we have reviewed. This book contains four chapters. The title of the chapters are-Origin and Development of Human Rights in India, Institutional Mechanism for Protection of Human Rights, Emerging Issues of Human Rights, and Human Rights of vulnerable groups.

In the last chapter, the author has nicely mentioned about various important conferences and decisions regarding women. Some of them are – convention on the consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage, and Registration of Marriage 1962, World women Convention, Mexico 1975, convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women 1979, Beijing Conference on Women etc.

This small book is definitely helpful and it may be treated as a guide to us to know various issues of North-East India.

The book ‘Human Rights’ by Purandar Gogoi, is also analysed and reviewed. This book contains five chapters.

The first chapter discusses about Human Rights: Meaning, Nature and Development, Three Generation Rights, etc.

The Second Chapter discusses about approaches and perspective of Human Rights, in the light of Universalistic and Relativist approaches, Feminist and Marxist Perspectives, Views of Mahatma Gandhi etc. Mahatma Gandhi’s view On Human Rights as quoted is “The true source of right is duty. If we all discharge our duties right will not be far to seek. If leaving duties unperformed, we run after right that will escape us like a will of the whip. The more we pursue them, further they will fly.”

The third chapter has discussed about United Nations and Human Rights, International Conventions and Covenants, Globalization and Human Rights, etc.

The fourth and fifth chapters have discussed about Human Rights in Indian Perspective and also issues and challenges. The issue of provisions of the charter of the United Nations Concerning advancement of Rights of Women, Commission on the Status of women, Declaration on Elimination of Discrimination Against women in 1967, Creation of United Nations Development Fund for women in 1985, Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, Equality and Political Rights of Women etc. etc.

‘Antarastriya Samparka’ (International Relations) is a book, in Assamese language by Dr. Lily Goswami, Dr. Nabanita Bhuyan and Sanatan Paul. This book contains four chapters. The authors have discussed about Introduction to International Relations, Approaches to the study of International Relations, Basic concepts in International Relations, World in 20th Century, etc. These issues are discussed in a systematic way and research knowledge can be broadened by analyzing this type of book.

As far as the topic is concern, this literature will not directly contribute to our purpose. But indirectly our mission will be served to achieve some relevant information. It will also help us to systematise our discussion.

Another book ‘Political Theory’ is also analysed with utmost care. This book is written by N.D. Arora and S.S. Awasthy. This book contains a total of sixteen chapters namely – Political Theory: Nature and significance, Politics: Meaning and Nature, Power, Theories of Power in Society, the Modern Nation State, Sovereignty, Citizenship and Rights, Nature of the Modern State, Liberty, Equality, the concept of Property, the concept of Justice, the Notion of Common Good, Democracy, the concept of change, Development and Environmentalism, etc.

By these topics, the authors have tried their best to present some basic concept on the issues. But due to lack of elaborate discussion, some vital things and issues are missed on.

‘Principles of Political Science’, a book of A.C. Kapur, is a very fine book. This book contains three parts. The first part includes twelve chapters, the second part includes eighteen chapters and the third part includes five chapters. Various topics like –the Nature and Origin of the State, The Organization of the State and The Functions of the State are also discussed in the book. This is also an important book and we can know many matters by reading this book.

One more book namely ‘Lok Prashashan’ (Public Administration) by Dr. Lily Goswami and Dr. Nabanita Bhuyan is analysed. This book has discussed the topics in eight chapters. The first chapter includes things like-various aspects of Public Administration, the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh and the eight chapter includes topics like-Approaches to public Administration, Organization and its various aspects, Financial Administration, Personnel Administration, Development Administration, Citizen and Administration, respectively.

By analyzing this book a research scholar can be gained information in so far as our administrative knowledge and skills are concerned.

In the review of literature chapter, we have reviewed another book in Assamese Language namely “Jatiya Andolan Aru Sangbidhanik Chromobikash” (National Movement and Constitutional Development) by Dr. Thaneswar Lahan. This book has been

divided into two parts. The first part has included eight chapters. The Chapters are – Historical Background, Indian National Congress, Muslim Communalism-Muslim League, Evolution, the Government of India Act 1935, Quit India Movement, Quit India Scheme of British, etc.

Likewise the second part of the book contains nine chapters. The issues which are discussed in the chapters are – Preamble to the Indian Constitution, Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State, Indian Federation, President, Union Council of Ministers, Parliament, Supreme Court, State Government, etc.

This book is a good efforts by the author who has tried his best to provide basic information to the readers. We have come to know about Assamese nationalism through this book. We have also gained knowledge about systematic way of writing book.

H.R. Mukhi, an eminent Indian writer has written a book ‘History of Western Political Thought’. This is a discussion with question & Answer. We have also gone through this book and could acquired knowledge of the great thought of western political thinkers. We have come to know about Bentham’s Utilitarianism, J.S. Mills view on rights, Machiavelli’s thought on Human Nature, etc. Out of these views, the view of J.S. Mill on right is more remarkable. According to him, “Over his body and mind, the individual is Sovereign”. This is a fantastic view and every body can achieve encouragement by reading such views on human rights. Another western thinker Rousseau remarked, “Man born free, so he is every where in chain.” These views obviously revamp the process of women empowerment world wide.

Another book that is reviewed is “Constitution of India” by Prof. A.N. Chakraborty. This book contains a total of Seventeen Chapters. The first chapter has discussed about ‘Constitution of India’ – its Evolution, Freedom Movement, Sepoy Mutiny, Various Movements, Laws enacted by British rulers, Making of the Indian Constitution, etc.

The second chapter has discussed about preamble and Salient Features of the Constitution, the third chapter has discussed about Fundamental Rights and Duties. The other Chapters have included issues like – Citizenship of India, President of India, The Union Council of Ministers, The Union Legislature, The State Legislature, The State Executive, Judiciary in India, Relation between the Union and the States, Miscellaneous Provisions, Local Self Government, Growth and Development of Local Self Government in

Assam, President of the Panchayats, Urban Local Government in Assam, Control over Local Authorities, University Questions 1988, etc.

So far as the book “Constitution of India” is concerned we can say that this is a small volume book having verities of items. Therefore it has the advantage of providing more things in a small bag. On the other hand, the disadvantage of this book is that it is a text book having less data and broad based discussion.

“Elements of Political Science” by Arun Bhattacharjee is a book that provides us experience to write and read books systematically. This book has included Twenty One Chapters. Besides there is a Bibliography and Index. The topics which are discussed chapter wise are Introduction, State, Sovereignty, Origin of the State, Functions of the State, Constitutions and its various forms, Government and its different forms, Democracy and its different forms, Organs of the Government and separation of powers, Citizens and their rights and duties, Law, Liberty and Equality, Elections, Political Parties and Public Opinion, The League of Nations, The United Nations Organizations, The Commonwealth of Nations, Other Political Organizations and agreements, Information about Six States of North-East India, Important sayings in Political Science and their Authors, Important Books and their Authors, Some correct Statements in Political Science, Important Political Terms, etc.

Besides these topics, the book ‘Elements of Political Science’ has included one Bibliography and an Index which are very useful and relevant in the engagement in research works. As we know, research is a study of problems and find out the solution of such problems, so we have reviewed more and more books, references and other published materials to make the present study on ‘Women Empowerment of Bongaigaon District 2002-2012’ Fundamental and to reach in its objectives.

One important book namely ‘Ancient and Medieval Indian Political Thought’ by V.P. Verma, is also reviewed. This book contains sixteen chapters besides an index. It is a very useful book written by one of the great scholar of political Science. We can achieve knowledge and research techniques of studying such type of books.

Some key issues and topics of this book are – ancient Indian Political Thought of Panini’s Ashtadhyayi, Dharmasutra, Mahabharata, Kautilya’s Arthashastra,

Political values in the Buddhist Sanskrit Literature, The Jain Political Thought, The concept of Property in the Hindu Political Thought, etc.

The Medieval Indian Political System and thought includes Indo-Muslim Political System and Thought, Hindi Literature, The vedic Religion and its Decline, Absolutism, Determinism and Freedom in Ancient Indian and western Idealism, etc.

The topics are discussed in a systematic manner and hence, this book is useful in our review of Literature section to achieve quality in research work.

Author S.P. Verma has written a book “Modern Political Theory”. This book is divided into three parts. The first part contains four chapters which are – Growth of Political Science as a Discipline; the Behavioral Revolution in Political Science: Meaning, Purpose and Limitations; State of Political Science Today: Decline or Resurgence ? Nature and Scope of Political Science, respectively.

The second part also contains four chapters. They are – (i) Elite, Group and Power as Organizing Principles: Failure to Evolve a Theory (ii) Major Theoretical Approaches: Lasswell, Easton and Almond. (iii) Systems Analysis and International Relations and (iv) Models and Simulations: Communication Theory, Decision Making Approach and Game Theory.

The Third part of the book contains three chapters. They are – (i) Theories of Alienation: From Sartre to Marcus (ii) Theories of Political Development: A Critique and Search for an Alternative Approach, and (iii) Gandhi and Contemporary Political Thought, Towards Synthesis between the East and the West.

Besides these three parts of the book, the author has systematically arranged some basic things like References, Selected Bibliography and Index. By and large, we can say that this book is influential about knowing various aspects of political theory and to achieve knowledge on research matters.

Another book namely “Indian Administration by Sriram Maheswari is reviewed to gain more knowledge in our research work. This book contains a variety of issues. It comprises with issues like Indian Administration during the period of British Rule, Second World War and its Aftermath, Constitution, Contemporary Administrative Context etc.

The important things that we have come to know from this book is that Indian Administration is basically crept its root during the British Colonial rule. Although they established many institutions and created a barity of departments, but they did not do efforts to empower Indian women. They made the Framework of Indian administration in such a way which could help British Colonial policies. Even they did not want to provide High Offices to Indian People. Inspite of these constraints, Indian people could achieve success in Administrative Services. Their success led to the growth and development of Indian women gradually to the field of education as well as administration.

In the last chapter of the book, author S. Maheswari has discussed about 'Panchayati Raj and the Ashoka Mehta Committee'. In this chapter he has rightly described about beginning of Panchayati Raj in India; Decline of Panchayati Raj; Ashoka Mehta Report; its salient features, critical analysis etc. Hence we can say that although Indian Administration has some limitations to provide elaborate discussion, but we can know at least the basic concepts of administration by studying this book.

Another publication namely 'International Law' by L.N. Srivastava is thoroughly studied and reviewed. The purpose of reviewing this book is to know some fundamental elements of International Law and to express our findings of Women Empowerment in Bongaigaon District of Assam in the light of this book. This book has discussed issues like - Nature and scope of International Law, Functions, History, Basis Sources of International Law. Besides, the book has also discussed other issues like codification of International Law etc., the Law of peace, State, Territory and Jurisdiction, State Responsibility, Intervention, Self Preservation and Self-Defence, Nationality, Extradition and Asylum, Human Rights, Agents of International Business, the Laws of War, Settlement of International Disputes, Forcible or Coercive means of settlement, Legal Regulations of the use of Force, Effects of Outbreak of War and of Armed Conflicts, Sanctions of Law of War, Treatment of Prisoners of War, Laws of Neutrality, Rights and Duties of neutral States, Belligerent Right of Visit and Search etc.

This book has also discussed about Law of International Organization, the Formation of League of Nations and United Nations Organizations. Various Organs of United Nations Organization, and their functions in International arena, Uniting for peace Resolution, etc.

This book is prepared for the benefit of students community providing question – answer facilities to the reader. It has no research value in so far as research methodology is concerned. Despite the shortcomings as noticed, we have taken some kinds of help from this book to make our own study concrete. We have reviewed this book only to know the quality and utility of questions-answer type book like L.N. Srivastava's 'International Law'.

'Indian Government and Politics' is an another book that is reviewed. The author of the book is J.C. Johari. This book has included topics like – British Imperialism, Constitutional Experiments, Benevolent Despotism, Montford Reforms, Towards Parliamentaryism, Imperialist Constitution, Partition Politics, British Bureaucracy, Socio-Political Transformation, Indian Nationalism, Anti Colonial Movements, Left-wing Politics, Revolutionary Leftism, Political Trends, etc.

Part – II of this book has included the topics like – Grand con'ssembly, Political Horoscope, Indestructible Union, Dynamic Secularism, Flexible Document, Constitution's Conscience, Unfundamental Right, Positive Directions, Judicial Review, Unitarian Federalism, Unionized States etc.

Besides the topics, the book has presented an Index, List of Tables and Charts, etc. The systematic arrangement of Chapters with facts, data and diagram is surely useful to the scholars and readers. The book also provides us trends of Indian political system since the British rule. Hence the book has vast utility for its readers in general and research scholars in particular.

Ancient Political thought by V. Venkata Rao is a marvelous book that is reviewed in the path of our research work. This book contains a total of sixteen chapters which have discussed about – Problems of Political Philosophy, Pythagoreanism, Sophism, Socratism, The Theory of Justice, Education, Communism, Government – The Ideal State, Revolutions, Law, Slavery, Citizenship, Democracy, Classification of Constitutions, Aristotle and Plato – A Comparative Study, Later Greek Philosophers etc.

V. Venkata Rao was a great political thinker of his time and so of his writings. Scholars are required to study some noble works of the eminent writer and as such we have enriched our study by reviewing his book. It is a book that can revamp the learning points of the readers.

Another book namely “Modern Political Analysis” by Robert A. Dahl is reviewed in the way of our research problem. The book contains a total of eleven chapters. The chapters have discussed the following issues serially – In the first chapter, discussion is made on- What is Politics ? Nature of the Political Aspect, the Ubiquity of Politics, etc. So far as the other chapters are concerned, the eminent author has focused on the depth of the matter. He has discussed about – Describing Influence with example from the least to the most, citizens from the least to the most, etc. Again he has explained about. Interpreting Influence – The absence of Standard Terminology, Controversies over the definition of Influence etc.

Although many thinkers have opposed his views in various occasions and on many issues, but he has shown a new path of analyzing contentious issues concerning with Political Science and Political System.

Another book on “Research Methodology” by Ranjit Kumar is a very nice and significant research publication. The author has discussed about – Research: a way of thinking, the research process: a quick glance, Reviewing the literature, Formulating a Research Problem, Identifying Variables, Constructing Hypothesis, the Research Design, Selecting a study Design, Selecting a Method of Data Collection, Collecting Data using attitudinal scales, Establishing the validity and reliability of a research instrument, Selecting a sample, How to write a research proposal, considering ethical issues in data collection, Processing and displaying data, writing a research report, research methodology and practice evaluation, developing a research project: a set of exercises for beginners, Glossary, Bibliography, Index etc.

Author Ranjit Kumar’s book is very much useful for beginners. He has given a free discussion with tips and examples. Any research scholar could be gainer if he/she read this book carefully and attentively.

Review of literature is a very important method in so far as research is concerned. It proves the depth of search of knowledge of the research. Hence we have reviewed some other books. One such book is “Social Change in India” by B. Kuppuswamy and revised by B.V. Kumar.

This book contains four parts. The first part is an Introductory part which has included topics like – Social Process and Social Change, Theories of Social Change,

Definition and Direction of social Change, Indian Social Values – Traditional and Modern etc. Among these topics – Indian Social Values has rightly discussed that India continues to accommodate the new while remaining true to the old. Traditional values such as the need to care of aged parents, respecting age and saving for tomorrow still carry a lot of importance in India. This becomes especially interesting in view of the fact that 65% of Indians are now under 35 years of age, thus casting a greater burden of support onto India's youth. There is a belief that women should be not only encouraged but brought upto have a career of their own – came up as a strong belief, though it was stronger in women than men. However this was not backed by corresponding belief in flexibility of gender roles, which means the burden of child-rearing and running a household is still all too likely to be viewed as a woman's space.

The second part of the book has discussed about – Factors of Social Change, the Demographic Factor, Technological Factor, Economic Factor, Cultural Factor, Legislation, Planning and Education as a Factor of social change. Among these topics, the author has said that social change refers to the modifications in the organization and behaviour of the group expressed in its laws, institutions, customs, modes and beliefs. When change supposedly for the better it becomes progress which is essentially an evolutionary concept. The term social change might imply changes in social attitudes, behaviour, customs, habits, manners, relations and structures in the ways or styles of living.

The third part of the book has discussed about – the caste system, the backward classes, changes in the status of women, changing, position of labour, urbanization and social mobility, expansion in mass media, equality, national integration and secularism etc. On the matter of changes of the status of women, the author has explained the issue in historical perspective. He has started his discussion from 2500 B.C. i.e. from vedic period and ended the same with contemporary period i.e. 1947, A.D. onwards. In his writings, he has mentioned that the status enjoyed by Indian women can not easily be assessed. While the 'idol' was worshipped, the "real" was neglected. Cormark asserts "Traditional Indian has always accorded women a high place and indeed equality". But in contemporary time, women are assigned a subordinate status. The change that have taken place in the position of women are a part of the process of transformation of a traditional society.

The book has incorporated an Assessment and Index in the forth part, which provide us enormous resources about the depth of study and guide to scholars. Hence the book can be termed as a needful one so far as our quest for knowledge is concerned.

Another book namely “Political and Social change and women in India” by Dr. Mamta Chandrashekhar is reviewed. This is an e-book collected through internet. The book provides – Table of contents, Tables, Table of charts etc. The book contains a total of eighteen chapters besides a conclusion and references. The first chapter is headed with “Social Change and Women in India”. The chapter begins with – “There are many changes in the status of women in dues to our constitutional provisions, laws, acts and programmes, Globalization, Urbanization, Industrialization and Privatization Played an important role in changing status of women.” With many other changes, transformation of and upliftment of women position, this chapter has focused on some vital issues and Laws and constitutional provision for women related matters.

The second chapter includes the topic “Changes in Women Education.” This chapter includes subjects like – need of education, women ratio in education with chart, Sarbha Sikhsha Abhiyan, Non-Formal Education programme, etc. The author has quoted some study reports about women education scenario in India. One among such report is U.S. Department of Commerce report in 1998 which says, “the chief barriers of female education in India are inadequate school facilities (such as sanitary facilities), shortage of female teachers and gender bias in the curriculum (female characters being depicted as weak and helpless), etc. The chapter has also provided a comparative literacy rate states wise in India etc.

The other chapters has discussed issues like – child marriage, dowry and dowry death, marriage status and intercaste marriage, divorce as an option, social and family life, health awareness, practice of Sati, political changes, women at the top, in the central government, women in parliament, women in state government, women in local government, in political parties, participation in voting, political activities, etc.

It is a fantastic book having analysis of various contentious women related issues. But one thing we have noticed that the author have provided much importance on readymade records than actual field study. Despite this minor short coming, this book has vast utility to serve out purpose in a proper manner.

Besides the above literature, some other references will be studied and analysis for making the present study up to date, authentic and data oriented. The purpose of the review of literature is to make the study fundamental and original.

Another article published in a daily news paper in Assam, namely Deoboria Batori covering additional issues for Deoboria Surabhi (Cream of Sunday Readers) by Sharma, Nitali, April, 28th 2013, P.P. (a) Guwahati and some records retrived from National Crime Report Bureau which clearly show an eye cateching worst kind of women status in Assam. The records of National Crime Bureau and the said articale have brought to light the following facts and suggestions in this regards. Excerpts are :

Women constitute nearly half of total population in Assam. *As per Census Report 2011, the total Population of Assam is 3,12,05,576 out of which 1,59,39,443 are male while 1,52,66,133 are female. The male –female ratio in Assam is 51.08% and 48.92% respectively.*¹¹ Therefore the implementation of human rights are very much necessary to develop a society like Assam because this right is considered to be essential for the survival of personality development of all human being.

It is a well accepted fact that the nature and Culture of a society can be known through the enjoyment of human rights by all section of people and the attitude of whole society towards women. But the Scenario of “women’s Human Rights in Assam” is not providing us a good picture. In truth, women have always been playing a very stereotypical role in Assamese society.

There is a tendency of neglecting girl infants since their birth. It is a well accepted fact that many parents in Assam do not provide equal status to girl infant. In Such families if the new born baby is a girl, then they plan for giving another birth and if again, the same thing repeats, then they give birth one after another, until the birth of a male infant. A lot of examples of such incidents are there in Khan-Khowa Char area of Goalpara District of Assam. This shows that girls are not given due respect and status since their birth. Again, if married, they stayed at home to look after the children while the husband work outside and bring the money home. In most of backward families in Assam, especially in char areas, girls are simply expected to get married and have children. It means that getting marriage,

11. Census Report of Assam, 2011

giving birth of children and caring them are the primary duties of the women in Assam. Besides they have to carry out all household works. The male section of people does not take much responsibility in such matters. The term ‘Spinster’, though not a term of outright abuse are seen as having some form of stigma attached to it. It implies that she is not good enough to get a husband because she is ugly or poor or undesirable in the eye of society. It is very pathetic when we see that a spinster has been spending a secondary and miserable life in her parental house where her blood related brother and sister-in-laws are enjoying a joyous life.

In ancient Assamese society, women were enjoying a meaningful and respectable life. They were treated like ‘Devi’ (Goddess) and their personal views were given due importance in family affairs. Even the bridegroom had to offer “Pon” (Dowry) to the bride family to get marriage. But this situation has drastically been changed. Now, the bride family has to given ‘dowry’ to bridegroom family for having marriage. This dowry includes cash amount, presentation of various valuable materials like gold ornaments, four wheelers, two wheelers (motor cycle) etc. etc.

In the matter of crime against women, Assam has recorded the dubious distinction of having the highest rate of incidences in the North-East region and seventh in the country.

The above records clearly prove that Assam is no longer remained a sweet home for women as it was in ancient times. Now, we have to think ten times to claim our homeland as safe for our mothers (Women).

*As per National Crime Record Bureau’s (NCRB) report which is last updated on Monday, June 17, 2013, Assam recorded 13,544 incidents of crime against women during the last one year. West Bengal tops the list with 30,942 such incidents. A total of 5745 cases of cruelty by husband and relatives were registered in Assam in 2011. In the North-Eastern region, Nagaland is the most women friendly state with only 51 incidents of crime against women, followed by sikkim with 68 such cases.*¹²

The above records imply that the attitude of Assamese society towards women is not positive.

12. Extracted from [www.national crime report bureau. com](http://www.nationalcrimebureau.com)

In rape cases, Assam ranked sixth in the country with 1,716 incidents. In cases related to kidnapping and abduction of women, Assam ranked fourth in the country with 3360, while Uttar Pradesh with 7,910 tops the chart.

These incidents have taken place against married women, widow, girls and girl children.

It is a well documented fact that Assam is a home of starting, visible squalor, a place where chronic poverty and deprivation are clearly seen in almost every corner of the land. Here are the problems of unemployment and caste-based differences. There are the caste Hindus, Muslims, Assamese Hindu Families, Bengali Hindus, Marwaries, Santhals, Bodo's, Karbi, Dimassa, Chutia, Deory, Koch-Rajbongshies, Maran, Matak Ahom, Tiwa, Rabha, Garo, etc. etc. This diversity has created diverse attitude towards women in Assam. But the most striking problem is the poverty which records 36.09 percent of total population in Assam remained below poverty line, a figure appreciably above the national average of 26.10 percent. Arguably, Poverty has a women's face. Out of every ten poorest persons in the world, six are women. It is in this context, we argue that it is the women in Assam who bear this unbearable miseries of poverty. In traditional Assamese society, it is said that women were given high respect and they are treated as "Greeha Laxmi" (Home Goddess of Fortune). But in actual practice, these have remained in folk talks. The records from various sources prove that women's Human Rights scenario in Assam is completely disappointing. Let us see another instance of women's Human Rights violation in Assam.

Statistical data reveals that street sexual harassment (eve teasing) against women in Assam is too much high and it catches eye of every conscious citizen. A recent research on eve teasing demonstrates that women are teased in the streets of Assam in every 51 minutes and in this way shackles their freedom of mobility. Undoubtedly, it is a very shameful incident for every conscious citizen of Assam.

The above discussion give us a clear pen picture of women rights scenario in Assam. The discussion leads to the following main points :

- Women are neglected since the birth of newborn girl infant.
- Spinsters have been spending a miserable life in many families in Assam.

- Married women are spending a life full of household works with negative attitude of their husbands toward them, except a few.
- Rape cases and eve teasing are growing at a high rate in Assam.
- Crime against women in Assam is an eye catching matter.
- Harassment, Torture, Domestic violence, etc. against women are day to day affairs in Assam.
- Dowry has so erected in Assam that all section of people have been suffering from this menace.

The causes of these incidents of violation of women's Human Rights may be discussed as under :

- i) **Illiteracy** : Assam is not a fully literate state. The Literacy rate in Assam is 73.18 percent where female literacy rate is 67.27 percent only. Again these literacy rate covers the persons who can write their name and can identify basic alphabets of their language. Therefore, the actual literacy rate will be much below than that of recorded one. This has created lots of problems in the Society. Even, most of the people in Assam including women do not know the meaning of equality and its significance. The Constitutional right of Equality has remained under dark Cover in char area, Tea Garden area Tribal area and other backward areas in Assam.
- ii) **Economic Disparity** : There is a huge gapes in income and expenditure between male–female people in Assam. As per records, 50 percent of people in Assam is engaged in labour sector. Out of this only 5 percent belong to women Section of people. Again, in India, workforce Participation rate of women is 25.7 percent while the same rate in Assam is 20.8 percent. The constitution of India has provided economic opportunity for both men and women in equal manner as per article 39,41,42 and 43 (a). But this opportunity has not found ground reality in the social and economic life of the people in Assam. This has also created a lot of problems towards the up gradation of status of women in Assam and enjoyment of human rights. Economic disparities have leading them towards the gateway of earthly hell.
- iii) **Political Suppression** : In Assam, Political Suppression on women is very high. An example will clear this claim. There are 14 Loksabha and 7 Rajya Sabha seats from Assam. Out of these 3 members (tow in Lok Sabha and one in Rajya Sabha) have

occupied by women. Moreover, out of 126 members in Assam State Legislative Assembly, only 14 members belong to women. In the Panchayati Raj Institutions i.e. Zilla Parishad, Anchalick Panchayat and Gaon Panchayats, number of women representatives are 33 percent and 50 percent respectively. But most of these women representatives perform their works under the guidance of their husband or advisers who are unquestionably male. This type of shadow Politics behind women representatives has raised the question of rationality of Passing women reservation bill in Indian Parliament. The political representation in Assam is totally anti-women in so far as their representation in Parliament and Assam state assembly is concerned. No remarkable steps have been taken by political leaders in Assam to check anti- women activities. They have not organized any public awareness meeting on that special matter. Even, it is learnt that some leaders engage themselves to give shelter to some culprits for political gain. Same allegations labeled against some veteran leaders in Assam. But they get acquaintance due to lack of proper evidences.

The discussion on women's Human Right scenario in Assam clearly show that women are facing social, economic and political hardship. They have been confronting with multifarious problems, in their daily life. Basically speaking, without the proper atmosphere of enjoying socio, economic and political rights, other rights like Cultural rights, family rights, right to work, education, freedom etc. become meaningless.

Therefore, to eradicate these discriminations against women and to provide them a healthy environment to enjoy human rights, following suggestions are prescribed in the publication item.

Meaningful and objective oriented EDUCATION SYSTEM should be introduced to make people aware and conscious about the need of establishment of women status in the society with that of male-counterpart.

People should be given primary idea of their Fundamental Rights as laid down in the constitution of India from Article 12 to 35. This could be done through Compulsory awareness Campaign through local self government in Assam.

Government of Assam should pay positive attention on the enjoyment of socio-economic and Political rights. Discrimination against women must be checked through iron

hand and if needed, with the passing of special legislation in the legislature. Poverty and unemployment should be wither away from the society especially from among the female section of people. For this purpose special empowerment scheme should be introduced at rural as well as urban sector. Integrating gender equality concerns into environmental sustainability by taking into account environmental programs and promotion of women's human rights. etc.

Interestingly, the government of Assam, of late has taken some measures to improve women's rights in the state by introducing some new schemes ad programs at various levels. But this has not provided much fruits as expected. Hence, more innovative steps with strict vigil is necessary to make a women friendly society in Assam. People also have vast responsibility to extend help and Cooperation to such women empowerment schemes, so that they can enjoy human rights without fear and improve their personality and make a progressive modern Assamese society.

In the review of Literature Section mention is utmost needed about a publication namely **Nellie 1983 by Sharma, D(2007), Eklabya Prakashan, Akhar Ghar, Malou Ali, Jorhat, Assam** and another publication in interest collection with the title '**Nellie Revised**' : **The Horrors Nagging Shadow, by T. Rehman** give us a detail condition of Assam Agitation which occurred between 1979 – 1985, for a period of long 6 (Six) years. The worst ever incidents took place in 1983 in Nellie where all section of people specially the women and child were badly sufferer. This has a link with the present discussion. The following matters from the above publication may be execrated to this context.

Assam is said to be the gateway of north-east states. It is inhabitant by various caste community people. Here is the Assamese Hindus, Bengali Hindus, Muslims, Bodos, Karbi, Rabha, Garo, Lalung, Missings, Santhals, Nepalis, Adivasis, Dimassas, Hajong, Deori etc. *The population pattern of major groups in Assam is Assamese Hindus 53.08%, Muslims 30.29%, Bodo 5.29%, Nepali 2.30%, Santali 0.99%, Rabha 2.04% and others comprise the rest.*¹³

The History of Six Years Assam Agitation :

In 1978 the then member of Lok Sabha Mr. Hiralal Patowary from

13. Statistical Handbook of Assam, 2008

Mangaldoi constituency in Assam was held and bye election was announced to fill up the seat. In the beginning of election process, about 70,000 names of suspected illegal Bangladeshi migrants were noticed in the electoral rolls by the Election Commission Office of Mangaldoi which caught the eyes of indigenous nationalist leaders of Assam. The All Assam student's Union (AASU) demanded that the elections be postponed till the names of foreign nationals are deleted from the electoral rolls. But government of Assam did not find concrete prove and logic to delete the names from electoral rolls only on the basis of suspicion and emotional sentiments. The fact was that AASU was creating extreme nationalist sentiments in the Assamese society against government's failure to deport of illegal Bangladeshi nationals. They made publicity about large number of migration from Bangladesh to Assam which will make the indigenous Assamese people as minority in their home land. At that time it was viewed that there are almost 60 (Sixty) Lac of illegal migrants in Assam. Rumour grasped the Assamese society about Bangladeshi migrants. AASU and other nationalist organizations expressed concern that due to Bangladeshi aggression, Assamese people must loss their home, property and security. This type of publicity created much havoc among the Assamese people and they extended grand support to the AASU to their activities and programmes. The general people of Assamese society thought them as 'Messiah' of new thinking and bringing dynamic changes in the society. The AASU leadership promised to make Assam as "Sonar Asom" (Golden Assam) by deporting such suspected foreign nationals from Assam. But they failed to provide concrete prove against such suspected foreign nationals. Therefore the Assam government could not agree with AASU demands. This led them anger and dissatisfied and subsequently launched agitation to compel the government to identify and expel immigrants. This agitation was run from 1979-1985 for a period of six years. So it is popularly known as "Six Years Assam Agitation".

Initially the six years Assam movement led by AASU was peaceful and non-violence. But the Election Commission of India declared Assembly Elections in Assam in 1983. The AASU and other nationalist Organizations in Assam called for boycott of the elections. But government was adamant to hold it. Accordingly, Assembly elections were held on 14th February, 1983. This led to the AASU and like minded organizations much anger and violence methods were applied here and there in almost all parts of the Brahmaputra valley region in Assam. Nellie, the small town in Nagaon District now in

Marigaon District in Assam witnessed one of the most ferocious kinds of violence on 18th February, by the local Lalung (Now Tiwa) community people against the Bengali speaking Muslims. Altogether 14 villages namely Alisinga, Khulapathar, Basundhari, Bugduba Beel, Bugduba Habi, Borjola, Butuni, Indurmari, mati parbat, Muladhari, Mati Parbat No. – 8, Shilbheta, Borburi and Nellie-were devastated. These villages were attacked from three sides leaving one side open that ends towards river kapili. There were attackers in boats too. Killing started at around 9.00A.M and continued till 3.00 P.M.

*The massacre claimed the lives of 2191 people (unofficial figures run at more than 5000). Most of victims were women and children belonging to Bengali speaking (suspected Bangladeshi) Muslims. Three media personnel namely Hemendra Narayan of Indian express, Bedbrata Lahkar of Assam Tribune and Diganta Sharma of ABC passing by the region were witness to the massacre.*¹⁴

*The survivors were taken to Nagaon Police Station. Most of the survivors were put into Nellie camp and they returned to their respective villages after 14 days of restoration of normalcy. Police filed 688 criminal cases against the culprits of the massacre, out of which 378 cases were closed due to lack of evidence while 310 cases were charge sheeted. In the meantime, the Assam Accord was signed between the Govt. of India and the AASU leadership on 15th August 1985 which included a clause agreeing to drop all the cases against culprits.*¹⁵ What a tremendous Justice in Indian federation! The law breakers were acquitted from all charges and cruelty to humanity because the victims were suspected migrants (actually they are legal citizen of India and the survivors of the massacre have been still living there). The AASU leadership called that accord as ‘Historical Accord’ and they formed a regional political party – Asom Gana Parishad (AGP) with the prime motto to deport all suspected Bangladeshis from the soil of Assam. But what happened and what is done by AGP government is known to all. They ruled the state for about ten years i.e. 1985-1990 and 1996-2001. During this period they could deport only 2129 Nos. of illegal Bangladeshis belonging to both Muslim and Bengali Hindu people. But took about 5000 innocent people’s life in Nellie and many more were killed in various places in Assam like Chaulkhowa, Samaria, Nalbari, Goalpara etc. by starting the agitation. This is one of

14. Nellie Revisited : The Horrors Nagging Shadow retrieved from www.nelliemessaere.com

15. *ibid.*

the shameful incident in Indian democracy and it created hatred socio-political environment in Assam.

*The Nellie massacre was seen as fallout of the decisions to hold the controversial elections in 1983 in the midst of the Assam Agitation. It has been described as one of the worst pogroms since the World War II. Even the victim's family was not compensated. The survivors of such families were provided Rs. 2000 (Two thousand) and three bundles of tin to build a new house. The compensation for every person who died was Rs. 5000 (Five thousand) and every wounded person got Rs. 1500 (One thousand five hundred). What negligence to the minority people who lost their life and property in the attack.*¹⁶

The findings of the study are :

- ⇒ The Six years Assam Agitation was based on some fictions facts and suspicion.
- ⇒ The agitation created an atmosphere of hatred politics, misunderstanding etc. among various caste community people in Assam
- ⇒ Government decision to hold 1983 Assembly Election was wrong. They failed to study the ground reality of people's anguish and discontent.
- ⇒ Although the movement was to deport illegal migrants irrespective of caste community and religion, but it targeted mainly the Bengali speaking Muslims.
- ⇒ Nellie became the graveyard land. Inhumanity and cruelty in Nellie massacre has no way to describe. Everyone who studies about the massacre wet his eyes with tears.
- ⇒ No Justice has been provided to the victims in the long 31 years of the massacre.
- ⇒ Victims have lost all hope of getting justice when the Nellie cases were dropped from legal procedure by both state as well as union government.

The discussion on Nellie Massacre shows that we the people have to play a constructive role to make a bridge of unity and brotherhood in the area. The local people of all communities should come out with open mind to rebuilt the believes and faith among them. We should prefer humanity rather than inhuman and beast type activities, because we

16. ibid

all are human beings, not the beast. The colour of our blood is the same. Besides, government should take appropriate steps to bring to book the culprit's of the crime. Justice and proper compensation to the next of kin of the victims must be provided. The people will have console that it is better late than never". In this context, government of Assam can follow the example of 1984 Sikh killing incident in Delhi, where the Prime Minister of India Dr. Manmohan Sing has apologized to the Sikh community for 1984 riots against them in Delhi. The same thing should be done to the minority Muslims in Assam, because both the State and Union Government can not deny their guiltiness in Nellie massacre. It is also the demand of all conscious people in Assam especially of Muslims to both the Government to take moral responsibility of the killing of innocent people in Nellie and to compensate to the victim's family as per universal Human Rights provisions of 1948.

The above discussion gives us a clear picture that justice and politics are separate issues. But in Indian context, politics supersedes justice. That is why Nellie massacre has been dropped from legal procedure. The government may offer hundreds of logic behind the dropping of the Nellie cases. But we general people can not echo our voices with them because we want to live in a society where peace, equality, justice, liberty, security etc. prevails. Let us try to build such an ideal society in our country.

In the quest for study on "Women Empowerment : A Study on Bongaigaon District 2002-2012, The scholar has tried to study women culture of Tribal societies also and in this matter a notable publication was found in the name of '**Asomor Rabha Janagosthi, Ati Bisleshan, Kitap Ghar, Goalpara, Assam by Rabha, B (2006)**'. Some other source about Rabha Tribal people in Assam were found in the name of Rabha People in Assam., Retrieved from www.rabhain.assam.com. These sources provide us the following information about that Tribal community with special reference to Rabha women. These may be quoted as following :

Assam is called the land of multi-culture and mix up of various caste-community people. Rabha community is one of the major community in Assam. They belong to Tribal Community and as such they are granted Scheduled Tribe status. Apart from Assam, the Rabha people are also found in west Bengal. According to census report, 2001, the number of Rabha people is 2,77,517 out of a total 26,65,528 people of Assam. The Rabha people share 8.4% of total population in Assam. The same report also shows that the literacy rate among Rabha people is about 66.7% out of which male occupies 76.2

percent while female has 57 percent. The Rabha's are also the indigenous son of the soil in Assam. They are scattering in many parts of Assam. But, Kamrup and Goalpara District of the state witness lion share of inhabitants of Rabha people.

Types of Rabha People and Culture :

During a field study programme on Rabha people in Assam, we visited the Bamungaon Part – II Village popularly known as 'Rabha Para' where we met a number of Rabha people, who informed us that there are 7 (seven) types of Rabha people namely (1) Maitoria (2) Totla (3) Pati (4) Rangdaniya (5) Jongai (6) Dangari and (7) Hassong Rabha. But as per scripts on the community, it has found that there are two major groups viz- Matoria Rabha and Rangdiniya Rabha.

Interestingly there is no any class or caste division among the Rabha Community and they share almost same type of socio-religious culture.

The Rabha society is patriarchal in character. The sons inherit the father's property equally; the daughters have no right of property unless the father makes arrangements before his death. A widow can not claim any portion of the dead husband's property.

In the case of marriage, the bridegroom family takes the initiatives of selection of bride. Generally the father of the bridegroom look for bride and after collecting information through middleman, he sees the bride. If he gets satisfied then the bridegroom is sent to see the bride. If he likes the bride then he tells his choice to the middle man and this time bride family comes to the bridegroom family for observation. By this way marriages are fixed in Rabhas society. But one thing is very important to illustrate that there is no system of 'Dowry' in Rabha society. Another important feature of Rabha marriage system is that newly wed couples are gifted by the invitee in marriage ceremony and the couple has to keep the gift in their memory that who have given what gift to them. Because, when the gift awardees will arrange marriage in their family, the previous gift taker has to present the same gift to them in return. This is a unique system in Rabha society.

There is rare example of Divorce in Rabha society. As per information available, there is a mere 0.4% of divorce cases in the society. This is because, male are not generally allowed to giving divorce. It is the women who can give divorce to their husband for various reasons. But before given divorce, the divorce seeker has to call a meeting of

village people. In this meeting, both the parties of husband-wife have to be attended and they are asked about the reason of such decision. The village men try to unite them for conjugal life. But if they do not agree, then both the husband and wife are given 'Pan' (Leafy chewing element which is largely chewed after eating food) in their hand. Now, they torn this 'Pan' and Separates formally from any kind of relationship. This is called 'Pan Chira-chiri' in local Rabha language which means divorce is done.

Rabha Society and Superstition :

There are some superstitions and social evils in Rabha society. In this society there is the superstition of 'Dainy' system which means the self appearance of some Tantrik (the so called people who know some secret speeches through which they can do any harmful to anybody they want) and against these 'tantrik' the general Rabha people take inhuman action here and there. This brutal superstition has taken life of many innocent Rabha people within the Rabha inhabitants. Interestingly some intellectual and conscious Rabha people have come out against such evil system. Mohini Rabha of Boko area of Kamrup Rural District of Assam has been leading the anti-'dainy' movement and to some extend, she has earned success in her efforts.

In Rabha society, some other superstitions have been still prevailing. Some of them are- existence of child marriage, non-recognition of widow marriage, etc. In the case of new born baby, they offer at least a drop of locally produced 'alcohol' to them as first food, and arrange for bath with the same alcohol. It means that alcohol is widely used in the Rabha society. Women also consume alcohol as men and there is no social restriction of taking the same.

Nature of Rabha Society and the Place of Women :

Rabha society is agrarian in nature. However weaving has also taken an important means of earnings. Basically the Rabha women are engaged in weaving since the early ages. During earliest days, when these Rabha tribes used to live in the jungles, they practiced shifting cultivation. Examples are cited where these Rabha tribes have been seen to plough in the land they used to cultivate with Gogo or bill-hook. However, in the later period they choose settled farming and began doing farming with plough.

In the cultivation system, both men and women take equal parts. In Rabha society, some times ploughing of land, harvesting of crops, are done with the help of all

villagers. For this purpose the man who sought help of other people have to invite the villagers previously and fixed the date of such works. On the fixed date, the work is done and the participants are offered feast with pigmeat and local alcohol.

Besides, the Rabha women have the habit of fishing, doing house hold works and help the male people in their daily works. They enjoy a kind of authoritarian position in the family affairs. This lead us to think that the Rabha society was once matriarchal type. But with the mixing up with Assamese Hindu society, they have adopted patriarchal pattern of society in due course of time.

In this society, no Rabha can marry within his own clan. The younger brother can however, marry the wife of the elder brother, in case of his death. Sometimes, 'Cross' cousins are allowed to get married, but marriage is strictly forbidden for 'parallel' cousins.

Custom in Rabha Society :

Traditionally, the Rabha's are very religious. They had performed their own religious rites. Their main puja festivals are 'Baikho' or 'Khosi Puja'. This puja is offered in the month of Baishakh. Some Rabha people also observe the 'Kechaikhaiti Puja' along with the 'Langa Puja' or 'Dinga Puja'.¹⁷ The Dinga puja is associated with boat. On the occasion of this puja, the Rabha people, specially the female decorate the 'Dinga' (boat) and puja materials are loaded in the Dinga. Now, the dinga is sent it to the middle water, and all present in the place offer puja by standing in the bank of water.

The Rabha tribe has excelled in the cultural heritage, as has been displayed in its various aspects. Apart from practicing animistic rituals, the Rabha people follow a distinct belief which is an amalgamation of the Hindu and Christian Culture. Differences are found among the ritual practices of the village and forest Rabha groups. They speak the Rabha language. They can also commonly speak Assamese and Bengali languages. Besides, they celebrate the Farkhanthi festival and Collecive Fishing Ceremony. The 'Nackchung Reni' is a kind of dance which is performed during 'Collective fishing' by women.

The findings of the topic as mentioned above are :

1. Rabha society is not fully educated one. Therefore, the society is still under the cover of darkness in many aspects of social life.

17. Axomor Rabha Janagosthi, Ati Bishlekhan, by B. Rabha, 2006, P – 10

2. Widows are not getting proper justice, since they are debarred from becoming heir of dead husbands property. Again, they can not come return to their paternal house. So, they have to spend a dependable life.
3. Some superstitions have been prevailing in the Rabha society. Most outstanding of them is the 'Dainy' system. This has become an obstacle in the path of development of Rabha society.
4. Rabha society is culturally rich. It is a transformative society and it has reached the present position through various changes.
5. Rabha women get less importance in the spiritual matter. They are not allowed to enter the temple or perform 'Puja' as priest. But in the case of divorce, women in Rabha community enjoy a superior position than men where the wives are allowed to seek divorce rather than husbands.
6. Alcohol consuming is a socially accepted tradition in the Rabha Society. But this has created obstacles of development of this community.

Rabhas are one of the indigenous people of Assam. They have come a long way of growth and development. But still there remained a long way to go to the track of development. For this purpose, the society must have to increase literacy rate. They should create an environment of peace and harmony in the society. Women should be given equal position and empowerment facility to develop their livelihood. Widow marriage system must be introduced and consume of Alcohol must be avoided. This can be done by creating awareness among the Rabha people. Scholars, intellectuals and leaders of this community should gear up such awareness programmes. By adopting this formula, they will be able to reach in the desired goal of progress and high position. They should avoid agitation and anti-community movement which is seen frequent in that society. At the same time government should pay proper attention and other communities should think them as equal as them towards the solution of their problems and demands. This will be the real force of development and peace in the society.

In search of plights of Tribal women in Assam, we have found article published in the Frontier, Vol. 44, No. – 20, November 27th December, 3, 2011 by Islam, M, the article reads :

“Constitution of India Provides specific measures for the protection and promotion of the social and economic interests of the Scheduled Tribes (Sts). The Sixth Schedule currently operates in the tribal-dominated areas of North-East India : Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Districts in Assam; Khasi Hills, Jaintia Hills and Garo Hills districts in Meghalaya; Chakma, Lai and Mara districts in Mizoram; and Tripura tribal areas in Tripura state. Each Scheduled Tribe area covered by the sixth Schedule has an Autonomous District Council with legislative, executive and judicial powers.

Twenty five ethnic groups in Assam have been ‘Scheduled’ as tribes as per provision in the constitution of India till 2002, the latest Constitutional amendment having made vide the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Amendment Act, 2002, notified by the government of Assam on April 1, 2003. The tribes listed for Assam are (in descending order of population in Assam according to the latest Census of India, 2001, which are shown in brackets):

1. Boro, (Boro Kachari (1,352,771), 2. Miri (Autononym : Mising) (587,310), 3. Mikir (Autonym : (353, 513), 4. Rabha (277,517) 5. Kachari, Sonowal (235,881) 6. Lalung (Autonym : Tiwa) (170,622), 7. Dimasa, Kachari (110,976), 8. Deori (41,161), 9. Kuki Tribes (28,273), 10. Naga Tribes (21,706), 11. Garo (21,112), 12. Barmans in Cachar (15,877), 13. Hmar (14,460), 14. Khasi, etc. (12,722), 15. Mech (8,997), 16. Mizo Tribes (2,957), 17. Chakma (2,478), 18. Hajai (1,882), 19. Man (Tai speaking) (739), 20. Syntheng (336), 21. Hajong (256), 22. Lakher (11).”

In addition to the above figure of population, the 2001 Census authorities have returned a figure of 47, 013 as Generic Tribe, which includes smaller groups of tribes not figuring in the constitutional list of Scheduled Tribes.

No population for the Pawi Tribe, which has a figure of 777 in Assam according to the Census of India, 1991, has been shown as nil in the latest census. Figures for the Khampti and the Singpho tribes are not available in the population statistics of Scheduled Tribes, as they were ‘Scheduled’ as Tribes only in 2002, i.e. after last Census. These two Tribes are more numerous in Arunachal than in Assam.

Health is a pre-requisite for human development and is essentially concerned with the well being of common man and woman. The widespread poverty, illiteracy, malnutrition, absence of safe drinking water and sanitary living conditions, poor maternal

and child health services and ineffective coverage of national health and nutritional services have been traced out in several studies as possible contributing factors to dismal health conditions prevailing among the tribal population in India. Health problems have been one of the main challenges faced by the tribal women of North East India, especially in Assam.

Several reasons may be identified behind those problems which include first of all habitat, illiteracy, ignorance, then lack of consciousness, the parameters of cultural ethos, at some point of time tradition, etc. Leprosy and tuberculosis are also common among them. Certain interacting factors like the infant mortality rate, life expectancy, genetic disorders, sexually transmitted diseases, nutritional status, forest ecology, child health and health care practices which are generally responsible for determining the health status and health behavior of tribal communities of Assam.

Malnutrition is common and has affected the general health of the tribal children as it lowers the ability to resist infection, leads to chronic illness and sometimes leads to brain impairment. The health, nutrition and medico-genetic problems of diverse tribal groups have been found to be unique and present a formidable challenge for which appropriate solutions have to be found out by planning and evolving relevant research studies. It is women who are always associated with health related issue and problems like high mortality rate, low life expectancy, malnutrition, sexually transmitted diseases, extra pressure of child bearing, lack of safe drinking water, lack of proper sanitary facilities, etc, Maternal and child health care practices were found to be largely neglected in various tribal groups. Expectant mothers to a large extent were not inoculated against tetanus. Vaccination and immunization of infants and children were inadequate among tribal groups of Assam. The ecological imbalance like cutting of trees have increased the distances between villages and the forest areas thus forcing tribal women to walk longer distances in search of forest produce and firewood. Infant mortality was found to be very high among some of the tribes.

Though National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), a National effort to ensure effective healthcare, especially for the poor and vulnerable sections of the society was launched (on 12th April, 2005 for a period of seven years 2005-2012) throughout the Country with special focus on Assam, AIDS awareness and prevention programmes among women were also conducted.

Doctors and Paramedical workers from the general population are reluctant to work in backward tribal areas of Assam. Further, there are not sufficient medical

personnel hailing from the tribal communities, who will have a better understanding about the needs of their people and who may be more willing to work in such areas. Abundance of healthcare facilities is not the only criterion in this regard since lack of consciousness very often stands in ways of development of rural tribal women of Assam.

We have taken the help of literacy rate in Assam district wise and tried to mention them to draw attention of intellectual community for the upliftment of women education in Assam. In this regard data has been collected from statistical Hand Book of Assam, 2011 published by Govt. of Assam from Dispur, Guwahati. This hand book refers us the following information about women education :

It is obvious to note that the census report of 1991, 2001 and 2011 show that total literacy rate (Percentage wise) in successive years in Assam is 52.89, 64.28 and 73.18 respectively. The Male-Female percentage is 61.87 and 43.03 in 1991, 71.93 and 56.03 in 2001 and 78.81 and 67.27 in 2011 respectively.

A comparative study of literacy rate of Male-Female in Assam can be shown in the following Table.

TABLE NO. – 2.1 MALE-FEMALE LITERACY RATE IN BONGAIGAON DISTRICT AND IN ASSAM DURING THE PERIOD 1991, 2001 AND 2011.

Sl. No.	Name of District	Male			Female			Total Literacy Rate		
		1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011	1991	2001	2011
1.	Bongaigaon	58.67	68.81	75.48	38.72	51.16	65.18	49.06	60.27	70.44
	Assam State	61.87	71.93	78.81	43.03	56.03	67.27	52.89	64.28	73.18

N.B : *The Districts have been created after 2001 census

The above table No. – 1 shows that the literacy rate varies from district to district in respect of Male-Female literacy ratio in Assam. This variation has major impact upon the social life of Assam. Again, the literacy rate includes those who can only write their names. Actually speaking, they are not proper literate and conscious. We cannot expect an intelligent society from them. This leads to a society where we are experiencing discrimination over female section of people. Domestic Violence, Physical torture, Dowry demand, rape etc. are common incidents in our society.

Education has broad scope to change the society. Education has the ability to eradicate superstitions, bad manner and to broaden the general outlook of people. That is why education is regarded as one of the most effective weapon of social reforms and changes.

To eradicate this type of social evils, our education system must reach all corner of society. Government must adopt appropriate education policy so that it can provide education as well as self-employment facilities. Sarva-Siksha Abhijan Mission (SSA), Assam cannot yield fruitful result as because it has become a kitchen for “Khichiri” (Mid-day meal) eating mission. This type of policy must be changed and new policy should be adopted in such way that can fulfill the requirement of our people. The word “Education” has been derived from Latin word “Educare” which means to increase, to progress, to develop, to go ahead.

According to Aristotle, “Education is the creation of sound mind in a sound body”

From the above meaning and definition of Education, we can say that there is no alternative way progress and development of our society other than Education.

In practical life, it is also observed and found that empowerment of women is interlinked with formal and non-formal sources of education. That is why late 19th and 20th Century social reformers advocated for women’s education as one of the main policy to answer about women related cases and questions.

Thus, nobody can deny the fact that the teachers, healthy social environments are needed for sound education system. Non-Government Organization and Civil Societies have to play constructive and major role in this regard. The future development and progress of Assam is on the shoulder of future generation irrespective of all caste, community and Sex. Only healthy education system can fulfill this demand and ambition.

Empowerment of Indian Women : A challenge of 21st Century by Dr. Bhuyan, D. where he says the following about the women in India. In his article, Dr. Dasarathi Bhuyan has tried to define the meaning of ‘empowerment’ in the light of the Indian constitution. The writer has explained some principles and ideals of the Indian constitution like Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties, Directive Principles etc. In the light of those principles, Dr. Bhuyan tried to compare the condition of Indian women where he mentioned that there are all kinds of necessary facilities for women in India. The Constitution has provided in the preamble that there is three types of equality i.e. Social, Political and Economic equality. This ideal as mentioned in the writings of Dr.

Bhuya is obviously a remarkable point so far as the process of upliftment of Indian women is concern.

Dr. D. Bhuyan also mentioned about Fundamental Rights in his writing. Yes, the writer has rightly pointed out the provisions of the Indian constitution. As we all know that Article 14-18 of the Indian constitution has provided the right to equality to all irrespective of caste, creed, sex, religion, language, region, etc. Besides, this article, the Indian constitution in its article 19 has provided six kinds of freedom to all it's citizens. Both the articles and the constitutional provision can be regarded as the milestone for the development of moral and intellectual capacity of Indian citizens.

The writer has also mentioned about the gender equality as enshrined in the constitution. All these provision of the Indian constitution has made women empowerment as more effective and meaningful. In the words of the author :

“Women of India are now uplifted and emancipated and granted equal status with men in all walks of life-political, social, domestic and educational. They have a franchise, they are free to join any service or follow any profession. Free India has, besides her woman prime minister, women ambassadors, woman cabinet minister, women legislators, women governors, women scientists, engineers-doctors-space researchers-giant IT specialists, women Generals, women public officers, judiciary officers and in many more responsible positions. No. distinction is now made in matters of education between boys and girls. Their voice is now as forceful and important as that of men. They are becoming equal partners in making or dismissing of a government.”

These show that the writer has gone through the Indian constitutional and legal system and accordingly explained the status of Indian women by citing some example. He has also mentioned about the changes of marriage system in the Hindu society. In the words of the writer :

Far-reaching changes have been introduced in the Hindu Marriage Act. Women have been given right to divorce in certain cases. Besides this, the Hindu Succession Act has given to the daughter; the right to the property of her parents. These are fantastic provisions and there is no doubt that by executing these provisions, the society will be completely free from discrimination against women.

Women Empowerment – Theory and Reality :

There is no noticeable change in the status of women in independent India, here is still a huge difference between the constitutional provision and ground reality of deprivation and degradation in the case of women. The amount of freedom has given in Indian society, is totally negligible and no changes are realized in rural India. Women are living in miserable conditions, like poverty, ignorance, superstition and slavery. On the one hand we see that there remained a big gaps between the objectives enshrined in the India constitutional provision and on the other hand, the ground reality of the position of women in India. In India the human rights scenario is not satisfactory and it is distressing. Female are being harassed, materialized and subjected to discrimination in all forms of their livelihood.

Though, the gender bias is prohibited by the constitution and female are guaranteed political equality with men, but still there is a huge gap between the legal rights and the rights actually enjoyed by women. Even after seventy years of independence, barring a few exceptions, women are extremely remained outside the jurisdiction of power and political authority in India. Though they constitute about half of the population and over the years their participation in voting has increased, but their sharing and representation in legislation and law implementing bodies are not very up to the mark.

Although the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment bill has offered access to women in the legislative process at the ground level but their participation in the Parliament and state legislatures is woefully poor. Insufficient security do not allow them to grow leadership at the ground level. In politics when a man proposes the name of a women, they themselves are ornamental in nature and political awareness is found insufficient. Women are also affected by the class and caste divisions, male domination in family and all sphere of daily livelihood. They are deprived of every where. They are like ornament in the family as well as in the society. They are neglected and it is widely accepted in Indian society. The story of religious Guru's are the best examples. Women are sold in prostitute houses, trafficking is going on. The impact of domestic violence is at the highest level in the society. More strangely, the child and infant girls are also not spared, old age mothers are kept in the orphan houses. What a situation ?

On the basis of the analysis of the constitutional provisions and the ground reality, we can say that the writer has contradictions in his writings and thinkings. Because he thought that here is all facilities in India for the all round development of women. At the same time, he has described the unexpected plights of Indian women. While describing these plights, he pointed out six weaknesses of the Indian society as well as government mechanism. These are :

- ⇒ Lack of awareness
- ⇒ Lack of social and economic empowerment
- ⇒ Lack of political will
- ⇒ Feebleness of accountability mechanisms
- ⇒ Lack of enforcement by the police force
- ⇒ Lack of gender culture

The six weaknesses lead us to raise some questions. These may be pointed out in the form of questions :

1. Why the awareness programme is not conducted regularly ?
2. Why there is no mechanism to abolish the gaps of social and economic empowerment ?
3. Why political parties, leaders and thinkers have not taken steps to implement empowerment methods ?
4. What measures or steps has been taken against the officers or police who denied to do work for women empowerment ?
5. What measures has been adopted to make implementing mechanism strong ?

The writer Dr. D. Bhuyan has not analysed these basic points. He has just explained the constitutional provisions and showed some problems of Indian women and also has provided few suggestions in this regard.

But so far our study and analysis is concerned, we want to humbly raise the above questions. If we put the questions and wish to gather data and information, I think we will be able to offer more effective suggestions to abolish discrimination against women.

In his writing, Dr. D. Bhuya suggested that training of women by Panchayati Raj Institutions should be more organized and broad based. He also advocated for education

and literacy. In the words of the writer, “Women must become literate, as education is beneficial for them as well as their families. The family web is woven around the women. She has to up to the mark and educated so that she could find for herself and her family during the hour of crises. The status of women would improve only if they educate themselves and grab every opportunity to become stronger and more powerful than before.”

Our analysis of the writing of Dr. Dasarathi Bhuya’s article “Empowerment of Indian Wome : A Challenge of 21st Century lead us to come to arrive at the following points.

- ⇒ The article is not a full study of women related issues.
- ⇒ It is not systematic and proper data, information etc. are not added here.
- ⇒ The writer has maintained a balance while discussing basic issues of empowerment.
- ⇒ It is not a classified or specific discussion. Rather it is a simple discussion.
- ⇒ It is a partial study of the women empowerment.

Keeping in mind the above weaknesses of the writings of Dr. D. Bhuyan, we felt to make our discussion more organized and systematic. Hence we have gone through other publications to make our aims and objectives fulfilled.

Another publication namely problems of women in modern India by Mazumdar Ananya (2010) Diamond Harbour Women University, department of women studies which is included in the syllabus for the year 2014-15 is a milestone to know the plights of Indian women. The publication gives us the following information regarding Indian women in modern period. The analysis of this publication i.e. The women in independent India are comparatively in a more respectable position. Some of the problems which had been haunting the community of women for centuries are not found now.

Problems such as child marriage, practice of ‘sati’, prohibition of widow remarriage, exploitation of widows, devadasi system, purdah system, etc. have almost disappeared. Development in the field of science and technology, universalisation of education, socio-political movements, modernisation and similar developments have changed the approach of people towards women to a certain extent.

These developments boosted the morale and self-confidence of women. As a result, Indian women now feel that they too have their own individuality, personality, self-respect, talent, capacity and efficiency.

Many of those women who could avail the opportunities extended to them have proved that they are capable of discharging the responsibilities assigned to them on par with men. The nation which neglected almost 50% of its population for several centuries has now understood the necessity of giving equal rights and opportunities to its womenfolk.

The Constitution of India provides equal rights and opportunities to women. It does not make any discrimination on the grounds of sex. Indian women are also responding positively to this changed socio-political situation. This does not mean that our women are completely free from problems. On the contrary, the changing situation is causing them new problems. They are now beset with new stresses and strains. Some of the major problems haunting the modern women may briefly be analysed here.

1. Violence against Women :

Violence against women is almost universal. In the present world, most societies witness violence in one way or another. Violence against men or women is a social problem because almost all section of people are affected by it every day. Each of us is affected in countless ways by the climate of violence. Violence is like poison to destruct the society.

Every society in the world establishes certain institutions designed to achieve goals. Violence disrupts normal institutional functions. Every act of violence, from beating, murdering etc. discontinue to some degree from the authority normally vested in society.

In most cases, it is seen that women are the victims of violence. Women are less likely to be associated in crime than men. But victimisation is higher than men among women. Violence against women is not a new phenomenon in India. "Women in Indian society have been victims of ill-treatment, humiliation, torture, and exploitation for as long as written records of social organisation and family life are available.

The records of women harassment is like incidents of abduction, rape, murder, and torture of women. Despite these incidents- of violence, these are not getting much important place in the literature on social sciences.

In India it is seen that women related cases are growing day by day in all parts of the country. From the children to the old age people, no body are spared of such type of heinous crimes. It is a matter of shame for us that old people whose age are above 70 are also engaged in rape cases. The incident of rape case in India's National Capital Delhi few years ago which is known as 'Nirbhaya Kanda', the Badaun Gang Rape, the Karnul Gang Rape, the Tinisukia Rape in Assam, the murder of married women in all over the country as well as in the Bongaigaon District of Assam lead us to say that India is no longer a safe place for the women. More to say that the so called 'Dharma Guru' (the religious Leaders) of almost all religion are involved in such type of heinous offences and crimes. The so called God men and their activities has led us to think that our system is damaged. Dowry has become a major problem for the female section of people in India. Many people are getting huge tension as they have no sufficient wealth to provide dowry for marriage of their daughter.

There is another problem in India that in every six minutes there is atleast one atrocity against women in the form of either eve teasing or murder for domestic violence or dowry related case or rape and so on. The crime Bureau report indicates that there is for every forty four minutes, a women is kidnapped. It is a matter of great concern. The same report also show that for every forty seven minutes there is a women raped. This prove that our social system is collapsed in all fronts. Humanity, morality, value system and so like has damaged. New generation is not getting value based education. Cello phone, internet. Google, face book, and other modern technologies are providing huge number of unwanted and cheap materials which are easily accessible. These elements are doing more harm to our age old traditions, morality and value system of humanity.

The National Crime Report Bureau has indicated that there is one Dowry related case in every seventeen days in the country. The number is increasing day by day. Our study found that there are dowry related cases in the Bongaigaon District also. Even the remote areas are also suffering from this menace. There are some cases which do not come to the light as because these cases are locally managed by some village headman. Some times cases are dismissed by giving threatening or by offering money to the victims family. Usually, it is seen that the poor and down trodden people are the victims of such type of crimes and incidents.

During our study time, it is found that the crimes against women is higher in the orthodox Muslim family. But these cases do not come to light due to high level 'Sharia Law' and conservativeness. The Muslim families are too much religious in nature. They adopt purdah system, religious education and do not provide the freedom to women. These has led to the miseries of Muslim women moor pathetic. Their interest is not on general and scientific education. Male domination is universally accepted. No body can wish to go against the Muslim cleric's verdict of purdah system. Those who are educated and modern thinkers in Islamic society fears of lift and property damage if they go against Muslim cleric's verdicts.

In the Bengali Hindu society there is high rate of Dowry related cases. We have found during our study time that many women and their families are suffering from this problem.. The NCRB (National Crime Report Bureau) also showed that crimes against women are grown two times in the last ten years. It is also sown that rape cases are increased by 400% in the last two decades. It is a fact of great concern. We have also studied in depth that women in the Bongaigaon district are legging behind in comparison to Assam State or in National level. This type of situation must be abolished. The respective government of the State and the Union government must adopt some concrete and confirm policy to safeguard the interest of our women.

It is in this context needed to mention that only government can not do all these things to make a better and healthy society. Therefore all intellectuals, civil societies and educated persons must have to come foreword for the upliftment of women's condition in the society.

Violence against Women within and Outside Family :

India which has a male domination society, violence's against women are unfortunately increasing at an increasing rate. Such violence's can be grouped into two types: (a) Violence against women within the family, and (b) Social violence against Women.

(a) Violence against Women within the Family :

Women are often subject to violence within the family, a place which is expected to protect their dignity and assure their safety. This type of violence includes crimes such as — dowry related harassments including death, wife-beaing, marital rape, sexual abuse of female children and women of one's own family, deprivation of sufficient

food to female members, happening sexual relations within the same family, abusing female servants of the family, low payment to the female workness, forceful prostitution etc. etc.

(b) Social violence against Women :

There are some very heinous offences which occur against women in our country. These are kidnapping, murdering, raping incestuous offences etc. The society do not take strict action against such criminals. It is seen that the village headman and other relatives of the criminal adopts every means to suppress the crime.

These type of violence include compelling women for abortion, eve-teasing, kidnapping girls of pre-matured age and forcing them to marry, sexual harassment of women employees in work place, immoral trafficking in women and girls, forced prostitution, begging, blackmailing of women, throwing acid to the faces of girls who refuse to marry, the police and the jail personnel committing sexual crimes against female prisoners, the police, armed forces and the border security forces committing sex crimes against the female citizens in the border areas, the religious conversion of married women, abuse by boss in Government as well as private offices, etc. etc.

2. Injustices on the ground of 'Gender' :

Injustice on the ground of gender means a widely used practice in a society, where one sex gets preferences over other in all respect of life style. Broadly speaking, there are two types of society in the world. They are advanced society and under developed society. In the advance society, these injustices are not seen or it is cease to happen. But in the under developed society, these differences are very much high. In this society, one sex people get privileges over the other. In India, this is observed in every sphere of social spectrum.

There are various forms of gender injustice in India. These may be discussed as under :

(i) Injustice in respect of Socialisation Process :

There are some social systems in India, which automatically bring injustices to women. In the social system of our country, women have been victimizing since their birth. Almost all people irrespective of literate or illiterate, want to have male children in their family. If such things do not happen, many people revoke their better halves and blame her genetic problems. Female children are not provided due importance in comparison to

male children. It is seen that discrimination between male and female children is in food, dress, health, education, domestic work, playing matters, etc. A society where there is male preference and female negligence may be termed as disadvantaged society. Further, mother's (who are like the angel for babies) also do such type of discrimination. It is observed during our field study and interaction with some villagers specially the women, they opined that 'what is the benefit of providing much importance of female children ? What will they do during old age? They will be at their husband's family. Their responsibility is to give marriage and make the daughter's family happy. Nothing else. Nothing shelter in old age can be hope from them. It is the male children, with home future life would have to be spent. They are the only hope of getting care in time of need. So, they prefer male children instead of female children.

(ii) Differences in the matter of work, power and Financial Affairs :

India witness a patriarchal society except Meghalaya province. In such a patriarchal society, some works like – cooking, feeding children, cleaning up house, washing cloths etc. etc. are specially look after by women. Male people get shame of doing such works. Our women also perform these works without any question because they see and grow in such practical environment.

Likewise, power whatever it may be in a family spectrum, automatically held by the male senior most person of the family. Even if that male is much younger than an old women of the same family, then also the younger male people get the family power to keep it systematic.

On the matter of income and expenditure, it is the male people who take final decision. Family's financial matters are look after by male people in our country.

(iii) On the matter of Health :

We see that female suffer from some major health problems from which male people are free. They have to overcome the distinctive biological process during pregnancy, or child- delivering, bearing, nursing, feeding, child- rearing or caring etc. These are their maternal as well as functions. But the example on the family planning has posed many health related problems.

The use of anti-pregnancy means mostly by the women has an adverse effect on health. Women who frequently make use of these means suffer from problems such as

bodily weakness, bloodlessness, high bleeding, fatness, problems in uterus, discomfort in breast, chronic backpain, etc. As Neera Desai and Vibhuti Patel have criticised the exponents of family planning do not seem to trouble much about these problems. It is a matter of great concern. Our study during field work has shown that :

Women themselves are neglecting their own health in our society. Normally Indian women takes less food and use more labour and energy on work. Women snares for the good of the family and children even at the cost of doing harm to their own health.

Our female folk cease to make complain about their ill-health because of their hiding nature or self-denial. The Government records in the health centres show that women are lagging behind men even in matters of availing of medical help. An observation of records reveal that one womenn take medical help for every three men in India.

Women do not get free time to go to health centres because of their heavy work at home. Again there is no available health centre's in rural areas which debarred them to take medical advice on their health. They are un-aware about folic acid, iron tablets, need of hemoglobin in the human body, function of White Blood Cell (WBC) and Red Blood Cell (RBC) in human body. These unawareness and non-consciousness brings lot of miseries to our women in the form of multi-ferious disease. Some women get neglect from her husband and other family members for such ill-health and occurrence of disease.

(iv) Decreasing women Population:

Naturally, in the population of any country in the globe, the male-female ratio becomes more or less the equal, that is, 50:50. But in India we have seen from census reports that female population has been steadily decreasing since last thirty years.

Here we can cite the view of Neera Desai and Vibhuti Patel who raised the point whether the womenfolk in India represent a “declining sex”. According to 2001 Census, there is a deficit of 35 million women as compared to 3 million in 1901. For every 1000 men, we have only 933 women at present as against 972 women in 1901.

The preference for male children has led to the abuse of modern technology. Thousands of “Female” children are killed at the foetus stage. It is said that in India, out of 12 million female children born every year, around 25% of them die before they attain the age of 15. Of the children who die every year, about 3 lakh female children, that is, more than the number of male children, die for one or the other reason. Of the children which die

every year in India, the 6th child dies due to gender discrimination. This data clearly shows the growing tendency of discrimination against female. What a society we have ?

(v) Women are dominated in Occupation :

In India, it is widely seen that women employees are paid less than that of male employees in mostly private and domestic work field. Although they perform the same type of work, yet they are getting the less-these women can not raise their voice, because by doing so, they might have to lose their job. In the matter of increment, promotion, their cases are not given much importance.

In public life also, women are given secondly position. All important Government posts and offices are held by male people. In the field of administration, more than three-fourth jobs and high officials posts are held by male people.

3. Difficulties in Women Education :

Sociologist and eminent thinkers opine that in a nation like India providing education to female will ultimately help in the eradication of many social problems. It will benefit the society as a whole.

So, the Government has paid, much attention for the education of women after independence. The female literacy rate is also growing day by day. It has increased from 18.7% in 1971 to 39.42% in 1991 and to 64% in 2001. In spite of this change in the trend towards literacy, some problem has cropped up. Here we have seen exemplary differences between the level of education of men and women. For example,

a) There is a tendency for discouraging girls to go for higher education and also for technical and professional education.

b) It is seen that regional imbalances in education in the states like Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra, female education is encouraged and given almost equal importance. Whereas in states like Bihar, Assam, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh etc. education of girls is not given much importance even today.

c) There is increasing drop-out of female children from schools is another problem, in almost all parts of India. Bongaigaon District of Assam is not exception to it. Here we have seen that a large number of drop out girls students are not going to school, college. Their guardians are also not much interested to send them for further education.

Instead they try to arrange for marriage which ultimately brings negative results in the due course of time.

4. In the matter of Divorce and Punishment of Women :

There is a increasing number of cases of divorce and punishment of women in India. There is various family related issues in our daily life. These issues may be solved amicably. But what we have seen during our study in the Bongaigaon District of Assam 2002-2012, is that maximum number of divorce cases has started from a very simple and negligible issues. For example, one couple was arguing to go for a holiday trip. While the husband wanted to go to Shilong of Maghalaya, the wife preferred to go to Shimla, Himachal Pradesh. This matter was not resolved amicably and finally many other small issues were going to be added with this issue. Finally both of them applied to the court for divorce. What a strange ?

Similarly, we have seen that usually, wife of a husband gets more punishment in the rural areas of the district due to their illiteracy and unaware of law related to women folk. This causes desertion also.

Desertion causes lot of hardships especially for women. It immediately drives a woman to a state of uncertainty and helplessness. Deserted women belonging to poor families all of a sudden become orphans especially when they are disowned by their own parents. Some of them may resort to immoral activity, some others fall prey into the hands of anti-social elements, while a few of them may commit suicide.

Besides the above problems, there are some other problems relating to women in India. For example, women are used as purchasable community by our big media houses and industrialists. They use the beautiful girls for various type of hot advertisement which ultimately creates neglect nature towards them by the society.

Secondly, media does not encourage structural women movement. Their causes are not highlighted in a depth manner women movement are not given full coverage by either print or electronic media. This is a daru chapter of in the path of emancipation of India women.

There is a legislation entitled “the indecent representation of women (prohibition) Act, 1986 which clearly ordered the media to refrain from misrepresentation the women. It is also stated that any attempt to discredit or insult or humiliate them or

assassinate the character of women and present them in an indecent manner is a punishable offence. This act brings a little bit hope of restoration of honour and dignity of Indian women. The role of media should be constructive in so far as the matter relates to women in India. Hence the said legislation of 1986 is one of the landmark legislation for the preservation of women respect is concerned.

In India, there is an acute problem of women is dowry. It has crept the India society from top to bottom. It is not only a harmful practice, but also an indecent manner to destroy a family. Usually 'Dowry' refers to receive of property, wealth money, goods and materials, ornaments etc. from the wife or from her family by the husband or by his family. It is an evil practice and seen it's strong present in the Bongaigaon District of Assam. During our study period, I personally visited some of the victims being can go in such a bottom line thinking with his better half! Some of the victims revealed that her family is disintegrated due to greedy nature of her mother-in-law, who always insists her son to acquire cash money or valuable furniture from father-in-laws family. It means that our women section themselves are associated with such a heinous crime. The menace of dowry causes unhappiness, miseries and destruction of bride's family for which bride groom's family has no any sympathy or they are not bothered with other's difficulties. There is a legislation in the name of Dowry prohibition Act, 1961 as amended in 1986 to prevent dowry problems from our society. It strictly prohibits dowry from all means and declared dowry demand as heinous crime. But the result of it is not seen as it was expect. All societies irrespective of caste, community, religion, etc. in the Bongaigaon District of Assam have been facing these problems.

Another problem of Indian women is the they are far behind from political powers. The political power is mostly handled by male politicians. Although, there is 33% reservation for women in the Panchayati Raj institutions in Assam as well as in India, but what we have seen in practice that in most of the cases where women have got the chance to represent people or a particular area, because of 33% reservation facility, but their husbands have been exercising this power through back door policy.

As the Bongaigqaon district consists a huge number of Muslims, so we tried to find out the position of Muslim women and their rights as granted in Islam. In this regard we searched for a number of documents and Islamic manuscript and in support of our quest of search, we found a fantastic publication by Dr. Ahmed B.H.A., et. al: Glimpses of The

Holy Qur'an, Adam Publishers & Distributors 1542, Ptaudi House, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002. This research journal gives us a lot of information about Islamic rules on women. Therefore, this journal has utmost utility in the way of our research study. The journal provides us the following information and data.

Islam is a unique religion in the world which preaches the philosophy of equal rights for men and women since its origination. In fact Mahammad Mostafa (S) was the first prophet in the human history, who spreaded the notion of equality among mankind irrespective of caste, religion, sex, language etc. and evolved the path of emancipation for the suppressed one. Muhammad (S) himself taught people specially his followers to provide equal status to women and to take care of female infants. In this context, it is to be mentioned that in the pre-Islamic Arab Society, female infants were killed immediately after their birth and wives were neglected who gave birth to female infants. There were another system of purchasing and using slaves (Male & Female) in open market and they were called "Gulam" and "Guluma". There were Physical punishment, sexual abuse, mental harassment, malnutrition etc. with the slaves. They enjoyed life nothings more than the beast. There was no system of widow remarriage in pre-Islamic society and those who became widow, had to spent a pathetic life. In such a situation and social condition, there came Prophet Muhammad (S) as the pathfinder for their rescue and emancipation. He preached the idea that there is one creator and controller of all creatures that is 'Allah' and He (Allah) has provided all of them equal rights and freedom. There is no place of slavery and abuse on men and women in Islam. If any body ignores such teachings, he will be punished by Allah in the final court of judgment and the guilty will be sent to Hell. Islam, through the holy "Qur'an", Allah says in His holy speeches :

*"O people! be careful of (your duty to) Lord, who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women."*¹⁸

So, it is the Islam and the Holy Qur'an through which Prophet Muhammad (S) pave the way of salvation for all suppressed section of people. Islam also declares male and female (husband-wife) as ornament for each other.

18. "Islammat Narir Maryoda" A Book written by Mufti Abdul Khaliq, P. 3 – 5

Muhammad (S) assisted his wives in doing domestic works. He preached the idea of equality, justice and freedom for all. He also urged the people for spreading education for both boys and girls. And it is known that he advised his followers to send the pupils to china (by this he meant distant places). No, other prophet in the world preached such ideas at the time Muhammad (S) did so. Muhammad (S) got severe insult, physical punishment and other barriers in his way of reform of traditional Arab Society and formation of new models of Islam and its fundamental principles and ideologies. Many opponents wanted to kill him while some others offered him rewards in the condition that Muhammad (S) should give up preaching Islamic principles. But nothing could divert him from the original way that is chosen by Allah and for what Muhammad (S) was sent to the earth. He continued his journey of rose and thorns and slowly people got attraction to this new ideals of Islam. Thus the ideals of Islam has spreaded all over the world during and after his lifetime.

Advent of Islam to Assam :

The ideology of Islam came to the mainland of Assam during 1206 A.D. with the invasion of Muhammad Bin Bakhtiyar which was followed by various other invasions including the Mughal kings. Historical evidences prove that like the Ahom's and many other people of Assam, Muslims are not the original son/daughters of this soil and they migrated from other parts of undivided India and abroad, especially from Arabian countries. There were sizeable numbers of Muslims in Assam at the time of independence of India. In this context, it is worth mentionable that the first Chief Minister of Assam (then called premier) during 1937-38 and again in 1938-1942 period Sir Muhammad Sadullah belonged to Muslim community. At present there are about 30.92% Muslim population in Assam. There are several types of Muslim groups namely Goria, Maria, Deshi, Bhatia etc. These Goria, Maria's had came to Assam with a view to invade it with the Mughal invaders as warrior but they remained here and subsequently settled down. Some of the Muslims were parts of original Bengali society as well as local ethnic groups who converted from other religion to Islam due to various invasion by Muslim invaders. "Bhatia's are the largest groups of Muslim population who belong to erstwhile Bengal. Some of them have also converted to Islam from other religions. Therefore, the social traditions of these groups have some similarities with the other Hindu groups namely Koch Rajbongshi, Majhi (Fisherman) and some other low caste 'Hindu Community'. Hence, the family pattern, male, female

relation, marriage system, rights of men and women, dowry system etc. have some how similarities with the Muslim society to the Hindu society in Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.

Assam is geographically divided into two valleys and one hilly region. The valleys are the Brahmaputra valley and the Barak valley. The hilly region comprises Karbi Anglong and North Kachar District (Now Dima-Hasao). The former comprises with 22 districts while the later comprises with only 3 districts. The present topic is related with the 22 districts of Brahmaputra valley Islamic society. Therefore the topic “Women Rights in Islam : A study on Brahmaputra valley Islamic society is related with these 22 Nos. of Districts in Assam. The area of study will cover social system, education facilities, attitude of male towards female, etc.

Muslim Population in Brahmaputra Valley :

In the Brahmaputra valley Islamic societies, the Muslims comprise almost one third of its total population. The following table contains the population pattern in Brahmaputra valley districts in Assam, which will provide a clear picture.

Table No. – 2.2 POPULATION PATTERN IN BRAHMAPUTRA VALLEY AREA IN ASSAM.

Total Population of Assam	Total Population in Brahmaputra Valley	Total Muslim Population in the Valley	Percentage of Muslim Population in the Valley
3,20,69,272	2,26,58,369	68,55,764	30.26%

The above table of population in Brahmaputra valley shows that a sizeable number of Muslims have been living here. But among these Muslims, there are two main divisions mainly Sunni and Siya. The present study will try to reflect on Women Rights in Islam : A study on Brahmaputra valley Islamic Society in Assam” with an analytical view on Sunni Society.

In the Brahmaputra valley it is assumed that about 97% Muslims belong to sunni society. Although, there are some linguistic and other differences among Sunni followers, but they have common religious norms and ideals.

Rights of Muslim Women in the Area :

The women rights scenario in the valley can be discussed under following heads :

Right to Education :

There are about 48.4% literate persons among Muslims in Assam in contrast to 73.14% of average literacy rate in Assam. The condition of Muslim women literacy rate is far behind the male Muslims which is only 38.00%. Interestingly, these literacy rates cover only those, who can write their name, and read the alphabets of any particular language. So, the actual Muslim women literacy rate (HSLC Passed and above) may not be more than 25%. It is a very panic picture of our female section. Most of the Muslims in Assam, specially in Brahmaputra valley region live in “Char – Chapori” (a area which is surrounded by rivers by all sides or adjoining to rivers). The Muslims of Char-Chapori are one of the most backward people not only in Assam but also in India. There is no any means of proper and adequate education, medical facilities and other modern means of livelihood, which need special attention from all quarters and planners of India. In the light of this backwardness, some so called Islamic theologians (who have no vast study on the Islamic culture), declare some religious norms which are completely against women rights and which indirectly do not encourage knowledgeable learning for Muslim women. Their speeches and voices confine Muslim women within the boundaries of the family. Physical torture, domestic violence, sexual harassment etc. are day to day happenings in such Islamic societies in Assam. Some Muslim family in Assam (specially in char areas) do not send their daughters to schools because of the fear of unexpected defamation of family status. There for Muslim girls are ceased to continue their higher studies. These conservativeness of mind of Muslims have hampered their overall progress. Again, the Muslims in Assam are too much imitator to other caste-community people. In this context, we would like to cite one example i.e. Islam never allows dowry. Even, it declares that any person taking dowry from bride, he is eating stool of dog. His place will be in the Hell. But most of the Muslims in Assam, do not follow such noble teachings of Islam. Despite, they follow the dowry system which is largely prevailing in some Hindu marriage system in India. Most of the educated youths demand Car, two wheelers while some others demand cash amount, ornament, or other materials in the form of dowry in Assam, which is not only unwanted but also condemnable. This unwanted practices have causing many incidents like killings of wife, suicide, domestic violence, legal battles in the court etc. etc.

Lack of proper education rights for women is a major problem in Muslim dominated areas. Although, Muslims living in town areas and ‘Kayem’ (permanent place of living without the fear of river erosion) area have adequate schooling facilities, but the people living in char areas have no such facilities. There are the problems of enrollment, dropout, and domestic child labour mainly female, immature marriage and so on. These have caused the violation of human rights as well as negligence to proper Islamic ideology towards women. A look on Muslim Male-Female literacy rate in Assam will show a clear picture of their position in the following tables.

Table No. – 2.3 Comparative Gender wise Literacy Rate in Assam : 2001.

Town Area						Rural Area					
Total Literacy Rate (Male + Female)			Female			Total Literacy Rate (Male + Female)			Female		
Hindu	SC/ST	Muslim	Hindu	SC/ST	Muslim	Hindu	SC/ST	Muslim	Hindu	SC/ST	Muslim
87	80	72	83	73	66	66	62	47	57	52	38

From the above table we have come to know that the literacy rate in town area is higher than rural area. Again the literacy rate in male people is relatively higher than female people. But, it is astonishing that the literacy rate in Muslim and SC/ ST community is not up to the expectation. The authority concern should consider this fact positively and adopt such a policy which will help this people to develop their education and increase literacy rate.

Table No. – 2.4 Comparative Gender wise General Literacy Rate in Assam : 2001

Percentage of Muslim Population in Assam	Percentage of Population in Hindu & Other communities	Hindu Literacy Rate	SC/ST Literacy Rate	Muslims Literacy Rate	Other Minorities literacy Rate
30.9	69.1	70.0	64.0	48.4	71.3

Killing of Embryo and Negligence to Female Infants :

There is another tendency of neglecting of female children in some families in Assam. Even, pre-delivery tests are done in the mothers womb by the way of some

medical experiments etc. to find out whether the baby will be female or male and accordingly measures are taken. This is done by some of the so called Muslim educated persons in Assam. There are many people who do not want to see the face of new born baby if it is a girl. Many people want to have birth control and small family. But whenever, he finds that his new born is a girl, his plan get changes and produce children one after another until a male child is born. Even some parents do not take adequate care of female infants.

Condition of Economic Rights of Muslim Women :

In the name of religion, Muslim women are debarred from enjoying some economic rights. For instances, Muslim women except a few percentage, can't go out for marketing, shopping or streets for demonstration in favour of their legal demands. But in actual practice, Islam permits them to do so with proper Purdah System. In fact, purdah system is not a hindrance to the progress of women. Despite, it is one of the best system to save women from men's negative attitude.

Islam reserves economic rights to women. It permits to engage them in various type of jobs having proper purdah system. But what we see in the Brahmaputra valley in Assam is that there is a negligible number of women representations in various income oriented fields of engagement. It has made the Muslim people economically backward. Poverty among Muslims in Assam is 38% in contrast to 16% among Hindus, and 18% among SC/ST people. The condition of self employment of Muslim women in the area is very poor. This occurred due to non-involvement of majority of Muslim women in income oriented jobs. These women remain at home as 'shadow worker' and spend a dependency life upon their guardians or husbands. When this dependency become unbearable burden, they are treated with ill manners. Rights of women wither away and a panic situation come to the forefront.

From this brief discussion made above regarding condition of Muslim women and their rights in Brahmaputra valley in Assam, it has been seen that proper Islamic principles and instructions have not been implemented among Muslims. Lack of education facilities to girl children, early marriage, dowry, killing of embryo and negligence to them, absence of proper economic rights and self employment facilities with dependency life of Muslim women in the area are found in the study. These causes serious set back for them in the path of progress and salvation.

To eradicate the barriers on the way of enjoying rights by Muslim women in Assam specially in Brahmaputra valley, and to improve a well and healthy Islamic society following measures may humbly be suggested :-

Spread of Education :

Education is like the epic centre of the development of human mind and thinking. It makes people conscious and logistic on every aspect of livelihood. So, the government may take special steps for spreading of education among Muslims because without the development of 30.92% Muslims, the development and a civilized society in Assam is not be expected. Besides, Intellectuals from all communities should be aware about women rights among Muslims in Assam. This will lead to develop a value based Islamic society.

Abolition of Early Marriage and Dowry System :

It has already been discussed that the Muslim society of this area is suffering from early marriage and dowry problem. This has deprived the women from getting equal status with male people. Therefore, the educated Muslims and conscious people should work for creating much awareness among Muslims with the proper explanation of the holy Quran and Hadith to abolish such unwanted matters.

Overcome of Poverty :

Poverty among Muslims in Assam is very high and this has caused overall backwardness for women. To make our female section self confident in their respective working field and to empower them in earning sectors, they should be provided proper opportunities.

Self Employment :

Most of the women in Muslim Society in the area of discussion are housewives. They engage themselves in house keeping works. Their direct monetary income is not seen. They have nothing to speak on family matters. So, self employment system with proper Islamic arrangements should be created to make them self sufficient. Government and other authorities should pay necessary and special attention towards the safeguarding of Muslim women rights with a broader outlook.

In addition to the above measures, there should be separate recreation centre for women. Each village or unit should have female consultancy centre to share their views, problems and to take suggestions from the women having Islamic knowledge. In such activities, Islamic Non-government organizations will have to take leading role by adopting the ways and means shown to us by Prophet Muhammad (S), which will definitely help our women to enjoy a meaningful life.

Another Book namely, Women Empowerment in India by Asmat, S. et. Al, (2012): Mittal Publications, New Delhi, provides us various information in the matter of women empowerment and its present status. The book might be an important informatics in the way of present research work.

An unpublished M.Phil Dissertation namely, Socio-Political Development of women of Srijangram Anchalik Panchayat Area under the Srijangram Development Block of Bongaigaon District of Assam during the period 1998-2008 by Ali, Mayemun in the year of 2009 gives us huge socio-political data and information of women of Srijangram Anchalik Panchayat area of Bongaigaon District in Assam. It is in this context, mentionable that the Anchalik Panchayat covers with 10 (Ten) Gaon Panchayat (Village Panchayat) consisting about 100 (Hundred) Villages where various caste community people like Assamese Hindus, Bengali Hindus, Muslims, Tribal People etc. live. The dissertation has elaborately discussed about the social and political norms, customs, rituals traditions, superstitions, political Participation, faith on Democracy, party membership at various levels, political representation of women in various representative bodies etc. The dissertation provides us some basic research idea which are in the form of Methodology, questionnaire, Bibliography, Appendix, etc. It also provides us the concept of Field Data Analysis and Enterpretation of Data.

Thus the dissertation may be vital source of the successful completion of this research study.

Indian Approach to women empowerment by Jhunjunnwala, B. & Jhunjunwala, M. (2004) and published by Rawat Publications, New Delhi, is an important book to find facts and theories of women empowerment with scientific logic. That is why this book is discussed and studied to make the present research work authentic and present research work authentic and objective in its presentation.

Manab Adhikar' (Human Rights), a book by Purandar Gogi, published in 2006. By Bhawani Prakashan, Pan Bazar, Guwahati, Assam; Elements of History by Roy, B.B. published in 1997 by Bina Library, Pan Bazar Guwahati; Manab Adhikar by P. Baruah Published in 2005 by Students Emporium, Dibrugarh, Assam are some valuable source of gathering data and information in the purpose of present research study. All these books and publications provide us the History of Assam, its origin, habitation, scenery of rights and freedoms of Assamese people etc.

Bhasin, K : understanding Gender, Kali for Women, 2000, New Delhi, a book to know women in India and their problems. From the beginning to the end, the book states the women related issues in pros and cons which established her a leading feminist thinker we may get extra energy and tonic if get extra energy and tonic if we study this precious book and go ahead through it's teachings.

In the review of literature section our study has covered colonial Assamese Society. The intention of this study and coverage is to know previous and present women position in Assam. In this context, we have studied a book namely "Assam in the Days of the company, authored by Barpujari, H.K. in 1995 and published by Bina Library, Pan Bazar, Guwahati, Assam. This book is a fantastic informatics source to all readers about Assamese society in colonial period with explanation of some heroic role by Assamese women like Kanaklata Baruah etc.

Besides, the above review, it is obvious to know more and more information, gathering and collecting of data field study, etc. are needed to have an accurate research study. For this purpose we have studied some other publication like Statistical Hand Book of Assam, 2009-2010, Assam Human Development Report, 2003, published by Government of Assam with title "Women Striving in an Unequal World", census report 2011, published by Government of India, National crime Bureau, Govt. of India, New Delhi, Gana Adhikar, A Daily News Paper in Assam, "Dalan Bhanga" a souvenir published by Bongaigaon Zilla Sahitya Sabha in 2008, Seminar Paper on Women Empowerment Organised and published by the Department of Political Science, Ratnapith College, Bahalpur, Chapar, Baseline Survey of Minority Concentrated Districts: District Report: Bongaigaon: Assam by Ministry of Minority Affairs, Government of India, study conducted by OKDISCD, Assam in 2007, Goalpara Gazette,1966; Bongaigaon Gazette,1989;

Panchayat Proceedings 2002, Goalpara Zillar Itihas (History of Goalpara District) by Sarma, S.(2008) etc.

An unpublished Ph.D Thesis namely “Women Empowerment and PRI’s in Assam : A Study of Nagaon District by Biswajit Roy is analyzed to enrich our study. The thesis contains a total of Six Chapters. Chapter – I includes Introduction where the researcher has explained women Empowerment on the basis of conceptual framework, Constitutional provisions citing examples of article -14 & 15. Besides he has mentioned the works done for women empowerment citing example of plan period (1951-56), Sixth Five Year Plan (1980-85), Seventh Five Years Plan (1986-91), Eleventh Five Years Plan (2008-2013) etc. By mentioning this researcher has shown the interest to extract the actual status of women in the district.

In chapter – II, the research scholar has discussed about Socio-Economic and Cultural background of elected women members in PRI’s. Chapter Five has discussed about reservation of seats for women in Panchayati Raj Institutions. In the last chapter the research scholar has discussed about conclusion, Major Findings of the study mentioning hypothesis, etc. Thus the thesis has provided a pen picture of the women in Assam with special reference to Nagaon district. Although the topic of study is vast one, but he has tried to provide only Panchayat members empowerment scenario.

Another unpublished thesis namely “Communities of Women in Assam : Being, Doing and Thinking Together.” by – Nandana Dutta is reviewed. This book uses communities of women as a framework for reading women’s experience, rights and aspirations in Assam and North –East India. It explores the varying roles played by such communities in the formation of society, the emergence of a women’s public sphere and the representation of these communities in culture.

All these publications have been reviewed and examined carefully to make the present research study fundamental, objective and accurate. Our sincere efforts are always to perform meaningful work and for this purpose we are ready to do all kind of possible hard works. In this context, it is mentionable that we will surely search for other relevant Books, Journals, Magazines or any other publications which may deemed fit for the fruitful conclusion of this research study.

Interestingly during our study time, we have gone through the publications as mentioned above. Notwithstanding with the study and review of related literatures we

collected relevant data and information by applying various methods like Observation method, Interview method, Questionnaire method and so on. While applying these method , we were very much careful of being non partial and unbiased. For this purpose we tried to test our findings from various angles and by applying multiple techniques. One such technique was random basis selection of data and analyse of them with utmost care.

Our observation was both participant and non- participant in nature. In some cases we observed the facts and wrote the matters with first hand data collection method. For instance, we participated in the socio- cultural programmes of the communities whom we selected as our resource and information collection group. We went to the Tribal societies living in the district. Rabha community is one of such group to whom we selected as our study community. We keenly observed the cultural programmes and traditional deities of that community. We attended the “ Baikhu Puja” festival where both the male and female people take part and performs all the functions equally. There is no discrimination between male and female people in the Rabha society in religious matters. Again in the marital matters , the women of this community get priority in the divorce affairs and rituals.

At the time of our study, we went to the Muslim society to study the socio-religious norms pertaining to the women of this community. But the things we were able to observe is that there is high amount of discrimination in relations to the male female status in that society. The religious bindings are too much high in the Muslim society and those bindings are well accepted. Even the female section of the people are well accumulated with these norms. There is the purda system, the hijab system and less liberity in the matter of participation in socio-cultural functions.

We also went to the Koch Rajbonshi society to gather data and information in relation to the position of women in this society. We found that the condition of women are slightly advance in this society. Like wise the women in the caste Hindu Society is also improved than those of the Muslim women in the district of Bongaigaon. The women in both the Koch Rajbonshi and the caste Hindu society enjoy almost equal status as because both these community have much similarities in the cultural and religious matters.

But to the astonishment of our research study, we have seen that the female in the Bengali Hindu society in Bongaigaon district is not healthy and acceptable as a whole. Because there is the acute dowry related problem in Bengali Hindu Society which have made the life and living of women more miserable than other caste community people.

Again there is the problem of alcohol consume habits among the male people of this community which creates unwanted domestic violence in the family. Many cases are fond of such domestic violence during our study period. But most of these cases do not come to light. Only few of them come to light and the victims do not get proper justice due to our traditional patriarchal nature of society.

While doing our research related works and study, we also adopted some other methods. We discussed those methods in the subsequent chapters elaborately. Therefore, we can say that we have not spared any opportunity in the matter of collection and analyses of facts, figures and information. But at the same time we did not allow unwanted facts to enter in our study.

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