

SUMMERISED CONCLUSION AND PROGNOSIS

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The present work on Maria Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley provides an interesting study, primarily from the population geographic point of view. Beginning from the geographical setting and economic and social conditions of the area the study includes the interpretation and analysis of the distribution, density, growth and size of the Marias, their demographic, Socio-economic and Socio-cultural characteristics. An attempt is made to show the distinctive character of this group of population from the rest of the area. The study made on the particular topic is summarised below:

Besides the collecting and reading of various relevant unpublished and published materials on this community, the researcher had to stay for a long time with them to get general information about them. Accordingly, the data were collected for each chapter both from library sources and field investigation to complete this research project. The information thus acquired were systemetised by data analysis, laboratory work and with the help of cartographic and statistical model for the interpretation of the data. A brief relevant works in the line is given in order to have a background knowledge of the problem. Introduction deals with the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, working hypothesis, its significance and methods. Very negligible research work have been done so far by the Historians, Anthropologists and Sociologists.

The geographical setting of the study area, given in chapter 2.0 serves

as a basis towards understanding the topography, climate, vegetation etc. and socio-economic condition and transport and communication of the study area. The Brahmaputra valley ( $25^{\circ}44'$  -  $27^{\circ}55'$ N and  $89^{\circ}41'$  -  $96^{\circ}02'$ E) is a well demarcated region by the Eastern Himalayas, Patkoi and Naga Hills and Garo-Khasi-Jaintia and the Mikir Hills covering an area of about 56,274 km<sup>2</sup>. The area served by the mighty river Brahmaputra is almost flat level plain built up by alluvium deposits. The average level of the valley ranges from 130 m in the east to 30 m. in the west. This valley has steep slope in the north on the foothills of Arunachal Pradesh but the slope is gradual towards the southern hill ranges. On both the banks of the river a number of isolated hillocks or monadnocks are seen, projecting towards the Brahmaputra from either side of the valley. In the north, there are innumerable tributaries running down from Arunachal Pradesh and Bhutan Himalayas. These tributaries formed the alluvial fans due to the presence of coarse alluvial debris. But the southern part of the valley is highly braided due to its low gradient. As a result innumerable riverine islands are formed. The climate of the area is sub-tropical with seasonal variations. The average rainfall is 180 cm. and the total number of rainy days are 18-20 days during the monsoon season (June to September). The average temperature during this season is  $27.17^{\circ}\text{C}$ ., but the relative humidity is very high. January is the coldest month with an average temperature of  $12.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ . Soil of the area is mostly of alluvial character. The new alluvial soils are less acidic and are suitable for the cultivation of rice, jute, pulse etc. The old alluvial soils are more acidic and suitable for sugarcane, fruits, vegetables etc. The valley is rich in natural vegetation. The tropical vegetation of both semi-evergreen and deciduous varieties of the study area are rich in valuable trees and medicinal plants. The forests are either reserved or unclassified.

The study area is an agricultural area. So, the economy of the people of the area depends on agricultural productivity. The economic activities of the people of the Assam valley are attached to (a) cultivation, (b) tea plantation, (c) forest based industries, (d) mining, (e) manufacturing, (f) communication, (g) trade and commerce and (h) construction. In this area 72.8 percent workers are engaged in cultivation, only 8 percent of the active workers are engaged in different types of industries and 19.2 percent workers are engaged in mining, plantations and other occupations.

The population of the Brahmaputra Valley is composed of various racial groups. People coming from different regions with different racial and cultural backgrounds and at different times have created a complicated society. The indigenous population may be divided into four broad linguistic groups, viz, Assamese (60.88 percent), Bengali (19.70 percent), Tibeto-Burman (10.20 percent) and Siamese-Chinese (0.15 percent). Each of them can be sub-divided into six religious groups viz. Hindu (72.51 percent), Muslim including Maria Muslim (24.56 percent), Christian (2.61 percent), and various tribal religions (10 percent).

The transport and communication system as a whole is not well developed. The developments of roads and railways have been hindered by the presence of innumerable rivers, streams and hilly terrains. But this region is much more developed in transport and communication than the surrounding hilly areas.

In chapter 3.0, a brief account of the historical background of the community is given. Under the above mentioned physical setting, social situation and economic condition, the Marias came to the Brahmaputra Valley as invaders and ultimately settled down permanently about four

hundred and fifty years ago. The coming of this group of people into this region is associated with several invasions made by the Muslims from the west. Assam came in contact with the Mohammedans with the invasion of Md. Bin Bakhtiar Khilji, a Muslim General of Kutabuddin in about 1205 A.D. At that time Mohammedans entered Assam through the Goalpara district. The first contact of Mohammedans with the Ahoms took place in 1527 A.D. The invasion of Turbak took place in 1532 A.D. Turbak - a Muslim commander of Bengal encamped at Singri on the north bank of the river Brahmaputra, at the time of Suhungmung - the Ahom king. A great battle took place between the Mohammedan soldiers and the Ahoms. In this battle the Mohammedans defeated the Ahoms. But in 1553 A.D., another battle took place and after a series of engagements the Ahoms defeated the Muslim invaders, and Turbak was killed.

Nine hundred Muslims invaders were taken as prisoners at Sibsagar by the Ahom King during this war. The Ahom King wanted to use these prisoners as His servants. He engaged them in different kinds of work but due to their ignorance in these jobs, the disgusted king released them so that they could earn their livelihood in whatever ways were possible for them. Some of mercenaries were craftsmen and technicians and had knowledge of welding of brass metal. So, after the release some of them took to working in brass as an occupation and finally settled down in this valley as braziers. Then, they came in contact with the Ahoms and different Assamese Hindu caste groups who influenced them socio-culturally and socio-economically to a great extent. They married the Ahom women and the low caste Assamese Hindu women as they did not bring any females with them. Slowly they scattered throughout the Brahmaputra Valley from Sibsagar, keeping their identity as Maria Muslims. The Marias were looked

down upon by the orthodox followers of Islam. Because of their habit of 'drunkenness' contentious characters, they were regarded as degraded Muslims. Syads and Sheiks, other groups of Muslims, maintain a distance from the Marias. Because of the social distance, maintained by the two orthodox groups, the Maria Muslims have become an endogamous group.

The chapter 4.0 deals with the present population distribution, density, growth pattern and size of the Maria population. The Marias are distributed only in nine districts out of eighteen districts in the valley. It is observed that they generally prefer to settle in or around the urban areas for their profession. But, there is a significant variation in the proportion of Maria population at the village level. The highest concentration is found in Chawlkhowa (10.55 percent of the total Maria population) village in Dibrugarh district. Since this village is situated near Dibrugarh town and is well communicated by regular bus and railway services, so, the people of this village get the urban facilities very easily which have been attracting them to stay. It is to be mentioned that 29.08 percent of the total working population of this village are engaged in trade and commercial activities, and 23.64 percent people are engaged in service etc. in Dibrugarh town. The highest number of villages (12) are found in Jorhat district, which was previously under Sibsagar district, where they settled down first. An analysis of the rural-urban distribution of the Maria Muslim population gives an idea of the problem. The study shows that of the 4.28 percent urban Muslim population of the Brahmaputra Valley and India's 34.01 percent of the total urban Muslim population, 32.06 percent of the Marias live in the urban areas. It is revealed from the analysis that the concentration of the Maria population is significantly high in the urban areas. This is because of the necessity of pursue their profession. They started their occupa-

tion as braziers, so they used to prefer to live in and around the urban areas where they could get raw materials from the market and sell their finished products according to the demand.

The density of the Maria population has been shown very irregularly in the early census. As the 1872 census figure is not accurate, the density of the Maria population as shown in this census could not be discussed. In the 1881 census the population figure of the Marias is not available. The 1891 census shows the density of the Marias to 0.03 per km<sup>2</sup>. In the 1901 census the density of the population of the Marias became 0.02 per km<sup>2</sup>. The population had fallen off, as they were affected by the disease Kala-azar. The 1911 census shows that the density had slightly increased and became 0.03 per km<sup>2</sup>. After this census they have been merged with the Assamese Muslim population. The researcher did detail field work in this connection in 1988. On the basis of the field study the density of the Maria population is found to be 0.42 per km<sup>2</sup>. The highest density is found in the Sibsagar district and it is 1.23 per km<sup>2</sup>. It shows the high natural growth and availability of better medical facilities.

The growth of the Maria population in the previous census years was not regular due to technical defects in census operation. During the time 1891-1901 the variation of population shows a downward trend, it is due to the natural calamities like black fever and fever. By 1988, the Maria population shows a very high rate of growth. It shows their high natural growth.

The chapter 5.0 deals with demographic, socio-economic and socio-cultural characteristics of the Maria population. The demographic structure includes the treatment on sex-ratio, age-sex structure, dependency ratio, marital status, child-women ratio, fertility rate, birth rate, death rate and literacy rate. The study was conducted in the representative sample villages.

The sex-ratio of the Maria population in the Brahmaputra Valley is 732 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup> which is found to be lower than the Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley (918 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup>) and the Muslims of the country (936 female/1000 of male). When the sex-ratio for the rural and urban areas is considered, it is found that the rural sex-ratio of the Maria population is 739 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup> which is found to be lower than the Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley (926 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup>) and the Muslims of the country (955 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup>). The lower rural ratio is mainly due to the urban character of the Marias because of their profession. At the village level, the highest rural sex-ratio is found in Baliyan Tengabari (1076 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup>) village, which is significantly high. But the highest urban sex-ratio is found in Hajo Islampatti (909 female<sup>s</sup>/1000 of male<sup>s</sup>) which is lower than the rural sex-ratio. This is due to the movement of the males to the urban areas for better employment facilities which have contributed significantly to the lesser number of females in the urban areas and higher number of females in the rural areas.

The age-sex structure shows that in the age-group of 25-29 years,

the female population (15.27 percent) outnumber the male population (13.74 percent) which indicates the high rate of female child birth at least in the representative sample villages. The percentage of children in the age-group below 14 years is 40.95, it shows the high rate of child birth.

The dependency ratio is found to be 76.89 percent among the Maria population, out of which 79.37 percent is found in the rural areas and 71.05 percent is found in the urban areas. It shows that the urban dependency ratio is lower than that of the rural dependency ratio and it is mainly due to their landlessness. In the rural areas, due to the non availability of sufficient agricultural field, the children of the lower age group do not get jobs in the agricultural field, moreover, in the rural areas there are no scope for getting petty jobs for them. But in the urban areas the children of the lower age group get jobs in small factories, shops etc. which reduces the urban dependency ratio.

The study on marital status shows that the percentage of married persons is 39.41, out of which 37.81 percent are males <sup>of the total male population</sup> and 41.19 percent are females <sup>of the total female population</sup>. It shows that they do not prefer to early marriage due to their economic backwardness and the influence of Assamese Hindu culture. This is also supported by the fact that the percentage of married males and females under nineteen years are 0.83 and 11.58 respectively. But in the age group above twenty years the percentage of married males and females are found to be 99.17 percent and 88.42 percent respectively which shows their inclination to late marriage.

The child-women ratio among the Marias is found to be 612.48 per thousand of women of which child-women ratio in the rural areas is 612.82 per thousand and that of the urban areas is 611.65 per thousand. The rural and urban child-women ratio is almost equal.

The fertility rate of the Maria population is found to be 119.09 children per thousand of specific age group of women (15-44) of which 109.48 per thousand are in the rural areas and 142.39 per thousand in the urban areas. From calculation it is seen the fertility wastage is less in the urban areas than in the rural areas, due to the availability of better medical facilities in the urban areas.

The birth rate is 26.64 persons per thousand of women among the Maria Muslims as against 31 persons in the state. The birth rate of the Marias is lower than that of the state and it is due to the adoption of birth control measures. It happens due to greater contact with the urban people when the rural and the urban birth rate is compared, it is found that the rural birth rate per thousand is 24.37 which is lower than the urban birth rate of 32.23 per thousand. As mentioned earlier that it is due to the high fertility wastage in rural areas, due to the non-availability of medical facilities at the proper time and ignorance about hygienic sense. The death rate per thousand of the Marias (11.62) is slightly lower than the state's (12.5) for general population. When the rural urban death rate is compared it is found that the death rate in the urban areas is 10.98 persons per thousand is to be lesser than the death rate in the rural areas (11.89) per thousand. It is mainly due to the proper medical facilities which are available in the urban areas. The average size of the family is of six persons which is rather high. It is observed in the sample data that they are in favour of nuclear type of family, which is increasing.

The literacy rate among the Maria Muslims is found to be quite high (64.48 percent) as against 28.15 percent literacy of Assam and 37 percent of country's literacy for the general population. Since they are a professional group of people and are traditionally non-agriculturist so education is a very old phenomenon among the Marias. The literacy among the males is 72.29 percent and female literacy is 55.77 percent. It is mainly due to the fact that the guardian's consciousness about education to get jobs. But in the rural areas the literacy (72.20 percent) rate is higher than the urban literacy (27.80 percent) rate. It is mainly due to the easy availability of petty jobs in the urban areas where the guardian's send their children to earn money for economic stability. But in the rural areas the higher literacy rate is due to the non-availability of jobs and also because all the villages have at least one primary school where the guardians can send their children for education.

A considerable degree of blood and cultural assimilations have been observed between the Marias and the neighbouring people in their life cycle like pre natal, birth, adolescence, marriage, death, festivals and superstitions. Blood assimilation took place by way of marriage with Assamese Hindus from the very long past. They observe the Bihu festival like the Assamese Hindu caste groups. Even they do not practice the Islamic religion fully. Some of them also take part in Durga puja, they also fire crackers at the time of Kali puja - a Hindu religious festival. They believe in superstitions and black magic. A few generations back Hindu names were also found among the Maria women. It is because of the marriages solemnised with Hindu ladies, which has been discussed earlier.

The percentage of the Maria workers (26.09) is less in comparison with that of the state (28.35) for the total general population. It is mainly

due to the greater number of non-working dependants (73.91 percent), among them. Traditionally they were braziers but after Independence due to the popularity of stainless steel, high rate of raw materials, introduction of machine-made brass utensils in the market and loss of the market in Dacca, capital of Bangladesh, occupational diversifications have been observed among the Marias. At present it is observed that out of a total of 26.09 percent of workers, 48.06 percent people are engaged in Trade and Commerce, followed by Brass industry (17.59 percent), Service (15.96 percent), Transport and Communication (10.05 percent), Daily labour (5.75 percent) and Agriculture (2.59 percent) for their livelihood. When the occupational structure is compared with the rural and the urban areas, it is observed that the workers (71.39 percent) are high in the rural areas than that of (28.61 percent) in the urban areas. It is mainly due to the high literacy rate (72.20 percent) in the rural areas.

The average income per Maria household is Rs.851.47 according to the study made on the representative sample villages. The monthly per capita income is found to be Rs.137.33 as against Rs.546.00 for the general population of the state. The sample survey shows that per capita income is the highest in (Rs.186.59) Jay<sup>a</sup>ntipur village of the Nowgong district and the lowest in Vevarghat (Rs.105.46) of Darrang district. The people of the Jayantipur village get urban market facilities in Tezpur and Nowgong due to the availability of easy and good transport. Both the towns are famous for business. But the people of Vevarghat do not get the market facilities of the nearby urban centre - Mangaldai due to bad communication. When the per capita income pattern is compared with the rural and urban areas, it is observed that the per capita income in the rural areas is Rs.138.79 and in the urban areas it is Rs.137.26 which is almost equal. On the other hand percentage of the lower income group (Rs.600.00) is found to be (42.04),

and the percentage of households having very low income and categorised under unknown, is 4.31, as against only 19.06 percent of households in the higher income group (Rs.1200 +). When the income pattern is compared with the rural areas and urban areas, it is found that in the rural areas, 44.28 percent of households have an income less than Rs.600 which is higher than the urban areas (36.91 percent). In the higher income group (Rs.1200 +) also, the percentage (19.89) of households in the rural areas, is higher than the percentage of households (17.59) in the urban areas. This is due to the high rural literacy (72.20 percent) rate and the availability of good transport.

The average monthly expenditure per household is Rs.781.11 as against an income of Rs.851.47. Further the per capita monthly expenditure is Rs.126.95, while the per capita monthly income is Rs.137.33. Though it shows a small surplus budget but only 19.06 percent of the Maria families belong to the high income group (Rs.1200 +), 34.59 percent of the families belong to the moderate income group (Rs.600.00 to Rs.1200.00) but the vast 46.35 percent families are below the minimum income level (upto Rs.600.00). Thus, the average per capita income and expenditure do not indicate the general level of the standard of living of the people. So, the average budget of these families is always a deficit one. The survey shows that most of the expenditure is incurred on food stuff (67.95 percent). When it is compared with the rural-urban areas it is observed that 64.97 percent and 64.08 percent expenditure are incurred on food stuff in rural and urban areas respectively, which is almost equal.

This group of people acquired land on Adhi system (share cropper) and the forcible occupation of Government land or ownerless land.

A considerable degree of Assamisation has been observed among

the Marias in respect of culture, language, food habit, dress, personal adornments etc. with the neighbouring Assamese Hindu society. The Marias are homogeneous as a linguistic community. Their common language is Assamese. But, the people who are the inhabitants of Lower Assam (Kamrup district) use a dialect which is much common with Kamrupi, both phonologically and morphologically. But in upper Assam the dialect differs from that of Lower Assam both phonologically and morphologically. At present their original language Duan has become dead and a few of them can speak in Duan to some extent.

So far as the food habits are concerned they are the same with the surrounding societies.

The dwellings are constructed with bamboo, thatched roof, walls plastered with mud. But those who are in better economic condition construct houses roofed with corrugated iron sheets and the walls are plastered with cement.

So far as dress is concerned, it is observed that the old males wear coloured lungi, punjabis, pyjamahs, dhoti and caps but the young boys wear pant, shirt etc. But the females wear Mekhela-Chaddar.

Regarding personal adornments it may be mentioned that the females wear different types of ear rings like Thuria, Phooli, Dul etc., different types of necklaces like Galpatta, Har etc. and different types of bangles like Balakharu, Kharu, Muthikharu etc. On the ankle the young ladies wear Kari, and Payal. Anguthi is common for both males and females. This group of people were formed professional braziers on the basis of specialisation but the techniques in brass industry is similar among the groups who are geographically widely separated.

The common use of brass utensils are seen in the kitchen of a Maria family. In the urban areas the use of decorated China clay utensils also have been observed. In the rural areas, the cooking fuel is either firewood or kerosene, but in the urban areas cooking gas is also used.

Chapter 6.0 deals with the regional variations in the characteristic of the society of three Maria Muslim villages in three different parts of the Brahmaputra Valley. It is observed that more than fifty percent of the population are found in the 15-59 years of age group. It shows that the Maria Muslims are of the progressive type. The low birth rate is found in all the regions and it indicates that they are in favour of family planning and it may be the influence of urban people. Due to the availability of medical facilities at the proper time the death rate is also low. The average family size consists of 4-6 persons. The family size is not very large due to the expansion of nuclear families. It is noticed that in all the areas majority of them are unmarried which shows that they prefer late marriage. It is mainly due to economic backwardness and the influence of urban culture and the surrounding communities. It is observed that the maximum number of marriages is performed within the village and within the community. The causes are economic instability and the social distance maintained by other groups of Muslims. The literacy is low in the Lower Brahmaputra Valley and high in the Central Brahmaputra Valley. This high literacy is mainly due to the economic stability in this area than those of the other areas. A considerable amount of spatial variation is found in the work force. The work force is high in Hajo Islampatti of the Lower Brahmaputra Valley. This is due to the presence of brass industry where the children also get jobs on daily wage basis. The female work-force is also high in this village due to the same reason. The study of the economic condition of the Marias shows the spatial variation between all the three

regions. Per capita monthly income is high in Jayantipur village of the Central Brahmaputra Valley but the per capita monthly expenditure is almost equal in all the regions.

In almost all the villages, the Marias get medical, electricity, Post Office and drinking facilities along with atleast the primary education opportunities.

Assamaisation has been noticed among the Marias through matrimonial relationship with the Assamese Hindus since their settlement in this region. From that period blood assimilation has happened with the neighbouring Assamese Hindus. As regards food habit, they have adopted the food habit of the Assamese people along with their method of preparation. This is the case of their dress habit also. At present the Marias are found to be under the strong influence of the Assamese Hindus. They have adopted many customs in their life cycles like pre-natal, birth, adolescence, marriage etc. from the Assamese Hindus. Even they observe Bihu - a national festival of the Assamese people besides their own festivals. They also have been influenced by superstitions of the Assamese Hindus and believe them like the Hindus.

The interaction pattern between the Marias and other groups of Muslims and the Assamese Hindu is very strong in the Brahmaputra Valley. These three groups take part in their socio-cultural and religious functions with an open mind. This is observed both in the rural and the urban areas. The Marias get loans from the Hindus and the other groups of Muslims at the time of economic crisis.

A study of the degree of assimilation of the Marias with the rest

of the population of the Brahmaputra Valley shows a similar pattern of spatial variation between the Lower, Central and Upper Brahmaputra Valley.

Similar pattern of economic activities are observed in different regions among the Marias. They have started their livelihood as braziers but at present it is observed that except a few villages they have left their traditional occupations for their livelihood. They have left their traditional occupations mainly due to the coming of stainless steel, plastic and machine-made brass utensils. They cannot compete with the machine-made brass utensils because of its low price and fine finishing. One of the major causes of the poverty of the majority of them is due to the observances of socio-religious rituals or rites which are very expensive for their economic standard. That there is hardly any development in their economic condition is <sup>due</sup> to the lack of higher education among them. The State Government through proper plans and schemes could develop their economic condition. Referring to the hypotheses mentioned earlier the following conclusions can be drawn. The results obtained through analysis of the field based data and interpretation bring the authenticity of all these hypotheses.

The first hypothesis, "the assimilation among the Marias has become an important social phenomenon due to their marital relations with the Assamese Hindu society in the past," is being proved in chapter five through the analysis of their observances of various rites and rituals in their life cycles, festivals and superstitions.

The second hypothesis, "since the Maria community is a professional group of people they are traditionally non-agriculturists and do not possess agricultural land. At present the previous professions have been abandoned, which had a traditional good market, due to the popularity of stainless steel, plastic etc. and as such they are remaining economically backward",

has been proved through the analysis and interpretation in the fifth chapter.

The third hypothesis, "due to urbanisation the literacy rate is high among the Marias than those of other population in Assam", has also been proved through the analysis in the chapter five.

The fourth hypothesis "economic activities have changed through time and space in the Maria Muslim society since Independence, because of socio-economic changes in their surroundings", also has been proved in the fifth and sixth chapters through analysis and interpretation.

The fifth hypothesis, "since this community is not an agricultural one so there is a tendency among them to settle in or near the urban areas to avail of socio-economic opportunities", is being justified through the interpretation put forward in the fifth and sixth chapters.

The sixth hypothesis, "the urban concentration is more prominent in the case of the Maria Muslims than other Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley" has been proved in the chapter four through the analysis from the rural-urban distribution.

It is found that in spite of restriction including availability of detailed data at the village level, this study has brought to light some significant points regarding the population geographic work on the Maria population of the Brahmaputra Valley. This study gives a comprehensive knowledge about the habitat, economy and society of the hitherto somewhat neglected Maria Muslims of the Brahmaputra Valley. It has also been found that there has developed a great degree of assimilation among the Marias, the Assamese Hindu and other groups of Muslims.

PROGNOSIS : It is urgently required to make systematic plans and policies to improve the economic condition and the spread of higher education among the Marias. Developmental schemes should be based on their present socio-economic situation for their betterment. Emphasis should be given on the development of their economy and education.

The following suggestions can be given for their economic and educational development :

Economy :

Their traditional brass industry should be improved by giving loan and subsidy from the State Government at least to those families who are still interested to keep their traditional identity in this industry. At present only a very few families of Hajo Islampatti get this loan irregularly from Gaonlia (rural) Bank. The loan should be given regularly through the Goanlia (rural) Bank. The youths should be given proper training to complete with the machine-made brass utensils. The training centres should be opened at the selected areas or villages, to cater the need through their familiarity with this work and encultured personal skill. Co-operative societies should be opened among the workers through which they can sell their finished products for their economic enrichment. The price of the finished articles will be fixed according to their quality and craftsmanship and the wages should be determined according to the degree or skillness of the artisan and the quantity of the products. If it is done then the following profound effect may be made :

- (i) Traditional brass industry will survive and revitalize and will be expanded in the villages. Its commercial value also will be increased.

- (ii) The illiterate and semiliterate youths will be engaged in their traditional industry in their own villages.
- (iii) Their standard of living will be improved.
- (iv) Personal interest will grow to develop their own skill.

Besides this industry, the weaving cane industry etc. should be introduced by giving them proper training and financial assistance.

Education :

Primary education is available in almost all the villages. So middle or secondary schools should be established in or near the villages, such that the guardians can send their children for high school education, without incurring any expenditure of trouble in regard to communication. Emphasis should be given to establish colleges in selected areas in their locality where the youths can avail of opportunity in getting higher education.

The study shows their socio-economic development which could be made under the supervision of the State Government. The main focus should be given on their traditional brass industry, other cottage industries and the higher education.