

CHAPTER – VI

SUMMARY, MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, SUGGESTIONS, CONCLUSIONS.

6.1: SUMMARY

In the discussion of the role of women in social and political sphere in the BZP area, it has been observed that the role of women in the said area has been largely increased since the formation of BZP in 1994 and the trend is being continued. Women of this remote and under developed area had no any say on any socio-political affairs a few years ago i.e. before the formation of BZP. We can say this condition of women in the line and language of communist thinker Karl Marx as 'HAVE NOT' category people. But now the situation is being changed and they have acquired the minimum status of saying something on societal affairs.

Secondly, role of women in other social affairs like social development programme, education development programme, public awareness programme on AIDS, Family Matters etc. increasing gradually in the Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area. But this is not upto the mark.

Thirdly, women participation in cultural programmes, economic affairs etc. are also increasing day by day. Miss Ruli Ahmed, Fulora Bhuyan of RGM college, Lengtisinga, Anonya Das, Daisy Das and Tanupriya Kalita earned name and fame in the cultural programmes in the BZP area and also out side of the Bongaigaon district. The orthodox Muslim families in the area could not allow their girls to take part in cultural programmes. If the situation remains unchanged like this participation by women on political affairs will not increased. But this situation is gradually changing into positive directions.

Fourth, new leaders are emerging gradually after the passing of Assam Panchayat Act, 1994. They also include all section of people i.e. Muslim, Rabha, Garo, Koch-Rajbanshi, Nath-Jogi etc. Mrs. Lina Singha, Zebin Begum, Mrs. Hena Sarkar, Mrs. Sapna Bora, Suraton Nessa, Sandhya Rani Rabha, Minara Khatun, Jumi Rani Rabha, Rina

Sarkar, Aziron Nessa etc. are the emerging social-political leaders of BZP area. Assam Panchayat Act. 1994 have facilitated this chance to the women.

Fifth, Women empowerment process has largely increased in so far as group activities are concerned in Assam since 1994. The process of formation of Panchayat Raj Institutions, women representation, formation of Mahila Samittee, Self-Help Group (SHG) etc. has been increasing women empowerment process.

Sixth, the implementation of Assam panchayat Raj Act, 1994 have facilitated women to participate in the policy formation matters at grassroot level. By this process, some social evils like Purdah system, religious conservativeness, male domination on women are gradually vanishing from the society.

Seventh, there is a feeling in the society that women are not capable to take any decision in the socio-political matters. But this feeling has been proved wrong by the women representatives in the various level of PRI's. Many women representatives performed much better than their male counterpart in the cleanliness in many affairs in contrast to male representatives.

Eighth, women have taken the chance of improvement of economic condition improvement by throwing out social and religious restrictions since the Assam Panchayat At. 1994 is implanted. Now, they are interested in the engagement programmes launched by the government of India through Block Development Officers and Zilla Parishad offices. They are Tapattary Block Development office is working as an agent of rural development, 100 (Hundred) days job guarantee to below poverty line people (irrespective of sex, caste, etc.) have sufficient response from all section of people in BZP area.

Ninth, schooling facilities have changed the day to day life style of rural people vis-a vis women. It have enabled them conscious in various socio-political and economic matters, superstitions etc. The people have become too scrupulous about their own traditions and beliefs. Women have a share in such social transformation affairs. The educational institutions have been playing a great role in process of social reformation activities.

Tenth, child marriage is cease to exist in the State. Early marriage of girls has also come down in number.

Eleventh, interest of people has been increasing. Self income, self-reliant and self-sufficient in the minds of women is seen in the study time. Therefore, self-help groups are emerging among all section of people. In our study, it is found that there are 2350 nos of self-help groups in BZP area as on 05-10-2012, most of which are belong to women.

Thus, it has been seen that the women of BZP area have improved their condition from "HAVE NOT" to "HAVES" in the fields as mentioned and the trend of this improvement will be continued, But the spread of this process is vary slow.

6.2 : SOCIO-POLITICAL PROBLEMS OF WOMEN IN BONGAIGAON ZILLA PARISHAD AREA :

Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area is a large area where 53.14% people belong to Hindus, 46 % belongs to Muslims .Therefore, the social problems of all these people are not the same. Therefore, our discussion of social problems will be done separately, so that the basic problems come into light. In the Koch-Rajbongshi community Male domination over women are very high in the Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area. There is the problem of alcohol drinking by male people. This system is almost socially accepted norms and nobody can protest against such malpractices. This has made the rural women life miserable..

Religious bindings and conservativeness is very much high in case of women. According to Hindu religious law women are not permitted to take part in socio-political affairs. Many women are not permitted to participate in the religious programmes. They can not go into Mandir. Religion prevents many of them to take to take part in social affairs.

Marriage and Dowry have been prevailing in this society.In some remote areas of the district there is early age marriage system. As per social norms, girls are to be given marriage at the early age because at this time their demands are very high. Of late, this tendency of early marriage system is going to be end by the passing of time."Dowry" is treated as a socially accepted norms in this society.

Lack of proper Education is a major problem in this society. A few years ago, women were not allowed for higher education. Economic under development also prevented them to acquire higher education by the girls. Most of women of the area were basic (lower primary Education) passed. Although this backwardness has come to down but still major portion of girls are not getting proper schooling facilities. This caused a major problem in social development and in the matter of empowerment of women.

There are some major social problems in so far as the women of Kochrajbonshi is concerned. They can not take part in the society related meetings or “Gram Sabha” related program to raise their issues. Even they can not take leading part in “Puja” related functions. Male domination is too much high in these affairs.

6.3 : Some Common Problems :

In the societies of Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area, there are some common problems. These problems can be discussed as below.

Lack of political consciousness among the women are not seen as expected. Women obey the political beliefs and political culture on the line of their guardians and husbands. Most of the female party workers take part in party activities after getting green signals and permission from their guardians. Some women join party activities only for getting favour. But in the voting process, female voting habit is high and satisfactory in the area. On the other hand, female are not much interested to contest any type of election. The Assam Panchayat Act, 1994 can be treated as a milestone in empowering political rights to the women and through this act, women are getting a self-political ground.

Another factor relating to the lack of proper knowledge is the ‘manipulation’ of the members of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Specially the women. Sometimes it has been seen that women members are manipulated by a dominant section including bureaucrats, politicians and contractors. Moreover some economically and socially privileged section of people influences in the decision making process. Women representatives are facing such problems in the village level developmental works. Lack of sufficient and useful training programmers as well as training centre is important factor in the least women participation in Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI’s).

In the Muslim minority area, there are lots of social problems. These problems can be discussed as under.

- a) Corruption practice is less among the women representatives. But this social evil is gradually sowing its seeds among them. Some minor corruption charges labeled against female representative also. Interestingly Male domination : Male domination over women are very high in the minority Muslim societies and families in the Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area. Women can not go out side home without the proper permission of their male guardians, If any women go out side her home, neglecting her husbands or guardians order, then she may be beaten up or she may have to face rubbish revokes or this may lead to divorce between a couple. This system is almost socially accepted norms and nobody protest against such malpractices. This has made the rural women life miserable, But such social norms are now relaxed for some labourious women who have a major economic share in the family maintain affairs.
- b) Religious Bindings : Religious bindings and conservativeness is very much high in case of women. According to Islamic law in this society, women are not permitted to take part in socio-political affairs. Many Muslim women are not permitted to participate in the cultural show or programmes. They are not given any basic education on dance, singing, to form clubs etc. Religion prevents many of them to take to take part in social affairs.
- c) Purda System : Purdah System was seen by and large. It has been still running in some of the Muslim families in this area. To maintain Purdah Pratha Muslim women were not send to the school, colleges before 1980's. But the scenario has changed now and they are allowed for co-educational programmes at any level.
- d) Marriage and Dowry : In Muslim society girls are given early marriage. As per social norms, girls are to be given marriage at the early age because at this time their demands are very high. When a girl cross the 20 years of age, her chances of marriage get joints and the girl may not find a suitable groom for her, Of late, this tendency of early marriage system is going to be end by the passing of time in the minority Muslim society, "Dowry" was treated as a social evil and there were high religious sanctions against it. But things are gradually changing with the changes of time. The menace of 'Dowry' entered in this society. Though Major incidents have not taken, but minor cases on Dowry are growing in the society.

- e) Lack of proper Education : A few years ago, women were not allowed in co-curriculum programmes. Most of women of the area were basic (lower primary Education) passed. Though the barrier of co-curriculum studies vanished, but still major portion women are not getting proper schooling facilitated. This caused a major problem in social development and in the matter of empowerment of women.
- f) Social Problems in the Bengali SC society : In the Bengali scheduled caste society, who constitute almost 12.27% of total population of the Anchalik Panchayat are also witnesses male domination problems. But their domination is comparatively very low in contrast of Muslim society. Again the religious Bindings are less than Muslim society. In this society, although, women face some religious restriction, but it can not prevent them from taking any social or political role in the society. However, women are not allowed to participate in the social meetings held on various matters like village court, puja committee etc. There is no any Purda Pratha in this society but early marriage and Dowry is high in this society. Girls are given marriage at teenage period with heavy ‘Dowry’ There are many Dowry related cases lying in the society.

Education is also a far reachable matter for many SC women and girl. Though there is no any co-curriculum educational problem in this society, but due to lack of consciousness among these people, major part of girls and women remained uneducated. The profession of this caste is mainly business, fishing and agriculture which lead to the common people unaware about female education. Schooling facility is also not available for some far reaching SC families.

- g) Social problems in other Society : On the other hand, in the case of some other caste people like Rabha, Garo, Bodo, whose percentage is vary low in the ZPC area, but they are also facing some major problems. First of all, these people live in mostly interior hilly area where communication facility as well as schooling facility is poor. But there is no any Dowry related problem or there is not any social evil against women in this area. In the societies of Brahmin, Koch Rajbonshi and others, women get a respectable status in the family as well as in the society. But they also have to face male domination, religious bindings etc. But, this type of cases are minor in the society. Female are getting more or less and advantageous life style here. Higher education facilities, cultural etc. can be enjoyed by females in this society.

To study the role of women in the socio-political sphere of Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad of Assam, the investigator had studied different dissertations, thesis and books to get basic knowledge on the subject concern. The investigator also studied the design of the study, i.e. the methodology, different tools and techniques which were used in the date collection period. All the studded dissertations and books were given in the “Review of related literature” and “Bibliography” chapter.

Scheme of Chapters :

Chapter – I : Theoretical Frame Work.

Chapter – II : Review of Literature.

Chapter – III : Methodology.

Chapter - IV : Field Data Analysis.

Chapte – V : Status of Women in the Social Sphere in Bongaigaon District Area.

Chapter - VI : Summary, Major Findings of the Study, Suggestions and Conclusion.

The **First Chapter** (Theoretical Frame Work) includes meaning of the term Women Empowerment, Aspects of Empowerment, Objectives of the Study, Statement of the Problem, Research Questions, Methodology, Tools Used, Significance of the Study, Limitations of the Study, etc.

The **Second Chapter** (Review of Literature) includes Status of Women in Socio-Political Sphere, Achievement and Problems of Women, Educational Scenario in the District at Primary Level, Pre-Colonial Socio-Politics in Assam, Colonial Socio-Politics in Assam, Post Colonial Socio-Politics in Assam, Patriarchy as Ideology and Practice, Status of Indian Women, Women’s Movement and Participation in Freedom Struggle, Women’s Movement in Independent India, Electoral Process, Empowerment of Women, Women Human Rights Scenario in Assam, Condition of Women in Assam, Causes of Violation of Human Rights of Women in Assam, The History of Six Years Assam Agitation, The Nellie Massacre, Types of Rabha People and Culture, Rabha Society and Superstition, Nature of Rabha Society and the Place of Women, Tradition in Rabha Society, Women Empowerment – Still an Illusion of Reality, Increasing Violence Against Women, Violence against Women within and Outside Family, Different Faces of the Practice of Gender Discrimination, Problem of Female Education, Problems Relating to Employment and

Unemployment of Women, Harassment of Women at Work Place, Exploitation of Women in the Media, Divorce and Desertion, The Problem of Dowry, Decline in the Political Participation of Women, Advent of Islam to Assam, Area of Study, Muslim Population in Brahmaputra Valley, Rights of Muslim Women in the Area, Killing of Embryo and Negligence to Female Infants, Condition of Economic Rights of Muslim Women, Overcome of Poverty, etc.

The **Third Chapter** (Methodology) includes The Questionnaire Method, The Observation Method and The Interview Method, etc.

The **Fourth Chapter** (Field Data Analysis) includes Meaning of Analysis, Interpretation of Data, Collection of Data, On Naming the District, The District At a Glance, The People, Sex Ratio, Literacy Rate, Work Force, Road Infrastructure and Connectivity, Health and Educational Establishments, Health Facilities, Common Property and Village Organizations, Occupation and Employment, Enrolment and Dropout among simple Population of 5-25 Years, Poverty and Public Distribution System, Awareness and Participation, Most important Deprivation in the Families, Development Deficits, Questionnaire for the People, List of Surveyed Villages, etc.

The **Fifth Chapter** (Status of Women in the Social Sphere in Bongaigaon District Area) includes Habitation, Language, Culture, Tradition, Marriage and Dowry System, Role of Women in the Social Sphere, Role of Women in the Politics of Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad Area (BDPA) Since its inception, Women Participation in Public Meetings, Party Membership, Participation in Election Rallies, Participation in Various Party Programmes like Dharna, Protests, etc., Political Representation, etc.

The **Sixth Chapter** includes - Summary, Major Findings of the Study with some sub-title like - Achievement of Women in Social and Political Sphere in Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad Area, Socio-Political Problems of Women in Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad Area, Some Common Problems, etc. This chapter has also included Suggestions and Conclusions.

6.4 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY :-

The area of the study i.e. Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad (BZP) area is one of the development area of Assam. There are several social, political as well as economic

problems in the area. These problems are originated due to lack of proper education facility, infrastructural development, religious conservativeness, superstitions, and so on.

This research work is an attempt to observe the results found out from the data collected. From the Questionnaires, the investigator has deducted some vital women related problems in the socio-political sphere in BZP area. Investigator selected 17 (seventeen) out of 65 (Sixty Five) Gaon Panchayat under BZP area for in-depth study and found the following problems.

1. Male Domination :- Male Domination over women on every respect of livelihood is very high in almost all Gaon Panchayat (G.P.) which are within the jurisdiction of Bongaigaon Zilla Parishad area.
2. Religious Bindings :- Religious bindings on women are also very high in BZP area. Due to these problems, Women development is jeopardized.
3. Purdah Pratha : Purdah Pratha is seen in the Muslim orthodox families in BZP area. It is also a hindrance to the women development affairs
4. Dowry Problem : The problem of dowry in matrimonial ceremony is also found. It is high in Bengali community (SC) societies in BZP area.
5. Lack of proper Education : Education is not up to the expectation in BZP area. Although the literacy Rate is shown about 60% but there is lack quality education.
6. Lack of political consciousness : The people of BZP area are not politically conscious at all. This hampers their development.

SUGGESTIONS :

The above study has acquainted us with the problems of women in BZP area. These problems are the great obstacles for all round development of women in the BZP area. Hence following are suggested for eradication of these problems.

1. **Education** : Education is the epicentre of the development of human mind and thinking. It makes people conscious and logistic. Education, as in the contrast of BZP area. Especially women need this facility in broader sense. Without proper education. The eradication of the problems as discussed above, is not possible. Therefore proper and modern education is eminent for women development.

2. Stop Early Marriage and Dowry : To uplift the women status in the society, the early marriage and dowry system must be stopped in all forms all fronts. Mahila Samittee. Social organizations, volunteer organization etc. must have to taken active role in this regards. Only women may not vanish this evil from society. So the participation of male is also necessary in this matter. Women should encourage male people specially the progressive youths of the locality to take measures against early marriage and down system from the society. This will definitely benefit all section of people.

3. Organization of Awareness Programme : For the upliftment of socio-political role of women in the BZP area. Various awareness programme such as “AIDS” such as ‘AIDS’ camp, family welfatr and Birth control programme, Education seminar. Cultural programme, various village leve competitions, Awareness programme on deforestation etc. are needed. District Administration must have to pay special attention in this regard.

4. Increase in Political Participation : Political parties have to work for increase of political participation among women. By this process women will be able to take active part in the polities and policy formation matters in the grass root level. Right selection of public representatives will be possible in this system.

5. Stop Manipulation : In our discussion it is seen that the politicians, bureaucrats, contractors and social elite manipulate in the working of Panchayat institution and women representative are seriously sufferer in this regard. This could have happened due to lack of proper consciousness among women representative about their works and powers. Therefore, this type of manipulation must be ended. Policy should be framed and law should be executive in this matter.

6. Relinquish Social Barriers : it is seen in our study that women can not in some social and religious meeting and they can not take part in village level trial process. Some social sanctions is preventing them from this process. Hence these types of barriers must be relinquished from the society.

7. Eradicate Corruption and Poverty : Corruption is a Major cause for the under development of society. BZP is not exception to is. Public representatives and officers of various departments except a few are more of less corrupt. Many public works do not get reality due to corruption. In some case. Finances are sanctioned several time in

one development work in the several different under various schemes. It has caused under development of society. More over, People of BZP are poor and middle class. Maximum people are still doing agricultural works in traditional manner. Agricultural sector needs major changes and reforms here By this way economic condition of people will development. In this regard we can say in the language of Kari Marx that Economics is the principal factor of socio-political changes and brings justice and equality in the society. Therefore, to bring such conditions corruption must be eliminated in all forms and in all fronts. Various poverty alleviation programme must be implemented in the society, Public money should be expended in development works. People specially the women should keep dog type vigilance on such public works. They should not think that they have no power and mere created to obey the dominance of their husbands and guardian. Rather the women should think that they are as equal as with men and are the integral part of the society. Hence they have also some social and political role. This social political sense is to be grown in the mind of women. Anchalik Panchayat can take leading role in such affairs. More over, the salary and other bonus are very low in Panchayat level members and representatives. They allocate development works, sanction money for this purpose and jobs are allocated among people, they implement various programme which have huge monetary grants. But they get no nothing legally except the low salary. This led them to corrupt practice and by this way public works gets jolts. Therefore, Panchayat level representatives should be given an honorable salary and bonus, so that they may keep them away from corruption. If corruption is vanished, developmental work will get implemented and poorness of people will wither away.

8. To Continue the Panchayat Raj Institution : Panchayat can bring fruitfulness in the upliftment of social and political role of women. It is already seen that before the implementation of Assam Panchayat Act. 1994, women were merely like political toys of some local political leaders. They were used in many political activities but they did not get political representations in party level. But after the execution of this act, women get a remarkable share in the grassroots level development works. But the formation of panchayat and holding its election in Assam is not regular. For example Panchayat were not seen in the 1998-2002 period and a break sown came in women empowerment programmes, this type of irregularly is unwanted. Political and government should pay proper attention towards this side.

9. To Encourage Self Employment : To uplift the role of women in socio-political affairs, self employment programmes must be encouraged among them. This led them to think themselves strong and capable maintaining a family. Interestingly the process of formation SHG is going on. As per the District Administration report, there are 1962 SHGs in the area and most of time belongs to women. This is a good sign and this type of work must be encouraged.

10. To Establish Recreation Centres and to Develop Tourism : Tapattary Anchalik Panchayat area has many beautiful tourism spots. Bamungaon is already becomes a picnic spots and the government department can collects a huge amount with more development of the spot Again, Khoragaon hilly area be a tourism place of Anchalik Panchayat if authority pays some attention to this matter. Interestingly, "Koya Kujia Beel" Project has successfully come in to light as a '**GRAND TOURISM**' spot in BZP area. Women workers and labourers are given maximum opportunity. By this way their will grow and works will be sincere and nice.

11. To End the Unhealthy Relation between Officials and People : Sometime it is seen that there is no good relation between official and people. This lead to the non-implementation of some social development works. All section of people suffers for these no cordial relations. Therefore, this type of relations must be ended and panchayat representatives should take bold step in such matter.

Besides the above suggestions, women should given the concept of pure Drinking water and its utility, need of cleanliness, effect of puerperal pratha, concept of community development, concept of child labour and its harmfulness, use of drugs and effect on etc. By pertaining this concept, social atmosphere will change. Healthy Social, Economic and political environment can be deserved from this type of programme, Local N.G.O. of Zilla Parishad area etc. can take bold step in this direction.

CONCLUSION :

The above discussion about the Role of women in BZP area shows that women of this under developed society are facing enormous hardship and challenges. Most of the people are unconscious about their daily doings and happenings. They see these challenges & hardship as the writing of their Luck, and by this way they tolerate.

But the introduction of Assam Panchayat Raj Act in 1994 on the basis of the 73rd amendment of the Constitution of India have changed the thinking of many people of both male and female and by way, the condition of people specially the women have transformed from ‘HAVE NOT TO HAVES’ Thus the formation of BZP area is working as a major agent of women empowerment programme. This programme will be highly succeeded if the conscious people of the area and various organizations provide their help and co-operation to the legal Constitutional authorities. Again, government must have to pay attention and vigil towards the proper implementation of developmental works.

