

## **Chapter – VIII**

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### **Summary of the Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This study considers the Bodo community only in the Chirang district of Assam. Bodo is the largest ethnic group among all tribal groups of North-East India. Bodos have a rich culture and have long past historical evidence of existence in the region. But they are socio-economically backward compared to the other communities of Assam. The socio-economic status of any community reflects its separate identity and position. But the socio-economic index is not enough to know the actual position of human development. So, the community-based human development index is necessary equipment for highlighting the identity and position of a community at the national and international level. The socio-economic index helps us to know the factors influencing socio-economic identity and the position of a community. On the other hand, HDI is a measure of achievement in human development or human achievement. The alternate face of human development is human deprivation. Human deprivation is seen as capability deprivation in the capability approach. Poverty is a measure of human deprivation or capability deprivation. Human deprivation is multidimensional. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a measure of human deprivation or capability deprivation or simply deprivation which was introduced by Alkire and Foster with the association of Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiatives (OPHI) in the UNDP Human Development Report, 2010.

The Bodos are 4.37 percent of the total population of Assam in Census, 2011. But, they are 35.06 percent (highest) of the total Scheduled Tribe (ST) population in the state of Assam. Particularly in the Chirang district, Bodo people are 34.82 percent of the district population and they are 93.96 percent among all ST population of the district (Table 1.2). Compared to other districts of BTAD, in Chirang district, the ratio of Bodo population is not only the highest as a percentage of district population but also as the percentage of ST

population of the district. In the Chirang district, approximately all scheduled tribe population belong to the Bodo community. Cent percent population from the same community in a region may reduce to some extent the problems of heterogeneity in statistical inference.

According to Census, 2011, comparing the literacy rates and the number of lower primary schools of the districts of BTAD, Chirang district has the lowest literacy rate (63.55%) and has the highest lower primary schools (174) per lakh population. The Chirang district has the lowest dropout ratio in the lower primary (17.2%) and in the upper primary level (7.5%) among the BTAD districts. And thereby, it has the highest transition rate (87.4%) from the lower primary to the upper primary level. The Chirang district has the highest number of schools with the highest transition rate in the lower primary level, but, it has the lowest literacy rate or the highest illiteracy. That means some section of the population is remains out of schooling in the Chirang district.

Again, the HDI for Chirang district is 0.614 and it is the 7<sup>th</sup> rank among all districts of Assam as per Assam Human Development Report, 2014. The HDI value of the Chirang district is not only the highest among the four districts of BTAD but also higher than the State HDI value 0.557. But HDI value for the Bodo people in Chirang district is found 0.529 which is not only lower than AHDR 2014 calculated HDI value 0.614 for Chirang district but also lower than HDI 0.557 of Assam. Therefore, overall human development in the Chirang district is significantly better, but the human development of the Bodo people in the study area is low. That means, in the case of human development, the Bodo people of Chirang district are lagging behind the people of other communities.

This sort of information indicates some mismatches are there in the case of Bodo people in the Chirang district and these are the main reasons behind this study. This study attempts to study the socio-economic status, human development and deprivation among the Bodo people only in the Chirang district.

In this study, at first, we have investigated the district wise variation in the socio-economic status and human development in the districts of Assam based on secondary information. Secondly, we have studied the socio-economic status of the Bodo people of Chirang district. Thirdly, we have estimated the HDI of the sample villages and towns to study the human development of the Bodo people in the study area. Lastly, the deprivations of the Bodo people of Chirang districts were investigated with the help of MPI of the sample villages and towns. Now, we explain the findings of this study one by one as per the planning of the chapters.

## **8.2 Summary of the Findings**

There is wide variation in the socio-economic status and human development across the districts of Assam. It is observed in different sections of this study that the BTAD districts have relatively lower socio-economic status than the Non-BTAD districts. The majority of the population of the BTAD area are tribal people who belong to the Bodo community. Chirang is a district of BTAD area where the ratio between ST population and district population (37.06%) is the highest among all four districts. Again, 93.96 percent of district ST people of Chirang district are Bodo people and this percentage is the highest among the BTAD districts. The Bodo people are 34.82 percent of the total district population in Chirang district and which is also the highest among the districts of BTAD. To study the socio-economic status, human development and capability deprivations of the Bodo community in Chirang district, this study has taken three objectives. The first objective is to calculate the socio-economic index of the Bodo people in Chirang district. The second attempt is to estimate the human development index. And thirdly, this study attempts to measure the multidimensional poverty index for the Bodo people in the study area. The major findings of this study are given below.

1. First of all the regional disparities in Assam are reflected as the inter-district variations in terms of socio-economic variables. Even, the Districts of Assam also vary in terms of socio-economic status as

well as human development. The BTAD area is recognized as a backward region because districts of BTAD have limited socio-economic infrastructure compared to the districts of the Non-BTAD area.

2. The socio-economic status is reflected in terms of different socio-economic variables that access by the people of a society. The variations in the socio-economic variables represent different levels of socio-economic status. There are wide variations among the districts of Assam, even in between BTAD districts and Non-BTAD districts in terms of different levels of socio-economic variables. The status of BTAD districts is relatively lower in terms of socio-economic variables compared to that of the Non-BTAD districts of Assam. As a result, on average, BTAD districts have low socio-economic status with an SEI score of 11.88 which is lower than the Non-BTAD district average SEI score of 26.86 and state average SEI score of 25.35. Since, Kamrup Metro is only the metro district which has the highest socio-economic infrastructure in Assam and we have standardised SEI score of other districts with Kamrup Metro, the SEI scores of most of the districts have found much lower.
3. The wide variations in the distribution of population, the decadal growth rate of population, the density of population, the share of urban population and life expectancy rate in the districts of Assam are mainly due to the regional imbalance in socio-economic development. The variations in socio-economic statuses of the districts are caused by the inter-district variations in demographic variables. Particularly, the population density has a negative impact and the percentage of urban population and literacy rate has a positive impact on the socio-economic status of the districts.
4. Better performance in education is a symbol of better socio-economic status. We have found that some of the districts of Assam like Kamrup Metro, Jorhat, Dhemaji and Nalbari have better educational status with a high literacy rate and good progress of the

students. But, some other districts like Hailakandi, Dima Hasao, Chirang, Kokrajhar, etc. have poor performance in education. The districts with poor performance in education are found to have lower socio-economic status. The average literacy rate of BTAD districts (65.86%) is much lower than the average literacy rate of the Non-BTAD districts (72.71%) and the state average literacy rate (72.19%). But, BTAD districts, on average, have more quantity of lower primary (142) and upper primary (23) schools per-lakh population than the Non-BTAD district average lower primary (113) and upper primary (18) schools per-lakh population. In the BTAD area, Chirang district has the lowest literacy rate (63.55%), though it has the highest number of lower primary schools (174) per-lakh population in Census 2011.

5. Well-equipped household amenities like access to good housing with the pucca house, electricity, sanitary latrine, safe drinking water, using LPG for cooking, etc. are a symbol of better socio-economic status. Otherwise, it has poor socio-economic status. A few districts in Assam, particularly in the BTAD area, Chirang, Baksa, and Kokrajhar districts are very poor in household amenities. Even most of the households of BTAD districts do not have a latrine and Bodo people are still using open space for latrine which is very unfortunate.
6. While studying the growth of human development of the districts of Assam we have found that the HDI of Assam has increased marginally from 0.407 in 2003 to 0.557 in 2014. As per the UNDP recommendation, the HDI of Assam is found moderate. Similarly, the HDI scores of the most of the districts are found moderate though there is not a single district with high HDI in Assam. Human development is found poor in five districts- Dhubri, Cachar, Karimganj, Baksa and Hailakandi. A high HDI score represents good quality of knowledge, good health and high living status and these ultimately reflect a better socio-economic status of the people.

7. It is observed that overall human development in the BTAD area is lower compared to the human development of the remaining parts of Assam. The district average of the HDI of the BTAD districts is 0.510 in 2014 which is lower than that of the Non-BTAD districts (0.563) and state average HDI (0.557). But, the Chirang district of the BTAD area has an HDI score of 0.614 in 2014. It represents better human development in Chirang district, because it is not only better than state average human development but also has the rank 7<sup>th</sup> in HDI ranking of AHDR 2014. But the HDI score for the Bodo people of Chirang district is found 0.529 in this study. Therefore, the Bodo people of Chirang district have lower human development compared to the people of other communities of the district.
8. One of the objectives of this study is to study the socio-economic status of the Bodo people of Chirang district. In this study, we have found that the majority of Bodo households have poor socio-economic status. The socio-economic status of 69.07 percent sample households (297 households out of 430 sample households) is found poor because their HSEI scores are less than UNDP recommended minimum score of 50. Similarly, the socio-economic status of 29.3 percent of the sample households (126 sample households) is found to have medium because their HSEI scores are between 50 and 7.99. On the other hand, only 7 households or 1.63 percent sample households are found with high socio-economic status, because, their HSEI scores are either 80 or more. The households with high socio-economic status are H-92, H-258, H-400, H-403, H-418, H-422 and H-429.
9. While studying the socio-economic index at village level or town level, no one of the sample villages or towns has high socio-economic status in Chirang district. Four villages namely Chapaguri, Kukurmari, Kashikotra and Sukhanipara and both the towns namely Basugaon and Bijni have medium socio-economic status. But, the VSEI scores of the remaining 34 villages are less than 50 and they

are socio-economically poor. The poorest village is found Salbari Bhurpar with its VSEI score of 35.445. The socio-economic index of Bijni (63.599) is the highest in this study. Since the sample average SEI score for Bodo people is found 44.66, we confirm that the Bodo people of Chirang district have poor socio-economic status.

10. Most of the Bodo people in the Chirang district are dependent fully on agriculture in rural areas. Therefore, their income and sources of income are very limited. Due to this, people are unable to maintain a minimum standard of living. The literacy rate of the Bodo people is found low. Due to mass illiteracy, Bodo people in this district are unaware of different development schemes provided by the government through community blocks and other agencies. Again, due to lack of motivation, Bodo people in Chirang district fail to adopt other sources of income except for cultivation.
11. Besides aware of medical facilities among the Bodo people in the Chirang district, some of them, unfortunately, do believe in traditional believes in Kabiraj or ohjas. The kabiraj or ohjas are some traditional believes of treatment of disease and these have been prevailing among some tribal communities. Due to this, some untoward social incidence like witch-hunting occurs from time to time in rural areas. Ignorance of the people and poor literacy rate may be the main causes of it.
12. The roadway distance between a village and its nearest town is still a factor affecting the socio-economic status of Bodo people in Chirang district. A village nearer to a town enjoys better socio-economic infrastructure. And it is observed that the nearer villages have significantly better socio-economic status than the farthest villages. Therefore, the distance between a village and its nearest town is one of the main reasons that we have seen behind the differences of socio-economic status in between farthest villages and nearer villages or in between rural areas and urban areas in the case of Bodo people in Chirang district.



13. Regarding the HDI of the sample villages, most of the Bodo villages have an HDI score of less than 0.500. The highest HDI score is found 0.684 for Kukurmari village because of its highest education index 0.879 and second highest health index 0.635 found in this study. The living standard index of Kukurmari village 0.709 is also considerably higher than all other sample villages except Chapaguri village (0.732). The lowest HDI is found at 0.348 for Uttar Burikhamar village. Uttar Burikhamar is a remote village located in the North-East direction of Bijni Sub-Division and the people of this village are living without necessities of living. Unfortunately, no one sample village or town is found to have high HDI as per UNDP-2010 recommendation. However, most of the sample villages and towns have HDI values greater than 0.500 but less than 0.684.
14. Human Development Index is a composite measure of achievement in the socio-economic domains of education, health and living standard and they are called key dimensions of HDI. The scores of the key dimensions of HDI for Bodo people are found too low compared to the district level HDI key dimensional index recorded in AHDR 2014. The achievements of Bodo people in key dimensions of human development are very poor compared to the other communities of the district as well as Assam. Bodo villages have a low level of income, low life expectancy, low expected year of schooling, and low mean year of schooling. The low level of income of the Bodo people of Chirang district is due to the excessive dependency on agriculture. Low life expectancy is one of the consequences of the inadequacy of medical facilities. Similarly, low expected years of schooling and low mean year of schooling are due to a lack of adequate educational infrastructure in Chirang district. The Bodo villages in the Chirang district are located in remote areas and most of them are located nearby forest areas. As a result, the achievements of sample villages in the dimensional indices of Health, Education and Income are found poor.

15. The capability deprivation is multidimensional. Multidimensional poverty analysis is an application of capability approach in the line of analysis of capability deprivation of human beings. Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a measure of poverty. Poverty is caused by the capability deprivation of human. Thus, MPI is a measure of capability deprivation in the dimensions of education, health and living conditions. Poor socio-economic status and low HDI are the symptoms of multidimensional deprivation of the people of a region.
16. Bodo people in Chirang district have poor socio-economic status and low HDI and hence, they are deprived of many capabilities or real opportunities. We get high MPI values showing extreme multidimensional poverty for most of the sample villages. About 46.89 percent of Bodo people are found multidimensionally poor in Chirang district because the poverty headcount ratio is found 46.89 percent. But, according to AHDR-2014, the poverty headcount ratio for Assam is 30.10 and for Chirang district it is 30.04. Therefore, the percentage of multidimensionally poor people among Bodos is more compared not only to the state average of Assam but also to all other communities in Chirang district.
17. The sample average deprivation score of the multidimensionally poor people in Chirang district for Bodo people is found 46.65 percent. Because the intensity of poverty for Bodo people in Chirang district is 46.65 percent. The intensity of poverty for multidimensionally poor Bodo people (46.65%) is higher than the state level intensity of poverty 16.54 percent (AHDR-2014).
18. The MPI score for Bodo people is found 0.218 in Chirang district. According to AHDR-2014, the MPI score for Assam is 0.125 and that is for Chirang district is 0.111. Comparing these two figures, we are confirmed that the multidimensional poverty of Bodo people in the Chirang district is more than the state average.
19. As per contributions of dimensional deprivations to MPI, deprivation in the living conditions dimension is the highest percentage of the

multidimensional deprivation for Bodo people in Chirang district followed by percentage share of deprivation in the education dimension. Compared to the deprivations in education and health, Bodo people are mostly deprived of living conditions in the study area.

20. As we have observed that the percentage of Bodo people in Chirang district not accessing electricity is 27.5 percent, no access to clean drinking water is 76.4 percent, no access to adequate sanitation is 61.9 percent, living in a dirty floored house is 67 percent, uses dirty cooking fuel is 56.94 percent and no access to information or no asset related to mobility or livelihood is 9.68 percent. Thus, Bodo people in the Chirang district are extremely deprived of the necessities of life.

### **8.3 Conclusion and Recommendations**

BTAD is recognized as one of the most backward regions, where the majority of Bodo people are living as the single largest ethnic group in Assam. Bodo people are economically poor. The Bodo people of Chirang district have lower socio-economic status than the other community. They have low human development. In Chirang district, Bodos are multidimensionally poor. They are living mainly in rural areas without the necessities of living. Based on the foregoing discussion and observation, we can forward the following conclusion and recommendation for the overall development of the Bodo people in the study area.

1. Regional disparities in Assam are reflected as the inter-district variations in terms of socio-economic variables. Districts of Assam vary not only in terms of socio-economic variables, but also vary in terms of socio-economic status as well as human development. Special attention should be given to the backward regions through government policy initiatives to mitigate the regional disparities or inter-district variations among the districts of Assam.

2. Bodo people in the Chirang district are living mainly in rural areas some of which are forest villages and some other located nearby forest located nearest to the Indo-Bhutan border. These villages have limited socio-economic infrastructures like limited hospital facilities, limited educational facilities, limited household amenities, limited administrative facilities, and poor quality of road connectivity. Forest villages should be well equipped with establishments of schools and colleges, hospitals and dispensaries, rural electrification, providing safe drinking water, and providing the minimum required household amenities.
3. The rural-urban connectivity roads and the village inter-linking roads are very poor in quality in Chirang district. As a result, the roadway distance between a village and its nearest town is still one of the main factors determining the socio-economic status of Bodo people. A Bodo inhabited village nearer to a town has better socio-economic status than a village located farthest away from a town. So, the village interlinking roads should be improved up to the level of all-weather usable.
4. As a whole, the Bodo people of Chirang district have poor socio-economic status and low human development. Similarly, Bodo people in this district are multidimensionally poor mainly because of their limited access to household amenities. Most of the Bodo households are living without the necessities of living. Most of them are living in the kutcha house, without safe drinking water, without sanitary latrine, without clean fuel and electricity. Thus, Bodo people are deprived of many necessities of living, those must be provided by the government directly to the beneficiaries.
5. Similar to the other areas, the Chirang district is also introducing different programs for rural development and employment generating such as Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (PMYA)/ Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY), Deen Dayal Upadhaya Grameen Kaushalya Yojana (DDUGKY), Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural

Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Swachchh Bharat Mission (SBM), Training to Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Roshni: Skill Development Scheme for Tribals (RSDST), National Rural Health Mission (NRHM), Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (SSA), etc. Funds are allocated in such programs equally by the state government like other districts, but the respective departmental authorities are not properly implementing in time which we have seen by comparing to the other districts of Assam. Proper monitoring should be done for proper implementations of the rural development schemes in time.

6. Bodo people have lots of talent and inner qualities in the field of different activities like sports, handlooms, cultivations, business, cottage and small scale industries, etc. but, due to lack of awareness and proper guidance their qualities have not risen in the practical field.
7. To improve educational status the respective authority should take necessary steps basically for implementation of allotted funds and arrangement of awareness programs to create an educational environment in the study area in time. Most of the lower primary (LP) and upper primary (UP) schools are running without the minimum requirement of teachers. The study area does not have the minimum required numbers of senior secondary schools, junior colleges and degree colleges. Many times, the Bodo students' union, Bodo Sahitya Sabha and other organizations of Bodos are demanding fulfilment of a required number of teachers and establishment of provincialised junior and degree colleges in the remote areas in the study area. But the respective state government knowingly or unknowingly did not respond to the demand of the Bodos. Thus, we can suggest that the respective government should take immediate initiatives in this regard.
8. To improve the socio-economic status of the Bodo community, the respective authority should take all necessary plan-policies for family planning adoption, protection from different diseases, creating awareness among Bodo households by arranging the seminar, workshop, and guest lectures by inviting subject experts from various disciplines. Without full

awareness about development prospects, we cannot expect full utilization of both human as well as physical capitals. The neighbouring areas of Bhutan of this study area are still affecting by the diseases of malaria and Japanese encephalitis. Though the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) of the health department is trying to remove these diseases, it has failed to remove them fully in the said area. In this regard, the health department should give more concentration to the affected areas through the extension of medical facilities such as an increase of staff, health camps, funds, etc.

9. Safe drinking water is an important factor for good health. Most of the villages in the study area are using drinking water from unsaved sources. This is one of the reasons for various health problems suffered by the villages of the study area. More than 80 percent of the Bodo villages in the study area are not covered by water supply facilities of the Public Health and Engineering (PHE). Even most of the water supply systems facilitated by PHE are seen as either non-functioning or malfunctioning in the villages. Therefore, respective authorities should take the necessary steps for providing safe drinking water in this area.
10. Agriculture is the main occupation of Bodo households in the study area. They have enough land to cultivate but due to illiteracy, primitive culture and traditions, lack of irrigation facilities and lack of financial assistance, productivity are very low. They do not have proper storage facilities like cold-house or wear-house, due to which they are bound to sell their products below the minimum support price at the time of harvesting. It reduces their incentives to cultivate, as a consequence they cultivate only once a year. And also they are bound to cultivate only in the monsoon season due to lack of irrigation facilities. Therefore, to improve agricultural productivity, the irrigation department should take the required irrigation project relevant to the study area. Regarding the removal of difficulties in receiving financial help, the bureaucratic complicity should reduce for implementing the smooth flow of allotted

funds. In this respect, the respective authority should be monitored properly in the study area.

11. The tendency of easy money collection may be one of the main problems of the study area for a long time which has been creating many problems like incompleteness of different developmental projects, kidnapping and murder, etc. The insurgency problem is also equally responsible in this regard. Therefore, the government as well as the local-self government should take a bold step to solve the said problems through creating employment opportunities by carefully detecting the cause of those problems.
12. Finally, the government should emphasize all prospects of development of the study area keeping special attention to the weaker section of the society. In this regard, the government should prepare and execute effective plan-policies with adequate funds to bring overall upliftment to the study area.

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