CHAPTER- VI

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The study comprises six chapters, where chapter one reveals introduction and research design of the topic and chapter two presents review of literature. The scientific study on findings and analysis of the topic has been presented in chapter three and four respectively and concluded in chapter five. Finally, the study briefing with conclusion and policy implications as presented in this chapter six.

From the analysis of Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 it has been evident that in 1991, basically the districts of Upper South Brahmaputra Valley ranging from Sibsagar, Tinsukia, Golaghat, Jorhat and Dibrugarh and one of the Hill region district N. C. Hills have came out to be relatively more developed. Along with these, the districts like Lakhimpur, Dhemaji and Sonitpur of Upper North Bank Plain, Cachar, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Kokrajhar and Kamrup have also some sort of development than the remaining districts. Dhubri district is the least developed region in the entire rural Assam. It has been found that in average the districts of lower North Bank Plain have poor rural development than the other micro-zones.

In 2001, Lakhimpur district followed by districts of Upper South Bank Plain ranging from Jorhat, Sibsagar, Dibrugarh and Golaghat have placed again in the relatively more developed position. Along with these Barpeta, Dhemaji, N. C. Hills, Cachar, Tinsukia and Kamrup have also attained some development in the State of Assam. Here, also Dhubri district fall in the least development category. In terms of micro-zone, the regions Upper South Bank Plain followed by Upper North Bank Plain are two relatively more developed region out of the seven micro-zones that the study have been taken into account. Here, Central Brahmaputra Valley is the least developed micro-region.

Again, it has been revealed that in 2011 there were some improvements in rural development across the districts of Assam though disparities persist. Here, Baksa

district of BTC (Bodoland Territorial Council) region attained highest development out of the 26 districts of Assam. Along with Baksa, the districts Jorhat and Golaghat of Upper South Brahmaputra Valley again came out to be relatively more developed region. The districts such as Chirang, Lakhimpur, Tinsukia, Dima Hasao (formerly N. C. Hills), Dibrugarh, Kamrup Metro, Nalbari, Sibsagar, Dhemaji, Karimganj, Sonitpur, Cachar, Bongaigaon, Udalguri, Karbi-Anglong and Kamrup Rural were also found in the relatively developed position. Here, Darrang district is found as the least developed region followed by Dhubri that are fall in the low development category. Here also, in average the micro-zone Upper South Bank Plain has attained highest rural development followed by Upper North Bank Plain. The region Lower North Bank Plain again came out as the least developed region out of the seven micro-regions of Assam in 2011.

It is to be noted that the districts of Upper Brahmaputra Valley form the resource rich part of the State. Most of the tea plantations and industries basically mining, coal and oil took place in this part of the State. Further, the soil productivity of this region is also high than the other parts of the State. So, the agricultural productivity of this region is also high. The districts of Barak Valley also have some small industries and tea plantations. The Kamrup district (both including rural and metro) forms economically developed region which is not only the capital city of the State of Assam but also the gateway of entire North-East India. The N. C. Hills presently known as Dima Hasao in the Hill region is found developed in terms of the concerned rural developmental variables. It means that the basic amenities as well as the requisite infrastructure in that region is not lacking.

Thus, it is clear that the districts or regions which are relatively developed in literacy rate, health, agricultural activities etc. have more rural development contrary to the other regions and vice versa. This increase in rural development goes at par with economically forward districts that has equipped with economic activities such as industry and commerce, tea plantations including agricultural field etc. Districts such as Dhubri, Darrang in Lower North Bank Plain, Goalpara in the Lower South Bank Plain, Hailakandi in the Barak Valley, Karbi-Anglong in the Hill region etc. are termed as economically poor region. Mere development of only one or two indicator does not mean that it is relatively developed. For example, some districts like Dhemaji and

Morigaon in the Central Brahmaputra Valley was developed in agricultural productivity in 1991 but they are not treating as developed region. Again, development status of one indicator has been changing time to time. For example, in terms of agricultural productivity Barpeta and Cachar has surpassed Nagaon and Morigaon in 2001 which again replaced by Baksa and Chirang in 2011.

Again, as has been analyzed in Chapter- IV, i.e. factors responsible for disparities in rural development across the districts of Assam for the years 1991, 2001 and 2011, the resource availability factor has come out as significant in all the three census periods. In 1991, along with resource availability rural infrastructure also has some positive impact on rural developmental disparities. In the recent census period, i.e. in 2011, the amount of government expenditure on different rural development programmes has also significant impact in variations in rural development along with resource availability. It has been found that between the two indicators of resource availability, the access to land has significant impact than the operational holding. The other factors along with its components might also have some significant indirect impact in the rural economy. For example, by more urbanization and industrialization people from the agricultural sector can be transformed into the non-agricultural livelihood, so that pressure of land is reduced resulting in improved access to land for rural households. This can also be enhanced through government expenditure on rural development by making expenditure on non-agricultural sector.

Thus, for drawing policy implications the need of the hour is to see the status of districts or cluster of districts on the basis of indicators of rural development. Some regions are found more developed in one indicator than the other. All the districts are not equally enriched with the indicators of rural development. The districts or regions that are lagging in one indicator should be developed in that particular indicator. Therefore, the regions which have greater deficiency relative to the other should give more emphasize for improvement of the particular indicator. For example, two districts in the Lower Brahmaputra Valley such as Dhubri and Kokrajhar have relatively lowest literacy level in almost all the three census periods. Therefore, this inequality in literacy should be removed by emphasizing educational infrastructure in those particular districts. Similar is the case for other indicators also.

Further, the geographical and locational characteristics also have to take into account in reducing disparities in rural development of Assam. It has been found that Dhubri is the most backward district in almost all the three census periods. It might be the case of tense international border with Bangladesh which causes international migration at a large extent. The proper legislation in this regard might have to curb population growth due to immigration. This problem of tense borders both national and international might be happen in other regions also as may be the case for districts of Barak Valley. The underdevelopment of such regions due to such problems along with other resource lacking of the district needs more comprehensive study. Again, the efficient utilization of vast untapped natural resources of the underdeveloped regions has to be utilized as a balanced rural development strategy of the State of Assam.