CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION
Society in general refers to a group of people with distinctive patterns of relationships and institutions sharing the same territory. People gather in a society for certain specific interests or fulfilling certain common goals, as individuals alone cannot meet all his/her needs. And to fulfil the common interest or individual need, these organized groups of people operate under certain formulated norms, beliefs, ideas, customs, codes, social systems, rules and regulations. In short, we can say that they form a common ‘culture’ to keep the society organized. But a society is ever changing and thus, some elements of the society are bound to change. The changing process geared by scientific knowledge has discarded some traditional beliefs, uprooted some irrational actions with logical thinking, and has vastly transformed people’s mindset, attitude, aptitude and above all, their ways of living. This change can be analyzed in the sphere of ‘social structure’ and ‘traditions’. Though, all the changes cannot be termed as modern yet most of the changes have forwarded us towards modernization. Also, modernization in its wake has brought various complexities. The social and cultural pattern of the society is not as simple as the primitive societies. New issues, concepts, factors have been evolving with the rise of modernization. With various privileges, some duties have been vested upon the citizens. The more we are heading towards technological advancement the more the
instances of social degradation are taking place. In order to cope up with changing scenario, the consciousness towards various aspects of society is indeed essential.

It was assumed that modernization would do away with all the outdated and primeval aspects of human society and that the society would be driven by rationality. It was perceived that modernization would lead the society towards scientific end, where irrationality would give away to rational and modern way of life. Prof Ram Ahuja in his book 'Indian Social System' (1993) writes “at social level, we wanted social relations to be based on concepts like equality, human dignity, and social values which would ensure social mobility, removal of cast disabilities, amelioration of the conditions of women, and so forth. At the economic level, we wanted technological growth and distributive justice. At the cultural level we wanted secularism, rationalism, and liberalism. At the political level, we desired representative government, democratic institutions, achievement-oriented power structure, and a greater voice and participation for Indians in the governance of the country. The means for agents selected for modernising the society were planning, education, legislation, assistance from foreign countries, adopting the policy of liberalisation, and the like”. But in reality, things have not turned out in such a way.

As a consequence of such changes, new organizations are transplanting both the old and new groups and new trends are emerging. Undoubtedly, this has brought revolutionary changes in the social and cultural structure of every society for an instance; we have reached a very high level in the technological aspect. But on the other hand, we have also done away with some of our desirable traditional values in the name of change. For instance, the earlier joint family system has been replaced by
the modern nuclear family resulting in an increasing number of old age homes. The increasing number of divorces is also an instance of heightened practice/temperament of intolerance. Today, we accord more value to western culture, fashion and lifestyle at the cost of our tradition. The values that inculcated in us, respect towards elders, virtue of honesty and value of hard work have begun to disappear. It is important to take note of the fact that ‘modernization’ does not mean mere ‘westernization’. Though we are adopting the materialistic aspect of the western societies, we tend to overlook the best-practices of the West such as dignity of labour, work-culture, accountability, scientific approach and above all upholding a fair society. The advent of industrialisation has adversely affected our small scale industries. The increasing number of educated unemployed people has also created number of social problems. Various reports say that the numbers of registered cases of crime are increasing day by day.

It is already been discussed that the present complex society has brought with it various issues and problematic aspects, the awareness on which is very necessary to live with dignity in the present society. We can only talk about the ‘Aandolan’s and ‘Dharnas’ in the name of awareness whatever the issue may be. But, the question arises as to how many people participating in such ‘Dharnas’ are genuinely aware of the issues. Most of the people join them because certain organizations instigate them to do so. People are not really aware about their rights and duties. This is happening in all the aspects of the society. We find ourselves busy in gathering information on various issues and discuss about these, give long-winding lectures in meetings. And again the question arises of how many people are actually ‘aware’ in the real sense of
the term. There is a vast difference in their words and actions. We always talk about our environmental degradation but we forget the same while disposing household wastes by the road side.

Therefore, if we want to create a society which shall be based on rationality and scientific view, we need to reconceptualise the true meaning of modernization. We should discard irrational and inhuman behaviour but should not forget those values which teach us to be true human being. We should be responsible towards the needs and rights of others, only then can we envision towards living in a truly modern society. With this background in context, the present chapter aims to formulate the theoretical background and define the key concepts of the present study i.e. Modernization and Social Awareness.

1.2 Modernization: Concept, Approaches and Dimensions

Modernization as a concept gained currency in the social sciences by the 19th century following industrial revolution. In general, the word modernization implies ‘something new’. The dictionary meaning of modernization refers to the process of becoming modern, adapting modern ways, scientific outlook etc. The etymology of the word comes from the Latin root ‘modo’ which means ‘just now’. The term, modernization does not symbolize any philosophy or movement; it denotes a process of change. It is a process which indicates the adoption of modern ways of living. Earlier, the term modernization indicated the change in the economy and its effects on the society. But at present, the term is used in a more comprehensive way. Smelser defined modernization as “a complex set of changes that takes place in every part of
society as it attempts to be industrialized. Modernization involves ongoing change in a society’s economy, politics, education, traditions, and religion.” (Rao, C.N. Shankar, 2006). It is understood as an attempt on the part of the people, particularly those who are custom bound, to adapt themselves to the present time, conditions and ways in general.

Modernization implies structural and cultural changes in a society. It symbolizes a rational attitude towards issues and their evaluation from a universalistic point of view. Modernization has positive association with scientific knowledge, technological skill and technological resources of particular society. But what may be essential to modernization is the commitment to scientific world-view, the internationalization of humanistic and philosophical view point of science and contemporary problems and not only the technological advancement (Singh, Yogendra, 2012). Robert Bellah rightly interpreted that “where modernization means only an increased effectiveness in goal attainment with no increase in the rationalization of goal-setting process very serious pathologies can result. Empirically such pathologies have occurred but they are the product of partial modernization or disturbed modernization, not the inevitable result of modernization itself” (Srinivas, M. N., 2013).

Modernization has two main phases. In the first phase it carries the institutions and values of the society along with it and in the second phase modern societies has to confront such problems which can’t be solved in the array of traditionalism. The initial resistance to the modernization may be prolonged but it is generally doomed to failure and modernization begins to breed discontent on an
increasing scale. This is due to the rising expectations provoked by the early successes and dynamism of modern society. Modernization in its essential attributes or in ideal-typical forms is a universal cultural phenomenon. It is not an exclusive possession of any country or any specific ethnic group; rather it belongs to the humanity as a whole.

There is still no unanimity on concepts and evaluative standards of modernization among social scientists. There are various approaches to modernisation and each approach can be charged with having latent ideological biases. Most of the approaches can be classified into two categories as Structural and Evolutionary. The Structural Approach seeks to analyse modernization from its selected social and normative variables. The variables as ‘democratic political institutions and values’; ‘social mobilization’; ‘development of communication and media exposure’; ‘growth of literacy’; ‘extensive advancement in technical and economic resources of society’ are taken into consideration. According to this approach, modernisation in a society is dependent on the intensity and proportion of these variables.

On the other hand, Evolutionary Approach is based on a more systematic theoretical assumption. The social evolutionism theories describe modernization in view of societies as having a standard evolutionary pattern. There is, however, a difference in the in the process and direction of modernization. The process may be either ‘structural-functional’ or ‘dialectical’ and the direction may be ‘linear’ or ‘multi-linear’. The Marxists in their dialectical approach believe that class struggle is necessary in any evolutionary process and regards modernization as changes in the stratification system, ownership of property and productive resources, rather than
changes in the other social-psychological aspect of society. On the other hand, ‘structural-functional’ approach of evolutionary treatment endorses that modernization is the evolution from the barbarism to highly developed civilized society. Modern societies are believed to be more powerful and wealthier than the less modern societies. Talcott Parsons was one who propounded this view and according to him, evolutionary changes would engulf all human groups despite their typicality in other aspects of social and cultural phenomena. In any evolution of any society four aspects determines the nature of evolution, which he termed as ‘universal’. These universal aspects are communication with language, religion, social organizations with kinship and technology. He further writes in his essay on modernization that ‘stratification’, ‘cultural legitimation’, ‘bureaucratic organization’, ‘money’, ‘generalized universalistic norms’ and ‘democratic association’ develop in sequential order which determine the modernization process of a society. But this approach received much criticism as it envisaged modernization with westernization. Technically, modernity simply refers to the present, and any society that is in existence is therefore modern. The declaration of ‘democratic association’ as the highest state of modernization was refused by many sociologists. But Parsons’ view on modernization is theoretically strong and could be used to explain many structural and cultural contradictions on modernization.

Thus, in short if we have to point out the characteristics of modernization we can say that modernization is a process of:

1. Ever increasing new technology,
2. Ever increasing use of inanimate power and technology in competitive market situations,

3. Ever increasing rate of trade and commerce,

4. A scientific world view against traditional world view,

5. Failure of traditional-feudal structure and rise of democratic and totalitarian system.

Drawing upon the works of many eminent scholars, A.R. Desai has summarised the characteristic features of modernization as including the intense use of technology which shifts the use of human and animal power to inanimate power. Division of labour, industrialization and urbanization are the aspects of modernization that has been accepted by most of the scholars. Again, decentralization of power and supremacy of universalistic law is another feature of modernization. In social structure individuals also status have to achieve and it is not ascribed to anyone. The change of outlook of the people from sacred to other worldly, resistant towards changes to secularity, from worldly and forward looking ways to dynamic outlook are certain changes brought by modernization. Rationality, humanism, practicability are some of the important conditions which constitute the hallmark of the cultural outlook of modernization. (Desai, A. R., 1971)

Modernization is a process of social transition. This transition has two aspects- modernization of social subjects and modernization of social objects. The modernization of people’s behaviour, thoughts, attitudes etc. can be termed as modernization of social subjects. On the other hand, modernization of social objects
includes the democratization of political system, industrialization of agriculture; changes in the economic system, fusion of culture, globalization of education etc. The key to understand modernization is in thinking of it as a set of change that affects the entire society. These changes are many and complex and linked to each other. This process is different in every society. Modernization involves anything and everything within the society.

Modernization involves the transformation of social, political and economic organizations. "This includes the transformation indicated by Durkheim, from 'mechanical solidarity to organic solidarity'; that indicated by Backer the transformation from the 'change resistance sacred outlook' to 'change ready secular outlook': the transformation indicated by Weber from 'personal bonds’ to 'impersonal relation’ with bureaucracy and the transformation from 'status based relations’ to 'contract based relation’ as indicated by Maine. It applies to the individualistic forms of western model, the communist form of organisation of the Russian or Chinese model as well as the socialistic pattern of Indian model" (Kuppuswamy, B., 1972).

Modernization encompasses all the aspects of our life. It is very broad in its scope. However, in the present investigation the following dimensions have been taken into consideration.

a. Socio-Religious

Every society has certain social norms, codes and regulations which are determined by the society and the religious institutions. But all these norms and
regulations are not based on rationality and scientific ground and in fact some of the rituals or norms are blended with superstitious beliefs. In India, many people tend to believe that it is a negative sign or a bad luck when a cat crosses one's way. This is just one common example, there are numerous such issues which are purely superstitious in nature. We are still inclined to follow certain beliefs and customs which hamper the development of our country, such as the prevalent caste system. The people who staunchly support the caste system even believe that dining with the people from lower caste will affect their status. With the spread of education such irrational practices have been discontinued by many people. But, education has not been able to rationalize people at an individual level in many beliefs, for an instance, most people accept each and everything as God's wish and that this world is temporary and only God is ultimate truth. This kind of passivity may stand as an obstacle in their path of development as they lack the interest for any initiative.

b. Marriage

Marriage is a socially or ritually recognized union between two individuals, mostly male and female, that establishes rights and obligations between them and the recognition of a new status by others (or the society). It is an approved social pattern whereby two individuals are given the right to conceive and rear children. A legal marriage legitimizes a social status and creates a set of legally recognized rights and duties. In India, marriage is totally a family affair where not only two individuals but also members of the two families are united. The definition of marriage varies according to different cultures and in relation to some fixed rituals and customs. There are various prohibitions and restrictions as well. For example, inter-caste and
inter-faith marriages were strictly prohibited in our society but with the changing time such restrictions have visibly declined. Again, widow remarriage was seen something as deviant behaviour, but gradually the attitudes of the people are changing. Changes have also occurred in the family structure; now-a-days nuclear family is preferred to the joint family system.

c. Position of a Woman

Woman is always defined as a daughter, wife and a mother. Wifehood or motherhood is accepted as 'pivotal' and that the role they are to play requires no degree, certificate or additional knowledge. This concept itself has somehow generated the idea that women are lower to men. The practices like Suttee (widow burning), Jauhar, Devadasi etc. that prevailed in India during the Pre-British period are some of the examples which depict the plight of women in a male dominated society. However, with the advent of western education these practices have been finally abolished. But purdah system is still practiced by many Indian women in some communities. Child marriage is still widespread across the nation, although it has been declared illegal under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006. In modern India, major steps have been taken to ensure equality and dignity of women. With the changing scenario, women are also actively participating in all fields and at all levels, at par with their male counterparts. However, the attitude of the people towards women has still not changed totally and requires revision.
d. Education

Modernization has an incredible influence on the education system. In every age education has been imparted to people through various institutions. In ancient times the Gurukula, in Buddhist period the Buddha Biharas, in mediaeval period the Maktabs and Madrasas and in modern period various public and private institutions are the medium through which education is imparted. Previously, education was not everyone’s cup of tea but today, education has been made a Fundamental Right. Also the aims and features of education have changed drastically. The religious character of education has transformed to a secularist one. At the same time new issues and trends are constantly emerging in the sphere of education. The age old saying ‘spare the rod and spoil the child’ is no longer is applicable in today’s educational scenario. At the present time, girls and boys receive education in the same school with the same set of curriculum. Some issues which were seen as taboo such as sex education, are now included in our modern curriculum.

Scanning the contemporary views, approaches and dimensions, it can be summarised that modernization of a society or its people is dependent and determined by various factors and elements. More particularly, it is vastly dependent on the mind set and awareness level of people regarding various issues of society. Until and unless people are aware of what is happening around, they will be unable to keep pace with the changing world and in the true sense become modern as well. As matter of fact despite our adaptation to the changes that are taking place as a result of modernization, there is no less evidence of conflicts resulting from our maladjustment to changes. Education is now regarded as one of the most important instruments of
preparation of individuals in accepting or adapting to change. But in many ways, it has also failed in its very purpose. The present study has been undertaken to reveal how far the education system has proved efficient in preparing the individual to adopt and adapt the changes that are desirable and is a system evolved through the process of modernisation. The preceding paragraphs discusses the second variable of the present study i.e. Social Awareness

1.3 Social Awareness: Concept and Dimensions

The term social awareness has been constituted by two different words, one is ‘Social’ and other is ‘Awareness’. The word ‘social’ refers to everything relating to society or its organization. On the other hand ‘awareness’ has a complex connotation. Dourish and Bellotti (1992) defined it as “understanding the activity of others as a context of your own activity”. Awareness has a cognitive aspect which refers to a description or perception of an event or condition from the cognitive point of view. It refers to a coordination that involves deeper understanding of a social situation. Thus, social awareness is a cognitive description or perception of the issues related to society or its organizations. Social awareness is a relative concept; one may be partially, subconsciously or acutely aware. Various scholars defined social awareness in different ways. Tollmar et al. (1996) defined social awareness as being aware about social situation of the members (of a group), i.e. awareness about what they are doing, if they are talking to someone, if they can be disturbed etc.

Schmidt (2002) considers social awareness as the awareness of the social context and seen as something that engenders informal interactions and a shared
Social awareness does not have a simple dictionary meaning and is a complex concept that has a variety of implications for numerous people. Generally, social awareness is a conscious effort of seeking information about what is going on, in and around us and showing an attitude of concern towards them. The more the awareness on the social issues and problems, the better is the understanding of effective solution to problems. Social awareness can be understood as a principle that combines a series of factors. It is a model by which one gains fundamental knowledge on social issues including political, economical, technological, medical, environmental and scientific issues. Social awareness is learning about the dynamics of social relationships between individuals, groups and communities. A socially aware individual gives importance to the rights of people and acknowledges the necessity of harmonious social interaction for the developmental progress of human beings. The area of social awareness is very vast and encompasses everything in the universe. It begins from the basic social skill development to the social consciousness which leads to social activism and societal transmission. Though, it is not possible for a human being to be aware about everything in this universe, yet basic awareness of everything is very necessary in the present complex society. If we critically analyze, modernization is also an aspect of social awareness. On the other hand, social awareness is very necessary for the modernization of the people.
In general it is observed that people who are aware are also well prepared to face certain difficulties and ability in overcoming them as well. But, it is seen that people are becoming insensitive to social issues and problems day by day. Most people have become money-minded and selfish. They have become so self-indulgent that they do not even bother to know what is happening around them. This results in violation of human rights, as well as, degradation of our social and environmental conditions. Most of the people are not aware about their legal rights and are as such subjected to exploitation, stigmatization, violence, abuse among other such social menace and deprived of due justice. People are not aware politically, they don’t feel the urge to exercise their vote and choose their representative. Most of the people feel that one vote cannot create any difference. We can see the deterioration in our environmental condition again resulting from a lack of awareness and irresponsible behaviour of people. Hence, there is a need to develop social awareness among the people.

As Indians we belong to a rich socio-cultural ancestry which provides us the tradition of desirable qualities like cooperation, sympathy, mercy, benevolence, concern & responsibility etc. We should not be so self-indulgent to forget to recognize the needs of others and be sensitive about others necessities. A child during his/her childhood may be taught to share her toys with others and play in group in the playground. In the phase of adulthood one should be able to hear others’ point of view, be sensitive towards their values and acknowledge the needs of relatives, friends, co-workers and practice selflessness. While dealing with other individuals, one should lay emphasis on the commonalities rather than the differences. If children
disagree about the type of games they will play, they may lose their sense of
enjoyment but if they agree they may enjoy their game. The same applies for the
adults by which they may engage in negotiation or compromise over certain issues to
meet the differences. In order to be socially aware, one should increase her/his
sensitivity to social justice and harmony. Children should be taught to treat everyone
equally and adults may be engaged in donating to the cause of human rights. Through
these small steps the foundation of social awareness can be laid. In general, education
helps us to know the various social issues; it may be the formal education imparted in
schools or colleges or may be the discussion groups or volunteering for organizations
that concentrate on prevalent social issues. As social awareness is the knowledge and
perception about the issues relating to society, one would understand it better in
receiving varied exposure to different belief systems, cuisines and lifestyles which
helps to develop the social circle and tolerance of diverse viewpoints. Interacting and
intermingling with the people of different cultures helps one to develop empathy
towards those who are in different positions or are less fortunate than us.

As it has been discussed earlier that social awareness includes everything
related to society, hence, its scope is also diverse. It includes awareness on every
aspect of our society starting from our immediate surroundings and extends to the
world outside. In the present study, the investigator has considered five areas of social
awareness that have strong relevance in present era. These are:

a. Awareness towards Education

b. Awareness towards Environment

[16]
c. Awareness towards Health and Hygiene  
d. Awareness towards Human Rights  
e. Awareness towards Political Issues  

a. Awareness towards Education

Education at the one hand is an instrument for developing social consciousness and on the other hand is an important issue in which awareness of the people is very necessary. It is beyond doubt, that most of the people are aware about the need of education but with the increasing complexity of the society, issues relating to education have also become numerous. Earlier, the main centre of education was the 'teacher' and was depended upon how he/she taught the students but today the scenario has changed. Though, people are aware of the need of education, there are still many individuals who do not know that elementary education has been made free and compulsory for all the children of 6 to 14 years. Right to Education Act (2009) has made education our Fundamental Right and has come up with many resolutions such as the omission of entrance examination for admission into the elementary level, abolition of corporal punishment etc., but it is seen that in most of the private schools qualifying the entrance test has been made mandatory for getting admission. Capital Punishment has been prohibited in the schools but recent researches have revealed how it is a regular practice in most of the schools in India. There are many more such issues towards which people are ignorant about. Therefore the dimension of Education has been included here, to know how far people are aware about these issues on the basis of their agreement and disagreement.
b. Awareness towards Environment

Social awareness of environment is a recent phenomenon. It includes not only the physical, chemical and biological aspects but also the man-made social, cultural, economic and technological aspects. These aspects are related to each other and one should see them in an integrated manner in order to understand it thoroughly. The more we are heading towards technological advancement the more we are moving away from Nature. Agarwal, H.O. (1999) reported that though tremendous industrialization is leading us towards economic development, it also has an inverse effect on environment. Further, the rapid growth of urbanization, population and poverty has intensified the problem. Likewise, the construction of buildings by cutting down trees, discarding industrial and household wastes into water bodies etc. is causing serious environmental degradation. People are unaware of how modern lifestyle has rapidly degraded our environment. Therefore, it is the need of the hour to protect our environment. This pitiful condition of environment can be reduced by our small efforts like using more public transport or opting for bicycles to travel to nearby places, car-pooling in common groups, plantation of trees in our surroundings, using toilets for urination and defecation, keeping our surroundings clean, turning off the TV, lights and fans when not in the room, avoiding use of polythene bags, reducing unnecessary waste, water or rain-harvesting, terrace farming and recycling for reuse. And for all these small steps, one needs to be aware of one's environmental issues. Therefore, this dimension is one of the significant issues that need our immediate attention.
c. Awareness towards Health and Hygiene

The third dimension that has been studied here is awareness towards health and hygiene. Most of us are conscious about our health and hygiene but we tend to forget basic things related to it. As an example, we can talk about junk or fast food, even after knowing that it is not at all healthy and we have become dependent on it, mostly the young generation. Water is necessary for our survival but sometimes can also turn into the main cause of various diseases. Drinking water should be kept covered; it should be filtered or boiled before drinking. But, mostly in rural areas people do not have these habits and as a consequence they are very prone to water borne diseases. Again, people use inorganic pesticides in the agricultural field which causes hazards to health. Here we can cite another example; we often witness people who opt for medicine on the advice of others or based on his own past experiences. They are ignorant about the fact that the diseases having similar symptoms may require different medications. Our ignorance towards all these issues may have adverse effects on us.

d. Awareness towards Human Rights

Human Rights are some moral principles which set before us some standard of behaviour. Every individual inherently acquires these simply by the virtue of his/her being a human being. These rights are legal rights which are supposed to be protected by national and international laws. Human rights are thus conceived as universal and egalitarian. We have been vested with various rights to lead a dignified life. But the present scenario reflects a different picture altogether, as these rights are
given to us so that these can be violated. It is an alarming fact that the worst human right violations are taking place with the silent consent of the wide majority. The present era rightly supports the old saying ‘the more the laws the more the injustice’. Such violations are witnessed because we are not at all aware of our rights. Most of the people are not aware that legally daughters have equal right to father’s property as the sons. Thus, due to our ignorance we traditionally divide the property among the sons. Demanding dowry for marriage is a legal offence, yet the incident of domestic violence for dowry is regular news for us. The violation of human rights has created severe evils in society like exploitation, negligence, abuse, corruption, nepotism, crimes of various types and so on. So, it is very crucial to study how far people are actually aware about human rights and what role has education been playing in generating human rights awareness among people.

e. Awareness towards Political Issues

Awareness towards political issues means the consciousness of various issues relating to government, administration, state, policies, etc. Political issues directly or indirectly affect our lives. In most of the countries governments are run by the representatives of the people, elected by the common citizens of the country. All the policies such as education, finance, health, agriculture and so on are formulated by those representatives of the people. The life of the people and development of the country is very much dependent on such policies. But in the recent years the percentage of voters has decreased in our country. This shows their negligence towards their voting rights and also their ignorance towards the effects they have to bear. Politics has always been regarded as a significant issue; the common people
want to detach themselves from it. Most of the people tend to accept all the policies without any protest.

1.4 Role of Education and Teachers in Modernization and Social Awareness

In 21st century various changes have been taking place in all the aspects of society. The influence of education is visible in all the aspects of society. According to John Dewey, education is a "process of renewal". Human beings constantly renew themselves. If we look education beyond its traditional boundaries it forms the very essence of all our actions. It can be seen as an attempt to change a person's behaviour according to the accepted norms of the society in which he/she lives. Education plays a significant role by moulding the younger generation according to the needs of the society. It acts as a prime agent of socialization and fulfils the requirements of a society which varies from society to society. Education acts as an integrative force in society by communicating value, transforming beliefs and cultural systems which unites different sections of the society. The importance of education in society is indispensable and cohering, that is why society and knowledge can never be divided into two separate entities. It is difficult to give one definite meaning of the term Education; it has been considered as a natural process. Considering the importance of education, it has been declared as a Human Right in the article 26th of UN's declaration of Human Right, 1948. Our Indian Constitution has also made various provisions for making primary education free and compulsory for the students of 6 to 14 years.
Traditionally, content of education was esoteric and metaphysical; its communication was limited to the upper classes or the 'twice-born' castes and the structure of its professional organization was hereditary and closed. But, the modern education has a fundamentally different orientation and organization. Its content is more liberal and steeped in modern scientific world-view. Freedom, equality, humanism and denial of faith in dogmas are the themes which modern education contains. As we know, the reluctance of the people in accepting the modern values and their ignorance are the hindrances of a developing country. Good education helps in empowering people. It helps to make people aware about the surroundings as well as the rules and regulations of the society. It is only through knowledge that one will be able to question the authority for its negligence or any discrepancies and can avail his or her rights as a citizen and seek improvement in the structural functioning of governance and economy. On the whole, people can hope for development only when they know the area where attention should be given for improvement of the greater mankind. Thus, this is how education is very necessary and related with modernization and social awareness of people. Though in the broader sense education can be obtained in any situation formal or informal but formal education has been placed with the responsibility of preparing the individuals for the changing society as it is impossible to learn everything in the familiar setting of family and kinship. And the responsibility of educating our future generation is in the hands of the teachers.

"A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops." A teacher's responsibly is not only to instruct but to inspire students. A teacher has to influence the life pattern and character of the students and imbibe in them the values
which will help them to be a responsible citizen. The teacher should help his/her students to develop scientific and humanistic attitude and temper, self-discipline, concern for other people and awareness about the society. But, this cannot be actualised solely through the classroom lectures or by asking the students to read the books. As a general rule, teachers teach more by what they are than by what they say. So, it is obvious that teachers’ attitude, behaviour, personality etc. affect the people and particularly the student community. If a teacher shows unscientific attitude, irrational behaviour, indifference towards others’ need and ignorance towards the surrounding, this surely would affect the students. So, a teacher should imbibe within him/herself all the good qualities that can be helpful for the students. In simple words, it can be said that if any society has to soar the sky, then its teachers must exhibit modernity in their words, thoughts and actions as the society thinks tomorrow what the teachers thinks today. As Dr. Radha Krishnan said, “The teacher’s place in the society is of vital importance. He acts as the pivot for the transmission of intellectual traditions and technical skill from generation to generation and helps to keep the lamp of civilization burning”.

1.5 Statement of the Problem

The present study has been stated as “Educational Level and Its Influence on Modernization and Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession: A Study in Sonitpur District.”
1.6 Objectives of the Study

The present study has been designed keeping the following objectives in view.

(1) To study the dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession.

(2) To find out the influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession.
   (a) To find out the influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession of Rural area.
   (b) To find out the influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession of Urban area.

(3) To study the Social Awareness Level of Women in Teaching Profession.

(4) To find out the influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession.
   (a) To find out the influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession of Rural area.
   (b) To find out the influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession of Urban area.
1.7 Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are formulated in order to meet the objectives.

$H_{01}$: There is no significant influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession.

$H_{01}$ (a) There is no significant influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession of Rural area.

$H_{01}$ (b) There is no significant influence of Educational Level on dimensions of Modernization of Women in Teaching Profession of Urban area.

$H_{02}$: There is no significant influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession.

$H_{02}$ (a) There is no significant influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession of Rural area.

$H_{02}$ (b) There is no significant influence of Educational Level on Social Awareness of Women in Teaching Profession of Urban area.

1.8 Justification of the Study

Present society is marked by rapid change in its structural and functional pattern. All the aspects of society, material or non material have undergone a drastic change. It is marked by increasing urbanization, which in turn has resulted in the
spread of literacy. It has tended to enhance ‘media exposure’ which is associated with wider economic participation. Monarchy has been replaced by democracy; justice according to social hierarchy has been discarded by modern universal law based on equality. Industrialization of agriculture, developed transportation facility is the characteristics of modern society. Generally, modernization is widely perceived as uniquely western practice that non-western societies could tag on only in so far as they abandoned their customary cultures and incorporate technologically and morally “superior” western ways. But in broad sense modernization is not merely westernization. It can be referred to a process by which change occurs in the mental outlook of the people. The present age has made our lives more and more complex, the adjustment in which requires one to be modernized in his/her material as well as non-material aspects. The state of modernization has evolved new issues like rights, empowerment, justice, rationality in our society and awareness about these issues are very important for individual to survive smoothly and efficiently which in turn helps a nation to flourish.

Most people generally perceive modernization as opposed to our tradition. But, modernization is how we can reflect our traditions into a rational and logical manner. Modernization is a process of socio-cultural transformation. It is a thorough, going process of change involving values, norms, institutions and structures. But like some other countries, India is also not totally free from its traditional bound, superstitious thinking, customs and rituals, in spite of living in the age of modernization and globalization. There is lack of awareness among citizens specially the women folk are indifferent towards different social issues. In a country where
women constitute almost 50% of the population, their participation in all social aspects is inevitable for the progress of the nation. Women should also come forward to a large extent and become self dependent and confident. It is a general fact that, though women play an important role in the development of the nation as a whole, most of them are still dominated in the patriarchal system of society.

To acquaint with these changes, to be able to take things rationally and to be able to aware of the society quite well, some kind of education is very essential for everyone. Education, formal or informal transmits irrational traditionalism and attitude of ignorance towards modernization and to the sense of awareness. Thus, education is one of the important determinants of modernization and awareness about the various issues of society. So, it is necessary to study whether education is really helpful in forming the required attitudes of people towards various social issues or not, especially of the women folk. Education is the only means through which irrational traditionalism can be changed towards modernism and the attitude of ignorance about society can be converted to the sense of awareness about it. Thus, level of education of a person is one of the most important predictor of change of attitudes, beliefs, ideas etc. And the great responsibility of educating our generations is vested on the teachers.

The teachers are the torch bearers of the society and builders of the learners’ future. They are to keep the light of civilization burning bright. Kothari Commission (1964-66) has rightly remarked that quality, competence and character of teachers are undoubtedly the most significant factors which influence the development of any nation. Their acts, behaviour have immense impact on the behaviour and attitude of
students in particular and people of society in general. The responsibility of teaching students about modernity and awareness to social issues is vested upon the teachers. Therefore, it is most necessary that the teachers themselves are aware of social issues and do possess a modern attitude. So, it becomes necessary to find out the level of social awareness and modernization of teacher community. So, it was felt necessary to study how educational level of the women teachers has an effect on modernization and awareness regarding various issues as they are on one hand holds an important place and plays a role in creating awareness among the people, and on the other hand most of them are still dominated in the male subjugated society.

The area of the present study is Sonitpur district. As of 2011 it is the third most populous district of Assam. Average literacy rate of Sonitpur in 2011 is 69.96 compared to 59.07 of 2001. If things are looked out at gender basis, male and female literacy are 76.98 and 62.53 respectively. The female literacy rate is high enough in the district. So, the investigator proposed to undertake the present study in Sonitpur district taking women and the level of education as variables. Furthermore, no attempt has been made so far in Sonitpur district to undertake such studies. Considering the above issues importance of the present study is justified.

1.9 Operational Definition of Important Terms

A) Modernization

Adapt to modern needs or habits, modern ways, taking things rationally and scientifically in the spheres related to life. In the present study the modernization of
women has been studied in four spheres- Socio-Religious, Marriage, Position of Women and Education.

B) Social Awareness

Knowledge and consciousness of the matter related to society as its organization, relations of people or classes of people living in organized communication. In the present study the social awareness refers to the awareness towards Education, Environment, Health and Hygiene, Human Right and Political Issues.

C) Educational level

Systematic instruction for the development of character or mental powers on a height or value reached position or on a real or imaginary scale. In the present study educational level of women means women who are Graduate and Post-Graduate in their educational level.

D) Teaching

Teacher is the person who gives lessons to students in school, college, university etc. and helps them to learn by giving information. So, teaching is the work of the teacher. In the present study, teaching refers to the activities performed by teachers in Provincialized Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools of Sonitpur District.
E) Profession

A job that needs special training or skill, specially high level of education. In the present study teaching is taken as a profession.

1.10 Delimitation of the Study

The study has been delimited to the women teachers who are graduate and postgraduate in their educational qualification and are working in the provincialised Secondary and Higher Secondary Schools of Seven Community Development Blocks of Sonitpur District. The blocks are (1) Biswanath (2) Balipara (3) Dehekiajuli (4) Sootea (5) Naduar (6) Chaiduar (7) Gabharu.