PART III

THE SYNTHESIS
CHAPTER 9
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
9.1 Summary
The analysis of the folklore and folklife within the perview of present study in Chamaria and Nagarbera has been summarized below.

Chamaria and Nagarbera are two adjacent Mouzas located in the South Western most part of Kamrup District of Assam. It is a thickly populated area with a density of 480 persons per square kilometer. Out of the total Bengali population 95% are of Scheduled Caste origin who had migrated from erstwhile East Bengal and East Pakistan (Present Bangladesh). They are living in this area since almost 60 years with the local Assamese people and slowly and steadily they are assimilating in different socio-cultural aspects of this locality.

The life of the Bengali community of Chamaria and Nagarbera Mouza are somewhat different from that of other general Bengali community of Assam. The study also shows that there is a vast difference in culture and traditions among the different castes like Sahas, Pals, Namasudras, Brahmins etc. in this community. All these people made their contribution to keep their folklore and folklife in a traditional form, either directly or indirectly. But, with the development of education and other infrastructural facilities these are now changing rapidly (Chapter – 2).

The study has made in different fields of folklore and folklife such as, folk narratives, folk customs, material culture, and performing art of the Bengali community.

The community has their own oral literature which includes folktales, folk poetry, folk songs folk speech etc. The folktales covers all the categories such as wonder tales, religious or rituals tales, tales of cleverness and
cheating, didactic tales etc. A large number of stories about animals, birds, plants, deity, love, romance, jealousy, cruelty, humor, magic etc. are found in an oral form which is the precious documents of their oral literature. A big number of myths are found in these communities which are generally based on religion in comparison to other matters.

During the field study a large number of excellent and amazing narrative folk poetry including songs, proverbs, riddles, folk speech etc. were listened by the researchers which were collected in its original form. They have different sets of folk songs for different gods, festivals and ceremonies. It is observed that, the topics of the songs are related to their daily life ranging from birth to death. Holi git, Manasa puja git, palli git, bissedy git, marriage songs or biya git, parody etc. are some examples of such beautiful songs through which they express their pain and pleasure, joy and sorrows of their ever simple life. They have a big granary of proverbs and riddles, which are locally known as chilok. They are of different types such as, descriptive, joking, wisdom, puzzles etc. which they practices during their leisure time.

(Chapter -3)

The communities have celebrated various seasonal, calendaric, sacramental, domestic and limited festivals in different times in the year. To mention some of these are, Natai Puja, Pataipuja, Bhalla-Bhuilla, Charak Puja, Pushura, Jamai Sasthi etc. It is also found that, out of ten samskaras, six samskaras are prevalent among this society. There are some folk beliefs which are followed by them either in individual or in social life. These beliefs and omens are associated with journey, weather, agriculture, marriage, death, birth, etc. Moreover there are some other influential folk beliefs, associated with evil spirit, rain, drought etc. which were observed by the researcher during her field study.

Like other communities in India, the Bengali community of the study area also has some traditional games and sports. Some such games which
were observed during field study are golla khela, lash guti, tukibari etc. which are still in their traditional form.

It is also observed that, most of the people of this community believe in folk medicine. They believe in both natural and magico religious folk treatment. Moreover, it is also found that, the Bengali community of Chamaria and Nagarbera Mouza have their own coinage of words to explain the disease which are significantly different from formalized medical terms. (Chapter-4)

Although the Bengali communities of this area are comparatively new one, it is found that, they have carried some material culture with them. They have different kinds of musical instruments like Dhak Dhol, Khole, Dotara, Kartal, Khunjuru, Banshi etc. which are different in shapes and size than other culture.

Pottery is another important material culture which is found among the Pals, Hiras and Karmakars. They make different types of ornamental, non-ornamental articles, play materials etc.

A variety of ornaments made of gold and silver are the example of their artistic creation. Ornaments worn in the forehead, nose, head, neck, wrist waist, ear, foot, fingers etc. are generally made according to their traditional designs and applying traditional techniques.

During field study, different types of agricultural equipments were found, which are different than that of Assamese agricultural equipments. These traditional equipments are using by the Bengali cultivators, generation after generation in the same way like their forefathers.

It is found that, the Bengali community of the study area has different types of traps, and nets like, jata jal, phansi jal, toni jal, langi jal etc., which they use according to the nature and size of the fish and fisheries. They also use some fishing methods like filtering floating, screening etc.
Each and every family of this community, have some bamboo equipments which they make for running their households and as a means of economic support.

It is found that the Bengali community of Chamaria and Nagarbera Mouza has their traditional homestead, costume, cook and cookery which are the example of their traditional creativity. Traditionally there is a good name of the Bengali women folk for preparing various cuisines. It is found that during Bihu, which is a social festival of the Assamese community, the Bengali women folk also prepare laddoo, pitha, Karai etc. like Assamese community. (Chapter – 5)

During field work the researcher has got an unique experience of folk dance, drama and music, which they performed in different puja, marriage ceremony etc. (Chapter – 6)

The study shows that, educationally and economically this community is very backward. It is because of the high percentage of the scheduled caste population in the area. After survey, it is found that, poverty, ignorance, illiteracy etc. are some common matters among them, which are the main causes of their backwardness. The survey made in 7 different villages shows that, the family size of these surveyed villages is very but, only 34.74 percent of the total population are found engaged in earning money of which most of them are engaged in primary and secondary sector. The percentage of literacy rate in these surveyed villages also shows that there are only 42.45 percent literate people against the average percentage of 80.59 and 64.24 percent respectively of the total population of the district and the state level respectively. But at present people of this community has become attracted to take the opportunity offered by the government and non-government organization for the economic and educational upliftment. (Chapter-7)

It is observe that, due to the same religion, close proximity and some other factors a process of assimilation and interaction has started. This process
has been reflected through various activities like participation in religious festivals of Assamese society, marital relations, taking different foods of Assamese style, preparing different foods, wearing Assamese traditional dress, speaking Assamese language, singing, dancing etc. (Chapter - 8 )

9.2 Conclusion

The researcher found that, the present characteristics of folklore and folklife of the Bengali community of Chamaria and Nagarbera Mouza influenced by a variety of factors.

As far as the analysis of the folklore and folklife of the Bengali community of the study area, the following findings and conclusion may be drawn.

1. It is found that, folklore and folklife of this community is still in original form.

2. Villages which are located in the close proximity with the Assamese society have been able to mix up with the Assamese culture to a great extent.

3. It is observed that, the assimilation process of this group of people has started with the local Assamese society slowly and steadily. This has come through inter community marriages, participation in various socio-cultural festivals observed by the local society and some religious and cultural festivals observed by both the community amongst them.

4. It is found that, in some pockets of the area where there is a very high concentration of this group of people, they have been able to keep their culture in its original form, but, the villages which are located in the vicinity of Assamese area, their folklore and folklife had been transformed towards the Assamese social life gradually.

5. It is found that, in those villages which have a higher literacy rate and a better socio-economic condition, their folklore and folklife have transformed to a great extent to the modern life style.
The present study may be taken as a pioneer work on the folklore and folklife of the Bengali community in Chamaria and Nagarbera Mouza of Kamrup District of Assam. Such works on folklore and folklife at micro level or in a small region will pave the way for further research work. Some of the important research problems may be taken up of these groups of people as follows:

1. A comprehensive study of socio-economic and cultural life of the Bengali community of Assam may be taken up as a research problem.
2. Myths and legends of the Bengali community of Assam also may be an interesting research problem.
3. Different festivals and celebrations of the Bengali community of Assam may also be a research topic for further study.
4. Customs of marriage and marriage songs of the Bengali community can be taken up as a research problem.
5. Pattern in material culture of the Bengali community of Assam may be an interesting topic for research.
6. Magic, faith and healing practices among the Bengali folk may be a research problem.
7. Different types of story and story telling in different occasions may be a very extensive research problem.
8. The sports, games and pass times of the people of the Bengali community may be also taken for further research problem.
9. A comparative study of folklore and folklife of the Bengali and Assamese community also may be a very good research problem.
10. A study on food and food habits of the Bengali community may be research topic for the further research.