1.1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a long process of bringing up or training an individual who is culturally refined, emotionally stable, mentally alert, morally upright, physically strong, economically independent and socially efficient. Every aspect of the present society or the present economy directly or indirectly comes as a product of education. The scope of education in the 21st century has widened, refined, developed and finally changed enough. In this century education makes people creative, collaborative, knowledgeable, liberal and global. The government of India has been adopting numerous policies and programs for multiplying literacy rate, eradicating poverty, checking population growth and improving the socio-economic condition of the rural population right from the time of independence or even before independence. Population is now a great challenge before the entire educational program. Despite all these policy programs, efforts and endeavours, our land has been suffering from the problem of high growth rate of population characterized by large family size in rural areas. Every fruit of the country has now been eaten up by this major set back. This problem is rightly been called “The mother of all problems”. The present growth rate of population in India is 1.58%. 50% of India’s current population is below the age of 25. The present birth rate is 22.22 but the death rate is 6.4. India has the largest illiterate population in the world. Every year, India adds more people than any other nations in the world. Keeping this viewpoint in mind it is imperative
to say that education has to do a lot more in socio-economic perspectives. Education should deal deeply with the agents which in turn deal with lower consumption, low standard of living, lower socio-economic status, large family size and so on. Education helps reduce the population growth rate and relieve society from the burden of non-productive new entrants. It could affect the age structure of the population and bring about changes associated with a reduction in young dependency. Various changes might take place in the socio-economic milieu of a society as a result of a large-scale increase in women’s education. As a result, a higher proportion of women might participate in the labour force; a change might come about in the traditional role of women as a housewives and mothers; there might be better planning of every aspect of life by educated, emancipated women; and there might be a rational planning of a family size. Our rural society has been plagued with myriad problems causing a bottleneck in all the development segments, it is paramount on the young generation to give wings to their noval ideas for a balanced development of the country.

Amartya Sen’s human development paradigm says that—education plays an instrumental role in two different ways: through ECONOMIC PRODUCTION and through SOCIAL CHANGE. Education can improve the capacity of individuals to live a decent life and to escape from the hunger trap. The basic idea is that being educated improves rural peoples capacity to diversify assets and activities to access information on health and sanitation, to enhance human agency in addition to increasing productivity in the agricultural sector; these are all essential elements to ensure food security in the long run and also to ensure satisfactory socio-economic condition.
The new growth theories in economics and the LPG Model of Development place education and human resource development at centre of their explanation for long term economic growth. Many studies have shown that there is positive correlation between a countries educational effort and its socio-economic condition. Education is one of the most important forms of human capital investment. It is the basic need for socio-economic transformation and advancement of a nation.

It has been an established fact that the social benefits from investing in female education are far greater than those from investing in male education. Specifically, female education has powerful effects on the total fertility rate to exercise small family size.

A large body of micro economic evidence shows that increase in women’s education generally lead to increase in their labour force participation as well as in their earnings. Educated women’s’ greater participation in labour market work and their higher earnings are thought to be good for their own socio-economic development. Educated women desire smaller families. Education may also change women’s preferences about the quantity versus the quality of children, with educated women choosing fewer children but of better’ quality’. Obviously, checking the fast growth of population has a close relationship with economic development.

The women work force participation rate of the 1st world countries is very high – having no time to rear children of more numbers. The women of these countries are educated. Their socio-economic status is also very high. Education has trained them up to follow small family norm and to live a life of higher socio-economic status.
Education brings social change which in turn is vitally linked with economic change. Education makes the labour force of a country skilled and efficient. A healthy, educated and skilled workforce can contribute more significantly and effectively to economic development.

Education strengthens the base of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the Other Backward Classes in their socio-economic milieu. Government has done a lot after independence to raise the levels of education of these socio-economically depressed classes which in turn brought them up to a higher socio-economic status level than before which they used to enjoy.

Former President of India Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam has outlined his concept and strategy of PURA as the lever of economic upliftment of the villages and its success rests on promoting education for all.

From the historical point of view, it is a very difficult matter to know about the relationship between family size and socio-economic development. It is because the experiences of different countries vary a great deal. As far as policy implications for developing countries are concerned, it may be stated that more number of members in the families are not desirable for social and economic development. It also lowers the educational attainment. On the contrary, if we look from 1750 to the 1920s or 1930s, the size of the families were distinctly larger for those countries which are today considered most developed. During this period, the developed countries in Western Europe, the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Japan recorded long term increases in per capita product. Thus a positive association between large family size and increase in the per capita product and thereby higher socio-economic status was experienced by western countries.
J. C. Caldwell developed the theory of Intergenerational Wealth flow and according to him fertility behavior in any type of society at any level of development is rational. In a society, the fertility is high if children are economically useful to parents, and low if children are economically not beneficial to the parents. Whether the children are economically beneficial to parents is determined by social conditions: mainly the direction of the intergenerational flow of wealth (in terms of goods and services). This flow of wealth in all primitive and traditional societies has been from younger persons to the older persons, i.e., from the younger generation to the older generation. In other words, children in such societies are economic assets to their parents and naturally more children mean more wealth, leading to high fertility. Fertility will remain high as long as this intergenerational wealth flow is from children to parents. At this juncture, it is necessary to identify the nature and magnitude of intergenerational wealth flows in different societies.

Children are helpful to parents in several ways in primitive and traditional societies. Six different advantages to the parents can be identified:

1. There is a situational gain to the head of the household when the number of children is large. In the extended family type of household, the head of the household can control more resources and also can have access to more services if the number of his children, daughter in law and grandchildren is large. The larger the household size the greater the power of the head.

2. Children work in the household and on the farm and produce goods. They also do small jobs, such as bringing fuel and water, carrying goods and messages, sweeping, looking after younger siblings, caring for the animals, etc.

3. Children assist their parents by working in the farms as labourers.
4. Children are of great help in family ceremonies, such as marriages, funerals and ceremonies connected with births in the households. They also contribute to community festivals.

5. The grown-up children take care of the aged parents.

6. Parents can invest in the training and education of children so as to increase the ability of children to make returns.

Thus, it is clear that in primitive and traditional societies, children are assets to parents and having a large number of them is economically advantageous. In such societies, the net flow of wealth is from children to parents and hence high fertility is economically rational. When the direction of this net flow of wealth changes, i.e., when the flow of wealth is from parents to children, low fertility becomes economically rational.

Family size, education and socio-economic condition are interrelated to each other and they influence each other. Education is not for the sake of knowledge only. The great teachers, philosophers and the thinkers like Gandhiji laid great stress on education for improving the economic and social conditions of the people. Countries that practise small family have higher level of education to enjoy forward socio-economic condition and vice-versa. USA, UK, Japan and other 1st world nations generally practise small family to afford higher investment in education which in turn brings enjoying a high standard socio-economic condition. The relationship among family size, education and socio-economic condition could be realized under the following perspectives

Small family makes availability of food and nutrition: The members of a small family is expected to enjoy food sufficiency with nutrition. Small family helps
educational attainment: Parents having lesser number of children are expected to invest satisfactorily in educating them. Small family affects on health: Parents with smaller number of children can take proper care of their children to make them enjoy good health. Small family bring economic development: Lesser the number of dependents, higher is the economic position of the earners.

It is high time that we all become aware of population problem and choose the right type of education. If the rate of growth of population goes on increasing at the present rate, 1.58% we all might see the most catastrophic effects of climate change, drought, desertification, pollution, global warming etc. in our near future.

Mere inclusion of “population education” in some curriculum perhaps would not able to save our planet earth from all sorts of catastrophic effects. Every household of the country especially in the rural areas must be able to receive education of right type which in turn help tackle these unwanted effects.

Education helps build a more resilient country, we must remain committed to averting the most catastrophic effects.

The past studies have brought out vital relationships between population growth and many other aspects of development, namely education, health and health care, social status of women, awareness in the society, urbanization etc. In a third world country like India, there exists a prolonged expectation for a male child, despite entering into 21st century, female infanticide is quite rampant in most of the parts of India. Teacher education programes can play a vital role in disseminating the multiplier effect in spreading the awareness among children and society. All teacher training institutes such as DIET, B.Ed. Colleges, Department of education in the university
programes can effectively integrate to stand against the abnormal growth of population which should again be introduced in their curriculum.

Education is one of the most important inputs which influence the total development of any nation-economic, social, physical, cultural, ethical and spiritual. The present market economy of India is characterized by Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization (LPG), which have influenced all aspects of human life and the case of education system is no exception in this regard. Of late, with General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) becoming fully operational under the World Trade Organization (WTO) regime, it will be difficult for our country to survive as a nation without developing our “intellectual knowledge” through diligent monitoring, expansion, strengthening and re-orientation of our education system as per the ever increasing demands of the market.

Population and socio-economic development are closely inter-related. Social and economic development is a key factor in the solution of the population growth. Fertility is one of the most important contributory factors of population growth and hence a large number of theoretical and empirical studies are centered on it. Irrespective of rich or poor, more urbanized socio-culturally developed states are demographically progressive. In these states, fertility has gradually declined more along with the changes in various socio-economic and cultural characteristics of the population. Education is one of the most significant dimensions of the social status and is also considered the best indicator to measure womens’ status and women empowerment, which determines the position of women in the family and the society. Better educated women are more likely to be able to avoid unwanted birth
and thereby achieve harmony between desired and actual fertility in comparison to those who are illiterate or who have had a few years of formal schooling.

The impact of education has been observed in rural as well as urban areas, where total fertility rate decreased with the increase in education of female. Education increases female age at marriage, higher the rate of family planning practices and motivates to change the overall fertility decision to adopt small family norm. However, this inverse relationship between education and fertility is not always uniform. It varies under different conditions. Under Indian patriarchic family system, apart from education of women a number of other factors including education of spouse, economic condition of the family, occupational status of women, nature of family etc. affects the fertility of women, thereby reducing the impact of education.

Inadequate education can be considered a form of poverty. Education is widely accepted as the main exit route from poverty. It is the backbone of growth and development of individuals and the nation. This study articulates the issues of education and poverty which is related to that of chicken egg relationships. Education contributes to poverty reduction by increasing the value of efficiency of the labour force and thus enhances economic growth.

One important thing regarding the role of educational attainment in poverty reduction is the direct linear relationship between education and earnings. Education does not only increase the probability of being employed. Once in employment, better educated individuals earn considerably more than the less educated. Education brings social benefits and improves the situation of the poor. It lowers fertility,
improves health care of children and increases women’s participation in the labour market.

In the domain of citizenship, educated people are more politically aware than others, better informed, and more likely to vote and to participate in community affairs.

Large family size comes with its implications of poor health, inability to provide adequately for the education of the siblings, low standard of living and the inability to fulfill one’s dreams in life. A small family size on the other hand is seen as a family with an average of two siblings. The implications of a small family size are the ability for one to enjoy adequately the basic necessities of life with little or no stress. Notwithstanding, the undesirable effect of a large family size; most people are giving birth to large families as a result of factors such as ignorance, culture, lack of awareness, poverty and demographic factors. Not taking the above into account, one can witness small family size in some categories of families due to high level of education, good health, income, better accommodation etc. Such families though not many in the society, are basically of good social standing and as well being economically stable and balanced.

There exists an intimate and inseparable relationship between education and society. Various social developments occurred as an impact of the growth of western secondary education during the pre-independence period. In every developing society education if viewed in its true and proper perspective is considered a powerful instrument of the society for bringing about its change and development. Education develops the personality of the individuals and also makes them socially useful. From the economic point of view also, process of education is closely connected with the social process. A modern citizen cannot remain isolated and
ignorant of the national economy and the international market. The increase in the economic productivity, industrial output, consumption etc. in a progressive society has always been accompanied by an increase in education.

Family size in Indian society is a matter of great concern especially to an individual’s education and to his/her socio-economic status. The choice of family size of rural people is influenced by socio-economic variables. The tendency for larger family size of the third world nations lead to population explosion which deteriorates our socio-economic lives and also check us enjoy higher level of education. We also got entrapped by severe poverty due to it. Large family size and its resultant high birth rates have been seen accompanied by rapid growth of population which again resulted in sluggish socio-economic condition especially in the rural parts in our society. Traditional occupational practice with age old techniques on the part of the rural inhabitants fails to bring satisfactory benefit to their agricultural produces and leave them behind low socio-economic condition. Consequently, their social recognition also remain insignificant.

With the growing popularity of global family concept in the contemporary world, people of rural areas have also developed positive perception towards family size. They have therefore been characterized by dynamism in regard of changing scenario of India’s population especially the educated section of the society. Actually the problematic real life situations of these educated rural population with large family character have been compelled to welcome a very good perception towards family size relevant to the present day world.
1.1.i THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CASTE CENSUS (SECC) REPORT, 2011

The SECC 2011 is the first paperless census carried out in 640 districts and conducted on hand-held electronic devices by the government of India. The SECC 2011 painted a grim picture of rural India indicating that one out of three families living in villages is landless and depends on manual labour for livelihood. The census reported that 23.52 per cent rural families have no literate adult above 25 years, suggesting a poor state of education among rural masses. The census reveals that 29.97 per cent households in rural areas are “landless deriving a major part of their income from manual labour”. As many as 13.25 per cent families in villages live in houses of one room with kaccha walls and roof. It further said that 21.53 per cent families living in villages belong to SC/ST categories. The census further said just 4.6 per cent of all rural households in the country pay income tax. As for sources of income, 51.14 per cent households depend on manual casual labour followed by cultivation (30.10 per cent). The census said that it is considered to be very important document for all policy makers both at central and state government level. It was reported that though the name of the census suggests caste, it does not include castes.

1.1.ii THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND CASTE CENSUS (SECC) ASSAM, 2011

The released findings of the SECC reveals that only 43 per cent rural households in Assam have land and almost two-thirds of the state’s land is un-irrigated. As per the SECC data on main sources of household income in rural areas, for 29.18 per cent households in Assam, cultivation is the main source of income. As many as 42.58 per cent rural households listed manual or casual labour as main source of income,
while 5.05 per cent households are mainly dependent on part time or full time domestic service. 0.70 per cent households are dependent on begging, charity or alms collection in Assam, while 0.21 per cent listed foraging and rag-picking as their main source of income. It added that the number of households having Kisan Credit Cards with credit limit of rupees 50,000 or above is only 0.96 per cent of the total households in the state.

1.2. EDUCATION-ITS MEANING, IMPORTANCE AND DEVELOPMENT

The word ‘education’ has a very wide connotation. Philosophers and thinkers from Socrates to Dewey in the west and Yajnavalkya to Gandhi in the East have defined education in accordance with their philosophy of life with the result that there emerged divergent concepts and definitions of education. Aurobindo defines education as ‘Building of the powers of the human mind and spirit’. Nunn defines education as ‘Complete development of individuality’. According to Ramakrishna education is ‘Purification of the mind and heart’.

1.2.i IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Education is the chief engine to a nation’s progress and development. Investment on education in India in the 21st century is praiseworthy. However for balanced development of education sector, there is a need for investment in lower primary, upper primary, secondary and higher secondary schools so that people can send their wards to school to acquire education. This would necessitate investment in school building and equipment, provision of teachers and other supporting staff. After independence, the Government took upon itself the task of expanding education. At the higher education level, investment is required in colleges and
universities and research institutions so that the products of school education can further improve their knowledge and skills of a higher order. To improve vocational education, there is a need to expand institutes of technology, engineering colleges and medical institutions to train technical persons at various levels. Balanced development at all levels of education can only help develop the country in all respects. Education is a pre-requisite for the overall development of the country both socially and economically. Literacy is negatively related with fertility rates, population growth rates, infant and child mortality rates and shows a positive association with female age at marriage, life expectancy and participation in modern sectors of the economy.

Education for women empowerment means women gaining an understanding and control over social, economic and political force in order to improve their standing in society. Education is a corner stone of women’s empowerment because it enables them to respond to the opportunities and challenges for a better living. This is true not only because education is an entry point to other opportunities, but also because it has ripple effects within the family and across generations. Girls who have been educated are likely to marry late and have smaller but healthier families. Education helps girls and women to know their rights and to gain confidence to claim them. The education of parents is linked to their children’s educational attainments and the mother’s education is usually more influential than the father’s.

1.2.ii  DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION

The Constitution of India resolved to provide elementary education for every one. The Government set up the education commission (1966) to determine the need for promoting education. The 42\textsuperscript{nd} amendment of the Constitution in 1976 brought
education which was largely a responsibility of State Government on the concurrent list, making it the responsibility of both the Central and State Governments.

The 86th Amendment of the Constitution led to the inclusion of a new article 21-A that made free and compulsory education to all children of 6-14 years of age a Fundamental Right. In pursuance to this legislation the central government enacted Right to Education Act in the year 2009. Besides, the Government has been making several National Policy Statements on education in 1968, 1986 1992 emphasizing the need for eradicating illiteracy altogether, provide universal elementary education to all in the shortest possible time. The Directorate of Elementary Education (DEE), Assam has been functioning to achieve the goal of Universalization of elementary Education in the state to provide useful and relevant elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 to 14 years. It aims to bridge all gender and social category gaps at primary stage with focus on elementary education of satisfactory quality. All schemes for elementary education are implemented through Sarba Siksha Abhiyan (SSA). The DEE at present is functioning with a network of 40355 primary schools with 113192 number of teachers and 6706 upper primary schools with 7371 teachers. In this functioning process the DEE is involving 5620 Non-government Institutions in the state.

In order to reach a level of providing universal access to secondary education, school infrastructure both physical as well as human have been strengthened. Another major point of emphasis was the need to expand vocational and technical education at the secondary level.

The need for improvement in quality and relevance of higher education along with expansion for the age group 17-23 years was also emphasized.
1.3. FAMILY SIZE & ITS BEARING ON RURAL LIFE

While, in common parlance, family size refers to the total number of persons in a family, in demography, family size means the total number of children a woman or a couple has borne at a point of time. The completed family size indicates the total number of children borne by a woman up to the end of her reproductive period.

The population scenario of a nation can be found from the average number of members of the families. The average number of member of the families of the developed countries have been always less while the same is more in the less developed nations like India. Of course, a trend has arrived in favour of low average number of members in the families in the second category nations. However, in rural areas the trend has not yet become popular rather the average number of member of the families is very high. In the 21st century, education has been made universal in almost all parts of the nations. Education at different levels has influenced family size practices. Most of the rural inhabitants live miserable life only due large size of their families which in turn help deprive the wards from receiving education of higher level.

Factors affecting family size in India as well as in Assam have been identified as- illiteracy, poverty, superstition, ignorance, female age at marriage, female work force participation, awareness, culture and son preference. These factors have fueled in large family practice in our country. Family size in a society is a matter of great concern especially to an individual’s education and to his/her socio-economic status. The tendency for larger family size of the third world nations lead to population explosion which deteriorates our socio-economic lives and also check us enjoy higher level of education. The rural population got entraped by severe poverty due to larger family size. Today most of the educated couples have been accustomed
with industrialized life style and this made them practise small family norm even in rural areas. They have come out of the darkness of their superstitious life practices. Thus education has a very significant role in exercising small family practices in all parts of our nation.

According to a demographic study, 2007-08 (complete source not available) —

Total Fertility Rate in Assam is 2.4, while in Kamrup district it is 3.4. Population covered by Family Planning in Assam is 49.7 per cent, while in Kamrup it is 51.1 per cent.

1.4. SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION

Some glaring features of our country are - poor quality of human capital, mass illiteracy, low level of living of the average Indian, low per capita consumption, malnutrition, poverty, large family practices, low social recognition and traditional occupational practice. These features indicate Indian mass peoples Socio-Economic Condition.

According to World Development Indicators, 46 percent of the child population in India suffers from malnutrition. The average protein content of the Indian diet is only 59 grams per day as against more than double the level in developed countries. The picture regarding housing is equally bleak. Only about 52 percent of the households have been living in permanent houses, about 30 percent in semi-permanent houses and 18 percent in temporary houses. However the picture is more severe in rural India. The inhabitants of rural areas live their life in a very pathetic condition. The socio-economic indicators have always been lagging behind here leaving the inhabitants in a very miserable condition. India currently has 260 million people living below the poverty line. Former President of India A.P.J. Abdul Kalam offered to adopt the mechanism of PURA (Providing Urban Amenities in Rural
Areas) in 2004 in his vision 2020 to eradicate poverty from India and to improve the socio-economic condition of the rural population. He outlined the concept and strategy of PURA as the lever of economic upliftment of the villages.

The social status of women in India was pathetic till the modern system of education was introduced. Though some scholars narrate the glory of one or two mythological characters enjoying the highest status in some section of the society, the reality was far from such depictions. The situation has changed after independence. Successive governments have taken up programs of women empowerment across all sectors of the economy and society.

Socio-economic status has been typically broken into three categories namely higher, middle or average and low.

1.4.i SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF ASSAM WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON RURAL AREAS

Most of the rural population of Assam have been burdened with unpleasant and unclean jobs and environment, and subjected to social disabilities. They have no alternative but to bear with this depressing status in society because of their poor economic condition and lack of enlightenment. For years and years, they have to continue in this situation subconsciously and lead a life of subhuman standard.

This sort of discomforting unenviable situation stifled their progress in all directions. They are deficient in education, in wealth and they could wield no influence whatsoever in the society in which they are moving. The few aspirants for higher education are the worst sufferers.

Mainly the status of men and women in the modern society is determined by the education they receive, the income they are able to earn for their acquired skills, and the power they are able to wield in matter of societal welfare.
According to Statistical Handbook, Assam 2014, the percentage of population in Assam that live below poverty line could be presented as—Rural Assam- 33.89%, Urban Assam-20.49% and rural urban combined- 31.98%, (2011-12). However, the rates have been satisfactory than the previous ones. In 2009-10 the rates were such as Rural Assam- 39.90%, Urban Assam-26.10% and rural urban combined- 37.9%.

As per population census, 2011, the rural population of the state was 86% of the total population. This percentage was much higher than that for all India (69%). The proportion of rural population in the state however decreased from 87% in 2001 to 86% in 2011. As per the population census, 2011, around 14% of the state population was living in urban areas. The following table gives a brief description of the households of Assam that have been availing facilities which again depicts the overall socio-economic condition of the population of Assam.

Table : 1.1 Household availing facility in Assam (in %).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Assam</th>
<th>Rural Assam</th>
<th>Urban Assam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of households</td>
<td>6367295</td>
<td>5374553</td>
<td>992742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of drinking water within premises</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
<td>50.4%</td>
<td>78.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main source of drinking tap water</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of lighting electricity</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
<td>28.4%</td>
<td>84.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mode of communication Computer/laptop</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New addition in 2011 Source: Census,2011

It has been observed from the table that the available facilities in Assam is not at all satisfactory. Moreover in rural Assam it is totally dissatisfactory indicating low
living condition especially in rural areas. The condition of housing in rural Kamrup is very pitiable. The total number of dilapidated houses in rural Kamrup is 33382 out of the total 35927 dilapidated houses in Assam leaving only 2545 houses for Kamrup metro.

Illiteracy in rural Kamrup is still very serious. Illiteracy retards growth here in rural areas. Most people live in a very dissatisfaction socio-economic condition in rural areas of Kamrup District. However it should be mentioned that the growth of literacy in Assam has shown an encouraging sign now. The literacy rate for Assam as per census 2011 increased to 73% with 79% for males and 67% for females. The literacy rates for rural and urban areas found at 70.44% and 88.88% respectively.

Farming (landless agricultural labor), petty trade, fishing, animal husbandry, daily wage labor, weaving, pottery, poultry farming, carpentry, masonry, black smithy, gold smithy, etc. are some common occupational activities that have been found mostly in rural Kamrup. Occupation like Government service, landlord, owner of cottage industries etc. are also found but at a very limited number. Poor income, poor infrastructural facilities, non-participation in societal activities and birth are some common factor for having low socio-economic condition of the rural people. One who inherits a particular social status by birth can’t be changed. He or she has to bear that particular status by caste in the rest of the life. However, in the present time one can upgrade ones status by rendering some social activities or being a good social activist. Consequently, the socio-economic condition of the rural people have been raising.

According to the Socio-Economic and Caste Census (SECC) 2011, only 43% of the rural households in Assam have land and 57% households have no land. As per the
Socio-Economic and Caste Census data on main sources of household income in rural areas, for 29.18% households in Assam, cultivation is the main source of income. 42.58% rural households live on manual or casual labour as main source of income. Again 5.05% households depends on part-time or full-time domestic service. Only 1.55% households have non-agricultural source of main income. 0.70% households depends on begging, charity or alms collection in Assam.

Government has introduced many schemes for the upliftment of the rural people but the same have not yet been reached the rural folk because of non-implementation of the schemes and prevailing corruption in a large scale on the part of the bureaucrats and others.

1.5. AREA OF THE STUDY

Assam, the North-Eastern sentinel of the frontiers of India, is a state richly endowed with minerals and with places of tourist attraction. The total population of Assam (2011 census) is 3,12,05,576 with 52% male and 48% female population. Assam is the second largest state in the entire North-East after Arunachal Pradesh. Situated in the Himalayan foothills, Assam is known as the land of red river and blue hills. Assam covers an area of 78,438 sq km to represent 2.39 percent of the total land area of the country. Assam is a beautiful and attractive state. There is hardly any other state which has greater variety and colour in its natural scenery and in the cultural treasures of the people that inhabit it. The Brahmaputra flows through Assam. The Brahmaputra serves as a lifeline for the people of Assam that settle on both of its banks.
1.5.i LOCATION

Assam is a T-shaped state which is situated in the heart of the North-East corner of Indian sub-continent. The area of Assam extends from latitude $24.3^0$ N to $28^0$ N and longitude $89.5^0$ E to $96.1^0$ E between the foothills of eastern Himalayas and the Patkai and Naga Ranges.

Fig : 1.1 Political map of Assam
1.5.ii  BOUNDARIES

Assam is surrounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on the North; Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh on the East; Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura on the South; and Bangladesh, Meghalaya and west Bengal on the West.

1.5.iii  PHYSIOGRAPHY

Assam is surrounded on three sides by hills and mountains. The western side bordered by Bangladesh and West Bengal is plain. The northern part of the state is covered by the Brahmaputra Plain and the southern part by the Barak Plain. In between the two plains there lies a highland. The northern part of the highland is called the Karbi Plateau and the southern part North Cachar Hills. Geographically Assam is divided into three regions — (1). The Brahmaputra Plain, (2). The Barak Plain and the (3). The Karbi-North Cachar Upland.

1.5.iv  CLIMATE

The climate of Assam is different from that of the Gangetic plain because the state is surrounded by hills and plateaus. The region is humid, tropical type in the plains subalpine in the hills, with heavy rainfall and vegetation in green all the year round. The average temperatures in summer and winter are 29 degree C and 16 degree C respectively. The winter season extends from the month of the October to February and rains predominate the rest of the year.

1.5.v  LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

The local administration is based on the 27 districts (presently 35 districts) and their sub-divisions. Each district is governed by a Deputy Commissioner, who is the head of the District’s Administration. Deputy Commissioner is also responsible to act as the District Magistrate, Revenue Collector, District Election Officer etc.
The rural local self government is consisted of

1. Zilla Parishad

2. Anchalik Panchayat and


1.6 KAMRUP DISTRICT ( R )

Erstwhile Kamrup district has been divided into two districts namely—Kamrup District and Kamrup Metropolitan District on February 3, 2003 by the state government of Assam. Out of the total 27 districts (presently 35 districts) of Assam, Kamrup District or Kamrup ( R ) District has been taken as the area of the present study. The total area of Kamrup District at present is 3,483.77 sq km.

The investigator collected required primary data only before the creation of the new 8 districts by the state government of Assam. Hence only the former 27 districts have been mentioned in the present study.
1.6.i HISTORY

The word ‘Assam’ is derived from the Sanskrit word Asoma meaning ‘peerless’ or ‘unequalled’. The land whose bewitching picture is conjured by the name ‘Assam’ is in fact peerless, judged by her exquisite natural beauty, cultural richness and human wealth.

Assam was known in the epic age as Pragjyotisa or the place of eastern astronomy. In Classical Sanskrit literature, Pragjyotisa is also called Kamrupa. A graphic
account of the geography of Pragjyotisa or Kamrupa is to be found in the Kalika Purana (10th century) and the Yogini Tantra (16th century), both of which dwell upon the religio-geographical history of mediaeval of Assam.

According to historian Raj Mohan Nath, an ancient race, Chouthius settled in this part of India and they came to be known as Pragjuthis and this is how this part of India came to be known as Pragjyotishpura.

Some other historians also opined that the ancient name of Assam was Pragjyotishpura which means the city of eastern light and the name later changed into Kamrupa. According to the Yogini Tantra, Kamrupa was bounded on the east by the Dikhoo river, on the west by the Karatoya river, on the north by the mountain Kunjagiri and on the south by the confluence of the Lakshya and the Brahmaputra. It would appear from this account also that, even at a later period, the kingdom included not only the whole of Assam Valley but also parts of northern and eastern Bengal, part of Bhutan, The Khasi and Garo Hills and the northern portion of the district of Sylhet. In any case it is clear that Pragjyotisha or ancient Kamrupa was a much larger kingdom than most of the other kingdoms mentioned in the Mahabharata. The Kingdom came to be known as Kamrupa during the Puranic times based on the legend that Kamadeva, the god of love- the Indian Cupid- who was destroyed by the fiery glance of Siva returned to life in this country.

The modern name of the province, Assam, is of recent origin. The word ‘Assam’ is derived from the present designation of the Ahoms who entered the Brahmaputra Valley in the beginning of the 13th century. They say that this was the term applied to them by the native tribes at the time of their invasion of the valley, and was an index of the awe and admiration with which the later regarded the Ahom conqueror.
who conciliated them. Dr Banikanta Kakati suggests that ‘Asama’, may be a later
day Sanskritization of an earlier form, ‘Acham’. In Tai, the root ‘cham’ means ‘to be
vanquished’. With the Assamese prefix ‘a’, ‘Asam’ or ‘Acham’ would mean
‘undefeated’, ‘victorious’.

1.6.ii LOCATION

Kamrup District is situated between 25.46 and 26.49 North Latitude and between
90.48 & 91.50 E Longitude. The district is surrounded by Baksa and Nalbari
districts on the North; Meghalaya on the South; Darrang and Kamrup ( M ) on the
East and Goalpara on the West. Kamrup has a total geographical area of 3,483.77 sq
km.

1.7 VILLAGES & LOCAL ADMINISTRATION

In percentage terms Kamrup is a district of villages. A total of 1037 inhabited
villages and 280269 households are there in Kamrup according to 2011 census.
Amingaon (Guwahati) is the district headquarter of Kamrup District.

The local administration is based on the 27 districts (presently 35) and their sub-
divisions. There are two administrative sub-divisions of Kamrup District- viz.
Guwahati and Rangia. The district has eight revenue circles with eleven
development blocks in Guwahati sub-division and three revenue circles with three
blocks in Rangia sub-division.

1.7.i REVENUE CIRCLES UNDER GUWAHATI SUB-DIVISION

1) Boko, 2) Chamaria, 3) Hajo, 4) Nagarbera, 5) North Guwahati, 6) Palasbari,
7) Chhaya gaon and 8) Goroimari.
1.7.ii DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS


1.7.iii REVENUE CIRCLES UNDER RANGIA SUB-DIVISION

1) Rangia, 2) Goreswar and 3) Kamalpur.

1.7.iv DEVELOPMENT BLOCKS

1) Kamalpur, 2) Rangia, 3) Bihdia Jajikana.

Each district is governed by a Deputy Commissioner, who is the head of the District’s Administration. Deputy Commissioner is also responsible to act as the District Megistrate, Revenue Collector, District Election Officer etc. In addition to civil and criminal courts, every districts has its own police force which is headed by the Superintendent of Police. A sub-division of district is headed by a Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) who also acts as Sub-Divisional Megistrate. In each sub-division there are several Circles. A Circle is composed of some Mouzas and is headed by an appointed Circle Officer. A Mouza is headed by an appointed Mouzadar and is composed of villages and towns.

1.8. LOCAL SELF-GOVERNMENT

Like other states in India, Assam has also self government in urban and rural areas. According to Panchayat Raj Act, 1994 The Government of Assam has set up local self government as stated below:

1.8.i URBAN LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

1) Municipal Corporation
2) Municipal Board
3) Town Committee
1.8.ii  RURAL LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT

1) Zilla Parishad

2) Anchalik Panchayat

3) Gaon Panchayat.

This has been called the three tier Panchayats in the rural areas (plain districts) of Assam.

1.8.iii  ZILLA PARISHAD

According to the Assam Panchayat Act, 1994 each district shall have a Zilla Parishad. It is the highest Panchayat institution.

1.8.iv  ANCHALIK PANCHAYAT

According to the Assam Panchayat Act, 1994 for each development block, there shall be an Anchalik Panchayat.

1.8.v  GAON PANCHAYAT

According to the Assam Panchayat Act, 1994 the state government by public notification may declare any local area comprising a revenue village or a group of revenue villages or a forest village or a tea garden area or other such administrative units to be a Gaon Panchayat with a population not less than 6000 and not more than 10,000. The Act lays down that the Gaon Panchayat shall consists of 10 members and 30% of them shall be women.

1.9  THE PEOPLE & THE POPULATION

Assamese race is a composite whole of people belonging to different racial classes who settled in this region. The first race settled in Assam was Austrics, then followed the Mongolians and finally came the Aryans.
During the times of the British, there was a steady influx of people from three different directions namely—(a) East Bengal (b) Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Madras and (c) Nepal.

The people who came from East Bengal settled in the present district of Goalpara and took to farming. People coming from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Madras found themselves employed in the newly opened tea gardens which gained importance during the British rule. The people of Nepal settling in Assam, started dealing in milk.

In this way, down the ages, so many races with their languages, social customs, modes of dress mingled into the pan-Assamese identity and emerged as the Assamese race that we know today.

1.9.i THE POPULATION

According to Final Population Totals of 2011 census, the population of Assam stands at 3,12,05,576 of which 1,59,39,443 males and 1,52,66,133 are females. Assam is the home of about 2.58% of India’s population. According to the available statistics, Assam ranks 14th position.

Nagaon is the largest district, population wise with 9.07% people of the state living there followed by Dhubri with 6.25% and Sonitpur with 6.18% of the state’s population followed by Cachar with 5.57%.

Assam is extremely under urbanized. According to 2011 census only 14% of the total population of the state live in towns.

In 2011 census, Assam had 26,312 inhabited villages accounting for about 4 percent of the country’s total number of villages.
The 2011 census reported that Kamrup district has a total of 15,17,542 population. Total male population is 7,78,461 and total female population is 7,39,081 with sex ratio 949 female per 1000 male. The rank of Kamrup District in regard of population size of Assam according to 2011 census is 6th. Percentage of population of Kamrup District to total population of the state is 4.87%. Density of population of the district is 489 persons per sq km.

1.9.ii LITERACY & EDUCATION

According to 2011 census results the literacy in the state has been increased than before. In 2001 census, the literacy rate of Assam was 63.25% (71.28% for male and 54.61% for female). In 2011 census, the literacy rate of the state is 72.19% (77.85% for male and 63.00% for female). The average annual drop-out rate of Assam is 6.24 (Flash Statistics, DISE-2013-14).

The literacy rate in Kamrup district according to 2011 census is 75.55% (81.30% for male and 69.47% for female) and in the 11th rank. The data shows a better picture of Kamrup district than Assam. From the census report it can be said that among the districts, Kamrup (Metro) is on top with 88.71% literacy rate in the state. Dhubri stood at the bottom with a literacy of 58.30%.

The history of modern education in Assam began in the year 1826, when Assam became a part of the British Empire following the signing of the Treaty of Yandaboo. Though the British, immediately after their arrival, took steps to set up educational institutions, it remained a half hearted attempt till the early forties of the 19th century. It was only in 1841 that a vigorous drive was undertaken to set up schools for general education in different parts of the state. This effort leads to the establishment of as many as 1293 educational institutions by the year 1875, with a
total enrolment of 31,465 students. Needless to say, the Christian Missionaries played a major role in this aspect.

Cotton college, the nerve-centre of higher education in the entire region, was established in 1901 in Guwahati following untiring efforts by Manik Chandra Barooah and others.

An account of Educational Institutions has been presented below (according to Educational Statistics of Assam, 2012 : Source : Assam Year Book 2015).

Table 1.2  Showing An account of Educational Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Institution</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Higher Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University (Including private and Deemed University)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Institute</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College for General Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Arts, Science &amp; Commerce College</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Govt. college</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provincialised college</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College receiving Financial Assistance</td>
<td>172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Junior College</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>College for Professional Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a) Agriculture &amp; Forestry</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(b) Technology &amp; Engineering College</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including central/state/private)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(c) Management Institution</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(d) Veterinary</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(e) Medical college 16
   (including Homeo/Ayurvedic/Dental/Pharmacy/Nursing)

(f) ANM/GNM Training College 23

**Secondary & Elementary Education**

**School for General Education**

(a) Higher Secondary School 1192
(b) High School 5460
(c) Upper Primary School 11423
(d) Primary School 35541

**Institute for Professional Education**

(under graduate)

(a) Polytechnic Institution 10
(b) Architecture and Hotel Management Institution 3

**Teachers Training Institution**

(a) Teachers Training College 40
(b) Teachers Training School 1

The Gauhati University, the first University in this region was set up in 1948, the Dibrugarh University came into existence in 1965, the Assam Agriculture University, Jorhat, in 1969, and the two central universities – the Assam University, Silchar & the Tezpur University came up in 1992. The same year also saw the opening of an Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Guwahati.
1.10. **NEED & SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The present relationship study is important from different points of view. Specifically, it is important from the point of view of the implementation of family planning programs because it helps identify high fertility groups (in respect of education, socio-economic status, age etc.) on which the program efforts can be concentrated.

The present study is a sort of socio-demographic research and in India it can be seen to encompass a wide range of relevant topics. It may not be an exaggeration to say that research has been conducted to cover all aspects, though, of course, some areas, such as fertility, family planning in respect of different educational levels, socio-economic condition and its bearing etc. have been emphasized to a greater extent than others. This emphasis on the study of the variables is quite natural in a country which is concerned about the rapid growth of population especially in the rural areas and also about the feeble socio-economic condition.

The overburdened population (with more number of dependents in the family) and feeble socio-economic condition of the rural societies are mainly due to inaccessibility of education and educational levels. The derivatives of education are –high income, sound health and hygiene, favourable family size with controlled population, good socio-economic condition and improved scientific temper. They are the symbols of an emancipated society like the society of a 1st world country.

Hence the study is expected to give insight about the pivotal role of education in all aspects of rural life. The study would help the rural people lead a rational and scientific life. It would also help them understand and realize the real value of human resource for which investment in education of their wards is a must. The
study would help the rural folk enjoy high per capita income and thereby live a high standard life.

The study is expected to create awareness among the rural folk about the positive role of education and negative role of high growth rate of population in all-round development of the rural society.

Thus, the study is expected to provide first hand insight into some of the problems faced by the rural inhabitants of Kamrup District and to find out their hopes, aspirations, needs and wants, lags and also to find their remedy so that the rural societies can enjoy an appreciable socio-economic condition.

The study is also expected to give a direction to the policy makers to make policy according to the hopes, aspirations, needs and wants of the rural people. Such a policy implementation would certainly bring prospect to the villagers and broadly to the whole nation. Consequently, urban amenities could be provided to the rural people as per PURA adopted by former President of India A. P. J. Abdul Kalam which is an urgent need for the entire development of our country.

A thorough review of the Sixth and the Seventh Survey of educational Research has made it clear that this type of relationship study has been a continuous demand since long. So far as the effect of education on socio-economic factors at the micro individuals is concerned, very limited work has been found in the said Surveys of Educational Research.

Thus, such a study would help build a more resilient Rural India.

1.11 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education is instrumental in changing all scenario of a country and transforms its all socio-economic factors from its traditional mode to its modern mode. Every aspect
of Indian society got a lot change after the introduction of English education by the British in British India. It is because people came into contact with the rest of the world after having been educated. Education teaches people to live high standard life with limited family members. After all, education clears the path of progress of a nation.

The first pre-requisite of a country’s overall progress is that there should be a progressive relationship among education, socio-economic condition and the family size practices. As India has been a rural base country, its rural population adds more to the total population of the country than the urban population. Rural population lags behind all these factors. Due to low level education, people live under low socio-economic condition and give birth to more children in the hope of raising their family income.

Therefore the present study tries to explore what relationship actually exists among education, family size and socio-economic condition in rural areas of Kamrup district. Reviews done at different levels paved the way to take up the present topic which has much significance in the present day world. Finally an attempt has been made to carry on a study to see if there exists any relationship among education, socio-economic condition and family size practices and thus the present problem has been stated as **RELATIONSHIP AMONGST EDUCATION, FAMILY SIZE AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF RURAL POPULATION-A STUDY IN KAMRUP DISTRICT.**

1.12 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study has been carried out with the following objectives—

1. To study family size of rural population in relation to levels of education.
2. To study socio-economic condition of rural population in connection with family size.
3. To study the relationship between education and socio-economic condition.
4. To compare family size between educated and illiterate people.
5. To compare socio-economic condition between educated and illiterate people.
6. To find out whether the perception towards family size of the educated population differs in relation to their socio-economic status.
7. To find out whether the perception towards family size of the illiterate population differs in relation to their socio-economic status.

1.13 RESEARCH QUESTION

Depending on the first two objectives the following research questions have been framed

(i) Is education an indicator of family size?

(ii) Is socio-economic condition responsible for family size?

1.14 HYPOTHESES

Depending on the last five objectives the following null hypotheses have been framed

H₀₁. There exists no significant relationship between education and socio-economic condition.

H₀₂. There exists no significant difference of family size between educated and illiterate people.

H₀₃. There exists no significant difference of socio-economic condition between educated and illiterate people.
**H04.** There exists no significant difference on perception towards family size of the educated population that belong to different categories of socio-economic status.

**H05.** There exists no significant difference on perception towards family size of the illiterate population that belong to different categories of socio-economic status.

### 1.15 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The present study has been delimited as follows

1. Kamrup rural district has been considered for the present study as study area.
2. For the present study, 05 community development blocks out of the total 14 blocks have been selected.
3. For the present study, only 40 villages out of the total 1037 inhabited villages have been selected.
4. Samples have been taken only from the stable families and not from the broken ones.
5. For the present study, only the adult population of the age group 25 to 65 years has been considered as sample.
6. For the present study, only those samples have been selected as educated who received formal education and fall in the following levels of education

**Level—1** ---up to Elementary i.e., up to 8th std.

**Level—2**-- from Secondary to Higher Secondary i.e., from 9th-12th std.

**Level—3**--- Above Higher secondary i.e., Degree & above.
(7) For the present study, people who are unschooled that is do not know how to read and write or have not received any formal education are illiterate sample.

1.16 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Operationalising the ‘concept(s)’ means how the concept is to be used in the research and how is it to be measured by the researcher. In operationalising concepts, ‘content’ may be given greater importance than criteria. Operational definitions of the terms used in the present study are---

1.16.i EDUCATION

In the present study education is respondents status out of their educational attainment. Education has been defined in three levels, namely Level-1, Level-2 & Level-3.

1.16.ii FAMILY SIZE

Here family size is defined as family strength in terms of members i.e. the total number of live children born and live to a couple in a family. The family size of the respondents of the present study varies from one member to six members and above. Here family size covers two major aspects namely family size practice and family size perception.

1.16.iii SMALL FAMILY

Parents having only one or two offspring is regarded here as a small family (The Department of Family Welfare, Govt. of India ; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare). Here only biological children are taken into account in the present study.
1.16.iv LARGE FAMILY

Parents having 3 or more than 3 live children is regarded here as a large family (The Department of Family Welfare, Govt. of India; Ministry of Health and Family Welfare).

1.16.v SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION

In the present study social condition implies literacy, education, per-capita consumption, standard of living, health & hygiene and social recognition. Social condition also refers to the role of people in the society or the ways people fit into the community in which they live. Economic condition refers to the financial position of people in society and include, how much they earn regularly, whether own a house and the assets owned etc. In this study socio-economic condition of the rural people is found in three categories, namely higher, average and low socio-economic status.

1.16.vi EDUCATED PEOPLE

In the present study educated people are those who received formal education at any level. Here educated people are categorized and studied in three levels namely

Level-1 : up to Elementary i.e., up to 8th std.
Level-2 : from Secondary to Higher Secondary i.e., from 9th-12th std.
Level-3 : Above Higher secondary i.e., Degree & above.

1.16.vii ILLITERATE PEOPLE

People who are unschooled that is do not know how to read and write or have not received any formal education at any level.

1.16.viii RURAL POPULATION

The section of population that has permanent residence in rural areas of Kamrup district (especially in villages and in an agrarian society ) of Assam.
1.16.ix  KAMRUP (R)

On February 3rd, 2003, the state government of Assam divided the erstwhile Kamrup district to form the Kamrup Metropolitan District and the Kamrup district. The later has been known as Kamrup rural district with Amingaon as the district headquarter.

1.16.x  FAMILY SIZE PERCEPTION

Family size perception is the total perception of the respondents towards family size especially whether they like and suggest to practice small family. Respondents with large family norm may also have very positive perception towards family size i.e., they may show favor for small family practice. In the present study, family size perceptions have been found in scores from some items relating to family and family planning & their practice.

1.16.xi  STABLE FAMILY

Here family stability is considered for parental understanding, living togetherly and having no frequent change of residence.

1.16.xii  BROKEN FAMILY

Families that consisted of a biological family that has separated for specific reasons that may result in single parent families and family disorder.