CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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As we come to the end of our discussion and analysis, we may now make an attempt to summarise our findings in the foregoing chapters, and to record the conclusions, that emerge from these findings.

SUMMARY

Our recapitulation of the Indian system of Primary Education on historical perspective reveals that the Indian education system was completely crushed by the British colonialists at the first instance. Subsequently, the British benevolent administrators like Lord Curzon admitted this fact. Before his arrival to India, the Britishers did spend some money on secondary and higher education. They also invited Christian missionaries to start modern educational system. But the primary education was ignored. It was Lord Curzon who did praiseworthy works and raised the teaching standard of the primary schools, while increasing their numbers also. But his plan could not proceed well due to the political unrest in the country. By 1905, the Congress movement in India demanded for the introduction of compulsory primary education in our country.
The efforts of the Congress movement were supported by a few liberal Britishers including the Missionaries. But unfortunately the British rulers did not give their support. Ultimately the Maharaja of Baroda, introduced on his own, the first compulsory primary education in 1883 in his own state.

G.R. Gokhale also made an effort in 1911 to introduce the compulsory primary education in the whole country but failed ultimately. However, Vithal Bhai Patel was successful in introducing compulsory primary education in Bombay Province in 1918. Other provinces could do so during 1930. The development of primary education again received a setback before independence of India.

The Directive Principles of the Constitution of Independent India contains a provision for free and compulsory education at the primary stage of school education. But so far no legislation has been made for achieving this objective. The primary education in India today continues to face innumerable problems. The state of Assam is sharing all these problems. Nevertheless Assam was able to introduce the compulsory primary education in the state under the Act of 1974. The implementation of the Act however suffered a setback.

With regard to the problems of primary school teachers, we have found that the problems are similar everywhere.
In Assam, the primary school teachers are not accorded the required status and they are not paid adequately.

II

Our review of the proceeding of the inter-government conference held by UNESCO in October 1966, reveals that the conference was very much concerned about the career, security, rights and responsibilities of teachers, amenities and salary of the school teachers. In addition, the conference also discussed the condition of women teachers. The conference was convinced that the teacher's salary is the most important of all factors concerning their economic status. Therefore, this factor was dealt with in great detail in the proceeding of the conference. It was its belief that the salary scale of school teachers should be subjected to periodical upward revisions. The conference wished that women teachers should always be appointed in the teaching post in the locality of their homes and that married couple should always be working in the same school or near each other. The conference was also of the view that all teachers throughout the world should enjoy similar security protection as laid down by the charter of International Labour Organisation which prescribed many other benefits and amenities to the school teachers.

Our review of the socio-economic condition of teachers in a few western countries has brought to light that
teacher-pupil ratio in Czechoslovakia was 1:30 and this should not be exceeded. Besides, it was also found that salary scales of the school teachers are uniform for the whole country. In Nigeria, the salary scales of the teacher are subject to negotiations from time to time. Teachers are treated at par with those of the civil services. The school teachers in this country are better off than those workers who are in other fields of employment. A car or transport mileage allowance is paid to the teachers in this country.

In India the status of the teachers had drawn attention of the authorities after independence. But their remuneration is different from state to state. In most states, remuneration of primary school teachers showed considerable improvement. But that was not so in Assam until recent times. The problems of the social status of teachers also received some attention of the authorities after independence. The famous Kothari Commission was appointed to look into the socio-economic condition of different categories of teachers. This Commission considered and made recommendations with regard to pay scales of the primary school teachers, their work and service conditions and their residential accommodation. But most of these recommendations have not been implemented sincerely. In our review of the various studies in
different states and by different authorities and individuals, we came across common complaint on similar problems of primary school teachers. The problems of primary school teachers in West Bengal, are similar to those of the teachers in Gujarat and Maharashtra. The studies by individual researchers also have brought to light similar economic and social problems of the primary school teachers in many parts of the country.

III

Geographically, Assam is isolated from the rest of India. Hence, the impact of educational development taking place in the rest of the country had not been able to affect the state. In spite of its rich natural and human resources, the state is still lagging behind the rest of India. Education has not been able as yet to play its role in the socio-economic development of the state in spite of its great development potential.

IV

Our analysis and interpretation of the data collected and derived from sample survey have resulted into a mix feeling. In general, it has given an impression that the socio-economic condition of a teacher are far from the satisfactory and their status looked down upon. But, in the course of the analysis of our data it has been found that owing to the number of earners in the family of a teacher, the
teachers are not economically worse off. They could avail themselves of the modern amenities of life in some ways or other. The teachers however believed that primary school teaching profession has a social prestige.

CONCLUSIONS

From the discussion and analysis in the foregoing chapters and the summary, the following findings and conclusions emerge:

Assam is no exception to the rest of the country in so far as the socio-economic problems of primary school teachers are concerned. Rather, the teachers in Assam are worse off than the teachers in other parts of the country. The salary scales of the primary school teachers of Assam are lower than the salary scales of car drivers upto 1972. The salary scales of the teachers were slightly better than those of the Grade IV government employess who belong to the lowest category of these employees. The salary structure of the private school teachers was still worse off.

The Assam Pay Commission 1973, must have considered the recommendations of the Kothari Commission and hence recommended better scales of pay for the primary school teachers in Assam from 1973 onwards. But, private schools were outside the purview of the Assam Pay Commission. Hence,
the private school teachers continue to be languishing with the lower pay structure.

The teachers' salary, according to Inter-Government Conference held by UNESCO in October 1966, is the most important yardstick of the economic status of teachers. This corroborated with the recommendations of the Kothari Commission. Hence, the primary school teachers in Assam need a still better scales if their status is to be raised and their economic problems are to be eradicated.

The status and working conditions of primary school teachers need to be improved because of the fact that they are responsible for building up human capital for the purpose of economic development of the state which has a great economic potential in terms of natural and human resources. There is no denying the fact about the role of education in economic development in so far as the importance of skill in the labour force is concerned. Here lies the importance of human capital in economic development. The foundation has therefore to be built up at the primary school level for increasing the supply of skilled labour for development and diffusion of science and technology.

The increase in the supply of skilled labour is important for Assam which is almost isolated geographically from
the rest of the country. With the present political situation in Assam where the native inhabitants of the states are claiming for an equal treatment with the rest of the country, the increase of skilled labour among the indigenous population is important. It is also important considering the strategic position of the state. Its great development potential due to its rich natural and human resources warrants that education should play its great role in turning out adequate manpower for its socio-economic development.

Although the present improvement in the economic condition of the government primary school teachers more particularly after 1973 when their salary scales began to improve, yet a large chunk of the private school teachers are still languishing with the lower pay structure. As the teachers' salary is the single factor determining their economic and social status, the salary structure of private primary school teachers will have to be improved. It is only by doing so, that the socio-economic condition of primary school teachers in the Sibsagar town in particular, and those in Assam in general, could be emeliorated.