THE PROBLEM AND ITS NEED FOR STUDY:

The present study is "An Investigation Into the Probable Causes of Stagnation and Wastage among the pupils of Secondary Schools, Assam. With special reference to the Kamrup District and Remedial Measures Thereof."

Before going deep into the matter it is appropriate to see if there is any justification to take up this problem for investigation: Stagnation and Wastage bring out alteration in the educational system which is undesirable to relate education intimately to the life and needs of the pupils, who are now entering the schools.

It is also an important problem to investigate because to make it possible to save the next generation from impending danger of stagnation and wastage in a large scale in the secondary school. It is again secondary schools which prepare students who wish to go up for higher education. Secondary education has thus a vital role to play in the community. It is however common knowledge that secondary education has till now been the weakest link in the Indian educational chain.

Another significant fact about education in relation to economic development in India is the huge wastage at all levels of Indian education.
The stagnation and wastage like the twin evils, are not only degging the educational system of all the states but also prevalent at all stages of education. It compels to think the amount of wastage in Indian education needs identification, discussion and analysis. The stagnation and wastage are like headache and temperature of a patient though not much but really symptoms of other harmful evils disturbing national educational system.

The Committee of members of Parliament on Education (1967) states: "Strenuous efforts should be made to reduce wastage and stagnation and to ensure that every child enrolled in the school can complete the course".

At the end of secondary course a large number of young people will start looking for an entry into economic activity, whether by wage employment or self-employment, rather than to go for future education.

These views will clearly show the real importance of secondary education and we all agree that it suffers from the twin evils, stagnation and wastage, to a large extent that needs a deep study and analysis.

Secondary Education Commission Report States:
"See that every individual is equipped with the necessary knowledge, skill and aptitudes to discharge his duties as a responsible and co-operation citizen."
National Seminar Remarks:

"In fact, it may be said that no other problem of education in India has received too much attention at the National level or has been studied in such depth."

Now let the Kothari Commission's Report be referred to. The Commission States: "It is to be remembered that wastage and stagnation, like headache and fever, are not diseases in themselves. They are really symptoms of other diseases in the educational system; the chief amongst which are the lack of proper articulation between education and life and the poor capacity of the schools to attract and hold students. To these may be added a third ailment, poverty which falls outside the system, urgent action is needed to remove the first educational weakness; the effect of the third can be offset only as the economy of the country improves. The goal of universal retention of pupils therefore, is the most difficult of all and can be reduced only over a period of time. This makes it all the more necessary to organise immediately an intensive programme for the reduction of wastage and to pursue it till the goal is reached."

Secretaries of State Board of Education agree that:

"Measure against the number which takes the school final examination the wastage results for above 50% failures is still large enough to cause concerned."
In this context let the matter be directed as far back as 1929. The Auxiliary Committee (Hortog Committee) pointed out: "Throughout the whole education system there is wastage and ineffectiveness, this remark holds good even to-day."

Another significant fact about education in relation to economic development in India is the huge wastage we see at all stages of Indian Education.

The high incidence of stagnation and wastage in our schools possesses social and economic problems at the local, state and national levels. Statesmen, parents, teachers and educationists have voiced from time to time serious concern over the appalling dimensions of this problem. This merits attention.

In order to have some idea of the extent of stagnation at the primary stage from class to class, the Kothari Commission collected data. A sad picture has been pictured in the table shown below by the Kothari Commission.

Wastage is very large at the lower primary stage about 56% for Girls. At the higher primary stage wastage is much less—about 24% for boys and 34% for girls. That the percent of stagnation and wastage in Assam has not been stated or calculated in Commission's Report.

Economically speaking according to the Kothari Commission, the expenditure per capita of the school population is as follows:-
Only direct expenditure in

1950-51 ... Rs. 37.00
1965-66 ... Rs. 64.00
1970-71 ... Rs. 74.00
1975-76 ... Rs. 87.00

Against the cost in the education the percentage of stagnation and wastage falls at the rate 56% of the population. It is a matter of grave concern which prompts the writer to locate the possible causes of stagnation and wastage in the Secondary Schools of Assam.

The Governments, both the state and centre, have been investing money for the promotion of education without restriction. In the days of pan education there should be no stagnation and wastage specially in the Secondary Education which is the terminal point for the majority of pupils and also the point of selection for higher education.

In 1975 the last batch of the students appeared in the final examination in the old course. Old course means the course not under the recommendation of the New Curriculum suggested by the Kothari Commission. These pupils were stagnated for a long time.
The following table will show the number of students stagnated (SEBA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>53560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>58254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-75</td>
<td>82002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975-76 (New Course)</td>
<td>52333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though it was expected that all students of class X would be sent up to appear in the final H.S.L.C. Examination in 1975 as it was the last batch under the old course, yet 40% to 50% students were debarred from appearing in the H.S.L.C. Examination in the same year. It was due to the fact that the schools were afraid of being derecognised or to keep the image up as it was in the public eye. Those students have been wasted due to many causes.

The following table will show the picture of one H.S.L.C. Examination result which merits attention for investigation the probable causes of stagnation and wastage among the pupils of Secondary Schools.

**Table No. 7**

*(Showing the number P.C. of pass; yearwise)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Regular</th>
<th>P.C. of pass</th>
<th>Private</th>
<th>P.C. of pass</th>
<th>Overall P.C. of pass</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1972-73</td>
<td>26663</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>53560</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>41.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1973-74</td>
<td>29180</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>58254</td>
<td>23.7%</td>
<td>45.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From the table it can be well calculated that the efficiency of one expenditure is only about one third or a little more. In other words out of every 100 crore of rupees of expenditure on schooling at the High School level we get only roughly about 32 crore rupees worth of education. This is extremely disheartening to all. It indicates that out of 100 students enrolled in class VIII about 67.2 dropped out or stagnated.

It will not be out of place to mention here that in 1972/73 the students of class VI were directly promoted to class VIII to follow the new structure in education in Assam. In this period it was expected that the subjects should be well grounded in the beginning class which was not done. But the new structure admits from class VIII to class X in the secondary course in 12 years schooling system. This period became crucial to the majority of the pupils to cope in the next higher class that was either ignored or nothing was done for special coaching to the boys during the period in class VIII. That was not

The investigator is not aware of any such study having been conducted earlier specially in the problems of stagnation.
and wastage at the secondary level. The author feels that the present study will be an humble attempt to explore an important area which has been left untouched so far.

In this context education should be the instrument of changes which should be on a grand scale.

According to the National Education Commission the educational revolution must be welcome. All possible steps should be adopted in educational field as to relate it to life, needs and aspirations of the nation. It is expected to be a nationwide revolution. If it is so stagnation and wastage should be a matter of great concern. The main task before the nation at present is to secure rapid economic development. The stagnation and wastage stand on the way to progress.

The stagnation and wastage have been becoming the dead blow to the Secondary Education. Like other factors this makes it the weakest link in educational set-up.

The large number of failures in the different stages of education definitely indicates that there is something wrong somewhere else. Some years back the NCERT tried out some analysis on wastage and stagnation in the primary and the middle school stage. But nothing was attempted so far in secondary stage as a whole.
All available sources refer to some kind of defect in the system which is responsible for high rate of stagnation and wastage. It may be due to many cases, e.g., (a) defective method of teaching, (b) stereotyped curriculum, (c) defective administration and supervision, (d) low socio-economic condition of the family, (e) lack of school community relationship, (f) bad environment, (g) dearth of adequate qualified teachers, (h) physical facilities of school, (i) want of teaching aids, (j) heridity and environment, (k) disinterest of the family members, (l) lack of teaching facilities, (m) lack of communication, (n) defective timetable, (o) co-curricular activities, (p) students' attitudes to education, (q) sex problem etc. etc. All these should be taken into consideration in the new light of investigation.

Our earnest task is to look into the matter of stagnation and wastage and to find out the probable causes of it. Let there be a many fold analysis to find out the clues which are directly responsible for the stagnation and wastage particularly in the secondary stage. It is undoubtedly admissible that they are inter related and they go side by side.

Further, no attempt has been made so far in Assam to study the educational problems like stagnation and wastage in the secondary stage.

The author sincerely feels that the findings of the study will suggest certain measures which will have some
implications for changing the current educational policies and practices so as to reduce stagnation and wastage of secondary schools, Assam.

It can be stated that the problem is a national one. In 1968, September a seminar was organised termed 'The National Seminar on Wastage and Stagnation' under the joint responsibility of the NCERT and the Ministry of Education, Govt. of India. The seminar pointed out some of the causes of the problem. But the seminar was at the primary level. The seminar only suggested the following measures.

(a) Minimum programme to be adopted in all institutions.

(b) Intensive pilot project should be conducted at the level of school complexes etc.

(b) Defining the problem:

Stagnation:

The word "Stagnation" means in-active and hence stagnation means no movement or no progress.

Auxiliary committee of Indian Statutory Commission defined stagnation as — "The retention of a child a class for a period of more than one year."

For the purpose of this study it means the retention of a boy or a girl in any class.

Eg: 100 boys or girls after being admitted to class VIII; if all of them come out successful in the H.S.L.C. Examination without failing in any class they will take
(100 x 3) = 300 years, each taking 3 years to complete the course prescribed in the curriculum.

In this case the extent of stagnation will come to:

\[
\left(\frac{1-\text{total optimum years}}{\text{actual used years}}\right) \times 100 = \frac{1-300}{300} \times 100 = 0
\]

There will be no stagnation if optimum years and actual years make no difference.

Supposed out of these 100 students

20 took 60 years 3 years each
20 " 80 " 4 " "
20 " 100 " 5 " "
20 " 120 " 6 " "
20 " 140 " 7 " "

Students 100 took 500 years.

100 Students enjoys 500 years

\[
\frac{1-\text{total optimum years}}{\text{actual years}} \times 100
\]

Then \[
\frac{1-300}{500} \times 100 = 63.3\%
\]

In this case the rate or stagnation will come upto 63.3%.
Wastage:

Wastage generally means "of no use" and wastage means the amount wasted, wastage in educational context means the premature withdrawal of children from school at any stage before completion of a prescribed course.

A boy or a girl after being admitted to class VIII of our high schools is expected to continue upto Class X and come out successfully in the H.S.L.C. Examination. But if a boy or girl after being admitted to class VIII does not continue upto class X or leaves the school without passing the H.S.L.C. Examination he or she is treated to have been wasted.

For example:

100 students were admitted to Class VIII in 1972/73; they are expected to pass the H.S.L.C. Examination in 1974/76.

But out of those 100 students,

- 20 students left in the year 1972/73
- 15 students left in the year 1973/74
- 15 students left in the year 1974/75

50 students left the school or dropped out. Rate of wastage is 50% \((\frac{50}{100} \times 100) = 50\%\)
So it is observed that 50% of the students of the said cohort are wasted.

**Title of the Problem:**

"An investigation into the probable causes of stagnation and wastage among the pupils of Secondary Schools, Assam, with special reference to Kamrup district and remedial measures thereof."

The Kamrup district is advantageous for survey in collecting data for the project. It has communication to go from place to place. Secondly the district is supposed to have educational advancement, it being the centre of education from time immemorial having the continuity up to modern age.

Thirdly the survey will be an intensive study on wastage and stagnation in one district (Kamrup). This will enable the author to take advantage of the libraries, Central, District and the University and other resources available at Gauhati the headquarter of Kamrup. In view of these advantages the author has limited his study to Kamrup district only. It will give a general idea of the problems prevailing in the state for suggesting remedial measures.

**Scope:**

1. It has been mentioned earlier that stagnation and wastage as twin evils are found throughout the country and at all stages of education. But for the purpose of this study the author has taken only the secondary stage which is the crucial stage of education.
2. Only the students admitted to class VIII in 1973-74 have been followed up to class X in 1975-76.

3. The study covers the Kamrup district only.

(a) To find out the extent of stagnation and wastage, among the students of Secondary Schools.

(b) To find out the causes of these evils in the secondary schools including the Grant-in-Aid and Ad-hoc system schools.

(c) To forward certain important and possible suggestions.

(d) To suggest remedial measures from the actual field of work.

(e) To pinpoint the ways and means to reduce incidence of stagnation and wastage at the Secondary level.

The problem has been taken with a view to flash a positive bearing on the educational system and help the teachers, educationists and educational planners to look into the problem in correct perspective for formulating curriculum, method of teaching and text books in accordance to relate education to life and aspiration of the people. Moreover it will bring an effective way to stop the wastage of time energy and money and thereby it will be very encouraging effort for the development of the national resources.

Limitations:

The whole is definitely better than the parts and wider the sampling the more is the validity. From this point...
of view it would have been better if the study would have covered the whole of Assam than Kamrup district alone to give complete picture of the present state of affairs. But in order to understand the nature of the problem it was decided to make an intensive study of the problem in a limited area for want of time and money, the scope of study has been limited to Kamrup district.

The three stages of education, i.e., The Primary stage, the Secondary and the University stage are closely interlinked and can not be put into watertight compartments, the author has pinpointed his area of study to secondary stage considering the vital role it has to play in fulfilling the nation's expectations by preparing students both for higher education and for life as productive citizens.

Some secondary schools in Assam being with class II and some other with class VII. But according to the new structures the secondary stage covers class VIII, IX and X. For uniformity the cohort has been followed from class VII to X. Moreover in this study class X is taken as the terminal class because all the High Schools of Assam except the Higher Secondary and Multipurpose Schools belongs to this category. So schools having classes from V to X have been selected though cohort is followed from class VIII to X.

In this study the author followed up only one cohort from class VIII to class X in 1973-74 to class X in 1975-76.
This study includes only the new entrants to class VIII in 1973. The author has chosen these students population, how far they have been affected by these twin evils and thereby get relevant data in relation to the society.

This study may be useful for the development of the stagnated and wasted pupils and to impart needful education.

Cohort:

Batch of pupils admitted in class VIII for the first time fresh entrants in class VIII.

The data given in the study is not wholly complete as it does not account for the students who failed in class X. School final examination 1975-76.

A SURVEY OF RELATED STUDIES IN INDIA

It will be worthwhile to note here some of the major studies made in this line. Many such studies have been made at the Primary level. But at the Secondary level there are only a few. Those studies are only one of the various aspects of the problem, the author has taken up. Some of them have conducted the study on the problems of truancy, some on the socio-economic status of parents and its relationship to achievements of the students, some on the causes of failure in particular subject and other on the causes of failure of girl students at the high school stage. The following are a
few of the studies the author refer would like to refer:

1. **Wastage and Stagnation in Secondary Education**

   This study was conducted by the Department of Extension Service, Government College of Education, Bilaspur, Madhya Pradesh in 1967/68. They took 10 H.S. Schools representing the both Government and Non-Government Boys and Girls' Schools of Bilaspur city. They followed the cohort system. They took the fresh entrants of class IX in 1963/64 and followed them upto 1965/66 when they were expected to pass the higher secondary course. They found out yearwise and subjectwise stagnation. After finding the extent of wastage and stagnation they located its causes and suggested remedies. Percentage of stagnation 55% wastage 66%.

2. **Wastage in Girls' Secondary School in Poona**

   This study was taken up by Miss S.S. Pulsule in 1951. She took some schools of Poona and found out the extent of wastage and located the causes. Wastage 72%.

3. **Causes of stagnation in Secondary Education with particular reference to selected high schools of Baroda city**

   This study was conducted by Sri Ramsewa an M.Ed. student in partial fulfilment to the requirement of M.Ed. Degree. He selected 15 high schools of all categories within the city of Baroda and identified the causes only P.C. of Stagnation 63%.
4. An Investigation Into the problem of stagnation at the primary stage in the schools of the city of Cuttack:

Mr. Chakradhar Biswal had taken up this study in 1968. He selected 6 primary schools from different circles of Cuttack city. He found out classwise and schoolwise extent of stagnation. He located the causes of stagnation. P.C. of Stagnation = 55%.

5. A study of stagnation and wastage in some selected primary schools in Dhenkanal, Orissa:

Mr. Dibakar Prodhan took up this study in 1966. He selected 47 primary schools from various considerations. These 47 primary schools are the representative schools of various situations like the town schools, rural schools and backward rural schools. They also represent different types of schools like traditional schools, Basic schools and Sevashrams. He found out the extent wastage and stagnation and identified the causes and suggested the remedies. P.C. of Stagnation 60% Wastage 65%.

6. A study of the problem wastage and stagnation at the Primary level of education in the district of Sibsagar:

This study was taken up by Dr. R.C. Das, Principal of SIE, Assam, Jorhat in 1968/69. He investigated at the primary level and located some of the causes of wastage and stagnation. He also put forward some remedial measures. P.C. of Stagnation 65.63%. Wastage 27.75%.
7. **National Seminar on Wastage and Stagnation:**

The national seminar on wastage and stagnation was organised in 1968 from 23rd to 26th September in New Delhi. It was organised under the joint auspices of NCERT and the Ministry of Education. The Seminar located some causes of stagnation and wastage at the primary level and suggested some remedies through action programme of two types.

(a) A minimum programme to be adopted in all institutions.

(b) Intensive pilot project should be conducted at the level of the school complexes.

1. Wastage and stagnation in secondary education by the Department of Extension.

2. Wastage in Girls' Secondary Schools, Poona by Miss S.S. Pulsule.


4. An investigation into the problem of stagnation at the primary stage in schools of the city of Cuttack by Mr. C. Biswal.

5. A study of stagnation and wastage in some selected primary schools of Dhenkanal by D. Prodhan.

6. A study wastage and stagnation at the elementary level of education in the state of Assam with special reference to Mikir Hills by Dr. R.C. Das.

7. National Seminar on wastage and stagnation :- NCERT and Ministry of Education, Govt. of India.

N.B. : Records from thesis not being published so far.
CHAPTER II

1. The Report of the Committee of members of Parliament on Education  Page 211
2. Secondary Education Commission Report  131
   (NCERT Publication)
4. Kothari Commission Report  161
5. Report of the 4th Conference of the 
   Secretaries of the State Board of Education  10  
   (NCERT Publication 1961)
7. Collected from the Annual Report of SEBA  45
8. Ibid  48
9. Seminar on Wastage and Stagnation NCERT Publication  11