Chapter V

PROBLEMS OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE DISTRICT

I

WASTAGE AND STAGNATION – THE TWO MAJOR PROBLEMS

Though the primary education has made a progress in this district, but because of certain reasons it cannot be said to be encouraging and quite satisfactory. The main reason for this is that there are many problems and difficulties in the field of primary education which are creating obstacles. An attempt has been made to analyse the problems.

Wastage and Stagnation:

These are the two thorny and most important educational problems and great obstacles in the expansion of primary education in this hill district. Here an analytical study of these two severe problems have been tried to chalk out.

According to the Hartog Committee the interpretation of the term "Wastage" is premature withdrawal of children from schools at any stage before the completion of the primary course of education, and of the "Stagnation" means as retention of a child in a class for a period of more than one year.¹ The two words have acquired a special meaning in the context of education.

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¹ Singh and Sing, Current Problems of Indian Education, Chapter IV, p. 86
Meaning and definition of "wastage":

A student who enrolled himself in an educational institution is expected to complete his education within a prescribed period. In practice we find that many students who join the schools or colleges very enthusiastically leave education after sometime. Such type of students do not complete the study of their curriculum and consequently the time, money and energy expended on such students proves to be sheer wastage. In the early years the term "wastage" was used rather loosely to denote all kinds of waste in the educational system. Later it acquired a restricted and technical sense and is now used to denote the cases where a child leaves school without even acquiring a fairly stable literacy - the humblest goal of primary education. It may be presumed that a child who has passed the fourth class generally acquires a stable literacy. So as a matter of fact every child who leaves school before completing his course is held to be a case of "wastage" he either "stagnate" in the same class through failures or non-appearance in the examination or dropout from schools before completing of his school course.

Concept and meaning of "Stagnation":

The students at every stage of education are expected to pass the examinations after studying their whole curriculum but it has been found in general practice that many students
are not able to pass the examinations in one class or in more than one class within the stipulated period. In the light of this fact, in lemma, we may say that they do not pass every year in their class and thus they stagnate in the same class whereas their other classmates success and study in the next class. This procedure is called the process of "stagnation". The stagnation being locked by students in a particular class for more than one year is a hallmark for wastage in elementary education. It is seen that being unsuccessful in the examination, embrangling and losing the confidence, the pupil want to discontinue their studies. On the other hand the parents too prefer in withdrawing their children from school presuming that it is better to put their children to engage in work than to keep them busy in school.

It was the Hartog Committee which first drew attention to the widespread prevalence of wastage and stagnation. Generally the words "wastage" and "stagnation" go together because both factors cut short a child's progress - in the first case by his leaving the school prematurely, in the other by his being left over in the same class. Besides these two are in some measures co-related also - as cause and effect. Stagnation leads to wastage.

Wastage and stagnation in education is a burning problem of today. These two diseases have enveloped the system of education long since. High incidence of dropouts and
grade repeaters is in jeopardy and poses serious threats to the educational progress and has, in fact, been the contributory factor leading to the failure of educational efforts. These ailments not only concern the domain of education, but they create social and economic problems too. Wastage and stagnation are the two exhaust pipes running incessantly which are must plug if we want to fill education on the brim.  

Ever since the recommendation of Hartog Commission in 1929, this serious problems of wastage and stagnation in primary education is still a great evil. The problem prevails at all stages of education, but it is specially acute at the primary level. It has been realised by the educationists, educational administrators and the conscious citizens that immediate steps should be taken to study the various aspects of the problem and its causes. A good number of studies have been carried out on this major problem at personal as well as institutional levels in the different states of India. But in the State of Assam no such descriptive and accurate study of this problem has been made at all. With this gradual serious concern which has been voiced from all corners the problem has been endeavoured to discuss widely and studies have devoted to finding the extent of the problem while the others have tried to ascertain the causes.

2. Ojha, G.K., Compulsory Primary Education in India, Chapter XIII, p. 333
If the purpose of primary education is to impart permanent literacy to all the children who join school, then this phenomenon must be considered wasteful. The magnitude of wastage reflected in the proportion of children who leave school without being functionally literate, is considerable in the Indian context. In relative terms, the proportion of school going children in India who become permanently literate in one of the lowest in the whole South East Asia. India actually suffers from an exceedingly high level of wastage. At the State Education Ministers' Conference held in April 1964 this point was considered. The report states - "There is very great wastage at the primary stage at present. Of every 100 boys that enter class I, only about 40 reach class IV. Vigorous steps would have to be taken to reduce this wastage."

Broadly speaking it is found that in Assam and most of the all states of India, the most important causes of wastage - more than 60% are economic, that is to say, children are withdrawn from schools before they reach class IX because they are needed to work in or for their families. Some other causes are (a) repeated failures which makes the parent think that the child is no good at books, (b) marriage or bethrothal

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3. "Primary Education in Rural India" (Participation and Wastage) published Research Paper - by Agricultural Economics Research Centre, University of Delhi, Chapter II, p. 20

4. Ojha, G.K., Progress of Compulsory Education in India (1951-1966), Chapter XIII, p. 328
(in case of girls), (c) truancy which the parent does not or cannot control, (d) migration to a place where facilities for primary education do not exist, (e) absence of scholarship facility, (f) failure of the school to adjust the hours and vacations to local needs, (g) lack of holding power of school, (h) appointment of unwilling teachers. An interesting development in recent educational thought is the growing appreciation of the view that the introduction of compulsory education would in itself, be a great means of reducing wastage.

Stagnation is the second most frequently discussed evil of the present system of primary education. An analysis of the relevant statistics from this point of view shows a prevalence of stagnation particularly in the first class. In an well-conducted system, failures aught to be an exception, especially at this level. In India, the percentage of passes is never high in the primary schools. The extent of stagnation is, therefore, large in every class, but almost staggering at the first class-level where nearly half the number of students on the roll is annually detained.

Stagnation dampens the enthusiasm of both pupil and parents leads to waste of time, money and energy. It is also a major contributory factor to wastage for when pupils begin to have repeated failures. The usual parental reaction is to withdraw them from schools and to put them on to some
employment. Stagnation must therefore be kept at the lowest level possible, and although opinions vary as to what this level should be, there can be no justification for the very large extent of stagnation in Indian primary schools. But unfortunately little research has been done in this aspect of the educational system and no planned drive to reduce stagnation has yet been organised.

The more general causes of stagnation are known fairly accurately. They include inefficient instruction traceable mainly to ill-qualified or untrained teachers, irregular attendance on the part of the pupil owing partly to the absence of compulsory education and partly to a lack of adjustment of the school hours and vacations to local conditions, overburden or defective curricula, faulty methods of examinations, wrong conception of standards whereby the prestige of an examination is deemed to be inversely proportional to the percentage of passes, failure to isolate backward or retarded children and to provide them with special guidance, overcrowding of subjects, and absence of individual attention. In the first class all these causes operate no doubt, but four deserve special notice. Firstly the attendance in this class is extremely irregular because the children have not yet been accustomed to school life, secondly although this class needs to be placed in the hands of experienced and trained teachers, the usual practice is to entrust it to a junior teacher, so that inefficient teaching becomes very common at this stage. Thirdly, the age
of admission has a significant effect on the results because, the lower the age of admission, the greater is the extent of stagnation and lastly, the common practice of admitting fresh pupils to this class at any time instead of in the first, two months of the school year adds to the difficulties of the teacher and considerably reduces the efficiency of teaching.

The basic causes of wastage and stagnation of elementary educational system of Assam continue to be the same as they were before independence and need no repetition.

The above descriptions is a grim picture but a real one. What has been written above may not be applicable to all the schools. But most of them are surely common for every school of the different parts of the various districts of Assam as well as India.

India is an underdeveloped and poor country and the percentage of literacy is very less. Keeping in view with this situation, it is very unfortunate that the problem of wastage and stagnation has been existing in the field of education for a very long time. Because of the defective administration, defective environment, defective curriculum and defective examination system lakhs of students fail every year. Generally the rate of wastage according to Kothari Commission is from 1/3 to 1/2 in class I.
These two diseases have prevailed in the system of education long since in Assam. High rate of dropouts and grade repeaters pose threat to the educational progress and has in fact, been the contributory factor leading to the failure of educational efforts. In the field of primary stage of education in Assam the rate of wastage, stagnation and their resultant droppingout is so discouraging that it surpasses all other complicated problems of primary education in the State. Even after independence the percentage of wastage and stagnation is more than 77% in Assam. From statistical records available, at the end of the Fifth Five Year Plan (1977-78) the number of children who do not attend school are 5.10 lakhs in primary stage of whom 3.71 lakhs are girls and 8.72 lakhs children in middle stage of whom 4.99 lakhs are girls. These calculated the number of children who do not attend school as well as the dropouts. Till now, no scientific survey to find out the actual position of wastage and stagnation has been undertaken for the state as a whole.

The Table 1 is illustrated below in order to show the trend of wastage and stagnation in Assam during 1955 to 1959.

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5. Report of the Study of Administration of Elementary Education - in relation to the Programme of Universalization (Assam), November 30, 1979, pp. 50, 51

6. Devi, Dr. Renu, Asamar Sikha Bebatha, p. 62
From the above picture it is clear that about 50% students admitted in 1954 has left school when they have reached class I. In this way only 90,708 students has remained in the year 1958-59, i.e., 25% out of 100. The remaining 75% students out of 100 left school without completing the elementary education. It has been accompanied by a high dropout rate. It is confirmed that about 75 to 77% pupil could not complete the primary course of education within the prescribed minimum period of Assam. In general the incidence of wastage and stagnation is always on the increase along with the increase in the initial enrolment in class A. For example, in the State of Assam in class A were 2,78,111 students in 1951-52 and 1961-62 enrolment cohort increased to 5,33,536. The total incidence of wastage at the primary level for the 1951-52 cohort was 2,19,147 for the year 1961-62 it shot up to 4,30,509.  

stagnation can be observed for the individual classes also.

However, school dropouts in primary and middle stages are matters of concern. Statistics taken show that between 1974-75 and 1978-79 dropouts in the primary stage was 61.4% and in the middle stage during the same period was 76.8%. Out of total children of 27,22,200 the age group of 6 to 11, 10,49,800 are yet to see a school building in Assam and those who have been attending schools in this same age group the number is 16,72,400. According to the Education Ministry the high dropout in the elementary stage of education is due to socio-economic conditions of the deprived groups as well as certain deficiencies in the system itself. The dropout among girls appear to be slightly higher. During the same period the number of girl dropouts were 65.3% in middle and 81.2% in elementary the two stages of education respectively.

The hilly district Karbi Anglong which is an educationally backward and has many problems regarding education, wastage and stagnation have afflicted her education for a long time and a good deal of money and human energy is wasted on their account no concerted action has been taken so far in this district to remove these evils. Particularly the wastage from

8. Source - Assam Tribune (English Newspaper), 2nd November, 1982
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
class I to class II is very heavy. The percentage of wastage and stagnation in the four classes (I to IV) is 63.57 in class I, 28.30 in class II, 25.26 in class III and 24.56 in class IV. These percentages are graphically represented here. The rest of the children left studies either after their failure in the examinations or in order to assist their guardian in earning their livelihood. Unfortunately the lack of educational implements, undesirable environment, lack of school buildings etc., are the reasons to fail to attract children to complete their education. These two acute factors defeat the educational progress constantly in this backward hill district which has about nearly 64% dropout between the first year and the second year of the schooling. On the whole wastage is more prominent in the case of Karbi girls. It is obvious that this problem is specially involved in the backward and scheduled tribe community and in the rural and remote areas of the district. A bird's eye view of the rate of wastage and stagnation of the elementary school pupils of this hilly district is graphically represented from the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Pupils</th>
<th>Left and detained</th>
<th>Wastage and stagnation in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>19855</td>
<td>12623</td>
<td>63.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>7232</td>
<td>2047</td>
<td>28.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>5185</td>
<td>1310</td>
<td>25.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>3875</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>24.56</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Graph No. 1

(W+S) in % of Pupils

Class

(W+S) in %

1935 2869 2825 2155
The researcher endeavours to draw out class-wise and sex-wise pictures of the rate of wastage and stagnation of the general, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe communities of this backward hilly district graphically from the following tables:

### General Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>(W+S) in %</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>(W+S) in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>4299</td>
<td>58.85</td>
<td>2608</td>
<td>53.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>29.11</td>
<td>1222</td>
<td>45.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>1254</td>
<td>13.71</td>
<td>674</td>
<td>35.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>1082</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>30.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Scheduled Caste

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>(W+S) in %</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>(W+S) in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>46.80</td>
<td>623</td>
<td>52.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>34.08</td>
<td>293</td>
<td>26.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>16.34</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>22.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>12.32</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>20.52</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The study of the class-wise and sex-wise variation of the extent of wastage and stagnation of different communities reveals that the rate of wastage and stagnation decreases as the pupils move from lower to the upper classes. The rate of wastage and stagnation is highest in the lowest grade, i.e., class I being:

- boys 58.85%, girls 53.18% for general
- boys 46.80%, girls 52.96% for Scheduled Caste
- boys 61.47%, girls 66.54% for Scheduled Tribe

next highest in class II

- boys 29.11%, girls 45.66% for general
- boys 34.08%, girls 26.96% for Scheduled Caste
- boys 29.59%, girls 26.21% for Scheduled Tribe

and then goes on decreasing till it reaches:

- boys 10.45%, girls 30.75% for general
- boys 12.32%, girls 20.52% for Scheduled Caste
- boys 22.40%, girls 22.32% for Scheduled Tribe in

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Boys (W+S) in %</th>
<th>Girls (W+S) in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978-79</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>11612</td>
<td>8243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979-80</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>4474</td>
<td>2758</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>3150</td>
<td>2035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981-82</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>2344</td>
<td>1531</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
grade or class IV. Thus as the pupils move from one class to
the next upper, the chance of their constituting cases of
wastage and stagnation diminishes. The high extent of wastage
and stagnation in the lowest two classes or grades and rapid
decline in the upper grades only means that probability of
retention or continuation in schools (no wastage) is much
higher once the students complete the lowest grades successfully.
Efforts should therefore be made not to detain pupils in the
lowest grades of primary stage. Pupils who move to the higher
grades obviously become more enthusiastic, more interested,
more conscious and more ready to proceed still further. The
pattern of class-wise and sex-wise distribution rate of wastage
and stagnation is represented diagrammatically.

It is seen from the above tables and graphs that in
this backward hilly district the rate of wastage and stagnation
up to IV is higher (boys 22.40%, girls 22.32%) among the
Scheduled tribe than that of the Scheduled caste (boys 12.32%,
girls 20.52%) and the general community (boys 10.45%, girls
30.75%). It is because of this hilly district constituting the
majority enrolment of Scheduled tribe population.

For example, from the above table (Scheduled tribe)
it is clear that 11612 boys (61.47%) and 8243 girls (66.54%)
students admitted in class I in 1978-79, some of them have
left school when they have reached class II. In this way only
2344 boys (22.40%) and 1531 girls (22.32%) students have
remained in the year 1981-82 in class IV. The remaining 77.60% boys and 77.68% girls out of 100 left school without completing the elementary education. It has been accompanied by a high dropout rate. It is confirmed that about 77.60% boys and 77.68% girls could not complete the primary course of education within the prescribed period. In general the incidence of wastage and stagnation is always higher among the girls but here it is seen that only a slight higher than boys i.e., only 08%. But in case of girls in class IV it remains 30.75% girls and only 10.45% boys, among the general community and 20.52% for girls and 12.32% for boys among the Scheduled caste pupils.

Again a field survey was made on experiment basis about the wastage and stagnation in 10 sample different primary schools in Karbi Anglong district. These schools are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the schools</th>
<th>Medium of instruction</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ranaima Primary School</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Phuloni area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Padum Pukhuri Primary School</td>
<td>Bodo</td>
<td>Langning area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Diphu Town Primary School</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Diphu Town Sadar I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Bithilangsa Primary School</td>
<td>Karbi</td>
<td>Diphu Sadar II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. B.K.B. Model Primary &quot;</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>Parkup Pahar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Adarsha Hindi Vidyalay</td>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>Diphu Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Binapani Primary School</td>
<td>Bengali</td>
<td>Diphu Town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Jiribasa Karbi Arong Primary School</td>
<td>Karbi</td>
<td>Hamren Sub-division</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Kheroni Ampathar Primary &quot;</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Kheroni Circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Akshoimukh Primary School</td>
<td>Assamese</td>
<td>Dilai Bazar area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With a view to understanding the problems clearly four visited sample schools are illustrated here and it has been tried to show the class-wise and sex-wise enrolment of four successive years, of which two would show the incidence of dropouts and the other two show grade-repeaters of the respective sample schools.

Table 2

(1) Padum Pukhuri Primary School (Bodo medium)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Wastage &amp; Stagnation in %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>60.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>143.13%</td>
<td>186.95%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The class-wise and sex-wise wastage and stagnation (during 1978 to 1981) of the Padum Pukhuri Primary School reveals that the wastage and stagnation of the boys decreases at 9.09% in class II whereas 57.14% in the class II in case of girls. Again it is interesting to note that in class IV the rate of wastage is 33.33% for boys whereas the rate of wastage is nil for girls. The total wastage and stagnation is 143.13% for boys and 186.95% for girls. The rate of percentage of wastage and stagnation is higher in case of girls.
Table 3

(2) Ranaima Primary School (Assamese medium)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>P.C. of wastage and stagnation of Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1978</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1979</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16.66</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>126.66%</td>
<td>84.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the other hand the rate of wastage and stagnation of Ranaima Primary School is that in class I it is 3, i.e., 20% for boys and 1, i.e., 33.33% for girls. In this way in class II the rate of both wastage and stagnation of boys decreases at 16.66% whereas 50% for girls. Again in class III the rate of wastage and stagnation of boys increases at 50% and only 1% in case of girls, whereas 40% in class IV for boys and it is nil in case of girls in the same class. The total stagnation and wastage is 126.66% for boys and 84.33% for girls. In this school it is seen that the rate of wastage and stagnation is higher in case of boys than girls, it is because of the scanty enrolment of the girls in this school.
Table 4

(3) Binapani Primary School (Bengali medium)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Pupils Appeared</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>P.C. of Pass</th>
<th>Stagnation in P.C. on the basis of exam. results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>88.88%</td>
<td>11.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>38.18%</td>
<td>61.82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>70.83%</td>
<td>29.17%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows the class-wise (I to IV) results of the annual examination during 1980-81 of Binapani Primary School. In class I out of 36, 32 students success (88.88%), i.e., the stagnation in this class only is 11.12%. But in class II it is a different picture. Out of 55, only 21 students success (38.18%), i.e., the stagnation in the class II is 61.82% whereas in class III and IV the pass percentage is 70 and 70.83% respectively, i.e., the stagnation percentage is 30% and 29.17% respectively.
Table 5

(4) Kheroni Ampathar Primary School (Assamese medium)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Pupils Appeared</th>
<th>Passed</th>
<th>P.C. of Pass</th>
<th>P.C. of Stagnation on the basis of examination results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980-81</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34.78%</td>
<td>65.22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>II</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>III</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IV</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>83.33%</td>
<td>16.67%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The position of Kheroni Ampathar Primary School is that out of 23 students only 8 students success in class I (34.78%), i.e., the stagnation is 65.22%. But in class II, all the 5 students success (100%) and so there is no stagnation in the class II for the year 1980-81. In class III and IV out of 17, only 8 (47%) and out of 18, 15 students success (83.33%) respectively. The stagnation rate of both the class is 53% in class III and 16.67% in class IV respectively.

This problem varies under different geographical, economic, social and educational circumstances. For example, the nature, extent and gravity of the problem in urban area will be different from that in rural areas. The researcher endeavours to investigate the problem in regard to its extent in urban and rural areas in Karbi Anglong district. The investigation is confined to the primary level only and the
geographical area is limited to different parts of the Karbi Anglong district. Here the urban areas selected is Diphu town and its surrounding sub-urban areas. The rural areas consist of all areas of Diphu and Hamren Sub-divisions excluding the towns.

It is found on statistical treatment that the combined wastage and stagnation in rural area schools is significantly higher (73.87%) than that in the urban (60.82%) area schools. This means educational wastage in both these forms combined is highest in rural areas and lowest in the urban areas. The same trend exists for boys and girls separately also.

An effort will be made here to give in brief some interpretations of the results based on the field experience of the researcher. The investigation covered 833 schools out of which 822 schools are located in rural and only 11 schools in town. Altogether 37352 pupils (class I to IV) were covered in the rural area and 1475 pupils in the urban area.

In this study "True-cohort" has been the method followed to ascertain the rate of wastage (dropouts) and stagnation (grade repetition) expressed as percentage of the initial cohort. Here the career of the group of fresh entrants in class I is followed till they complete the last class of the primary stage. Out of the cohort, pupils dropping-out from the various classes before completing the primary level and pupils repeating in various grades will constitute cases of wastage.
and stagnation respectively. These are then expressed as percentages of the initial cohort. The method has been followed separately for the groups of pupils in urban and rural areas. The results of the investigation is shown in Table 6 and Table 7.

**Table 6**

Extent of wastage and stagnation of the primary level in RURAL areas of Karbi Anglong District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Initial true cohort followed (fresh entrants in class I in 1977)</td>
<td>11074</td>
<td>7962</td>
<td>19036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Regularly and successfully completed the primary level of education in four years (I to IV)</td>
<td>3921</td>
<td>1853</td>
<td>5774</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.74%</td>
<td>23.27%</td>
<td>29.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Left school on transfer or unwillingness during the period 1977 to 1980</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.02%</td>
<td>1.55%</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Premature withdrawal or dropouts during the period (wastage)</td>
<td>3031</td>
<td>2988</td>
<td>6019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.47%</td>
<td>37.52%</td>
<td>36.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) Detained in various classes during the period (stagnation)</td>
<td>4011</td>
<td>3030</td>
<td>7041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>36.22%</td>
<td>38.55%</td>
<td>37.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) Total wastage and stagnation during the period</td>
<td>7042</td>
<td>6018</td>
<td>11060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>71.69%</td>
<td>76.07%</td>
<td>73.87%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 7

Extent of wastage and stagnation at the primary level in URBAN area of Karbi Anglong District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
<th>Boys</th>
<th>Girls</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(A) Initial true cohort followed (fresh entrants in class I in 1977 to 1980)</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>507</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of the above cohort</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(B) Regularly and successfully completed</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary level of education in four years (I to IV)</td>
<td>26.02%</td>
<td>25.21%</td>
<td>25.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(C) Left school on transfer or unwillingness during the period 1977 to 1980</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>14.49%</td>
<td>12.60%</td>
<td>13.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(D) Premature withdrawal or dropouts during the period (wastage)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18.58%</td>
<td>16.80%</td>
<td>15.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(E) Detained in various classes during the period (stagnation)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40.90%</td>
<td>45.37%</td>
<td>45.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(F) Total wastage and stagnation during the period.</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>59.48%</td>
<td>62.17%</td>
<td>60.82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is seen from the tables that in urban area out of 507 pupils only 130 or 25.61% actually completed the primary stage regularly. In rural areas, out of 19036 pupils, 5774 or 29.50% completed primary stage of education regularly. The wastage and stagnation rates are shown in the last 3 rows of the tables separately for each of the areas. The wastage rates (dropout rates) for urban and rural are 15.61% and 36.49% respectively, while stagnation rates (grade repetition) are 43.13% and 37.38% respectively. The tables also show the
break-up details of the above for boys and girls separately. The combined wastage and stagnation (total educational wastage) therefore come to 60.82% and 73.87% respectively for urban and rural areas.

But when wastage and stagnation are analysed separately and compared among the two areas (Rural and Urban) of this hill district some significant peculiarities are observed. The percentage of pupils regularly completing the primary course is highest (29.50%) in the rural area compared to urban, i.e., 25.61%. It is also found that wastage is lowest (15.61%) in the urban area schools compared to rural area schools where wastage rate is 36.49%. But in case of stagnation (failure in the examinations) the rate is quite different in urban area schools which is highest, i.e., 43.13% in comparison to rural area school which is only 37.38%.

Investigation shows that the rate of wastage (dropout) was higher among girls, i.e., 37.52% in rural area and 16.80% in urban area than boys (35.47%) in rural and 18.58% in urban area. And in case of stagnation (failure in the examination) also the rate is higher among girls, i.e., 45.37% in urban and 38.55% in rural area where as for boys is 40.90% in urban and 36.22% in rural area.

Now so far as the variation of wastage and stagnation in urban and rural areas are concerned, the results may be explained as follows:
The circumstances and environment under which the pupils of urban schools receive education is far superior and more convenient in comparison to those in the rural areas. To add further in the urban area teachers and the parents alike are more conscious of the benefit of educational efforts. The physical amenities and equipments etc., the physical and academic condition of the schools, communication facilities etc. in the urban areas are much better than those in the rural areas. The most deplorable conditions of the school buildings in general and poor academic environment including poor quality of teaching, make a rural schools of Karbi Anglong most uncongenial place for learning as well as uninteresting for staying in it. In addition to all the unfavourable circumstances under which they are run in rural areas, comparatively less frequent academic supervision and guidance also contribute to the deterioration of the standard of education in rural areas. On the other hand, presence of the District or Sub-Divisional Offices of educational administration in the urban areas definitely has favourable impact on the education in the urban school. Further due to great concentration of schools, colleges and other educational institutions add to the improved educational environment in the urban areas. There are many other reasons for which the academic achievement in rural areas is so poor. It may be stated that the socio-economic disparities between urban and rural areas are too obvious to be mentioned here as a major
contributory factor. There are many other reasons for which the academic achievement in rural areas is so poor.

It is seen that there is no significant difference in wastage in between urban and rural areas. The rate of wastage, however, appear to be slightly higher in urban areas. This may be due to existence of wide opportunities in urban areas where pupils of lower income group may be got engaged for adding to the family income. It is found that the rate of wastage in class is less in urban area compared to that in rural areas, but as the pupils advance in age the rate of wastage get higher than in the rural areas.

Analysis revealed that the number of primary schools, enrolments, total teachers, percentage of trained teachers, direct expenditure, per pupil cost etc. in the district were always on the increase. But when the trend of stagnation and wastage was examined for the same period, it was found that the percentage of wastage had remained statistically constant. This constancy of the rate of wastage and stagnation inspite of expansion and increase in educational expenditure and facilities, is really a matter of grave concern. Since the enrolment cohort is increasing every year, a constant rate of wastage and stagnation implies continuous increase in the total incidence of wastage and stagnation in absolute terms. This is really frightening. If this rate remains constant for years to come the extent of wastage and stagnation in absolute terms
will defeat the imagination. There is another more important aspect of consideration that adds to the gravity of the situation. The per pupil cost in education is increasing every year. It implies that wastage or stagnation of a child means wastage of more money now than what it meant years ago.

A comprehensive research study may be instituted into this problem and it is hoped that some experts will show a way to stamp out this menace. The findings later will expose the severity of this evil problem in Karbi Anglong district.

CAUSES OF WASTAGE AND STAGNATION IN THE DISTRICT

With a view to have a clear idea regarding the causes of wastage and stagnation of primary education in Karbi Anglong district different schools of the rural as well as the urban areas were visited, parents and the teachers were interviewed, the officers of the District Council and the District Social Education office in Diphu were contacted for discussion. From the findings of these investigations the primary causes of wastage and stagnation may be divided into 5 major categories, such as (1) Economic factor, (2) Sociological factor, (3) Educational factors, (4) Psycho-social factor, (5) Miscellaneous factors. These will be discussed elaborately in different points. Effort was made to investigate the causes responsible for wastage and stagnation in schools, following a
combination of frequency distribution and opinion poll method. In the field survey data, too many causes were identified as applicable in the regions. But for analysis only the important ones were sorted out. Analysis showed that there was significant agreement among the teachers, teacher educators, the inspecting officers and the public in regard to the relative importance of the causes of wastage and stagnation. Here the researcher detects the fundamental causes and endeavours to suggest some measures of recommendations of her own along with.

(1) One of the basic causes of wastage and stagnation is the dire poverty. Most of the people of Karbi Anglong are heart breakingly poor. Broadly speaking, it is found that the most important cause of wastage more than 65% are economic, that is to say, children are withdrawn from schools before they reach class IV because they are needed to work in or for their family. In addition to it, the cost of education is also much more than what the parents can afford. They cannot afford to give slates, text-books, exercise books, pencils, clothes to their children. So far as the education of girls is concerned they are taken out of the schools only after receiving the knowledge of alphabets etc. It is because of the fact that, the guardians do not in return any financial help from the education of the girls.
In order to check the wastage and stagnation in education it is necessary to improve the financial conditions of the guardians. If the Government become fully conscious of this grim situation and make every possible endeavour to improve the financial conditions of the people of this tribal backward area, midday meals, free diet, free medical service, free textbooks, free reading materials, free uniform and free transportation is the only remedy for relieving the economic condition of parents who cannot afford to provide these to their children, and then undoubtedly these problems will be solved fully in near future.

Next important cause of wastage and stagnation is the ignorance and indifference of parents and guardians. Most of the parents being remote villagers and of lower income group are not at all interested in their ward’s education. For them, school going is purely a wastage of time. The guardians of the children will understand the importance of education of their children only when they themselves are educated. In order to reduce the ignorance and apathy of the illiterate guardians the District Council and the State Government providing ample facilities for adult education should make the hill brethren more conscious of the usefulness of education and so night schools, adult schools, and part-time schools should be established in large number in the different parts of the district.
(3) Poor health of the children is one of the alarming causes for wastage and stagnation. Most of the children are suffering from malnutrition and Malaria. They need food to raise their spirit and stimulate their brain and health care. They live in poverty-stricken families with misery and illness. Physical debility and frequent illness initially make the pupil remain absent in the classes, which in turn leads to backwardness in academic achievement and then failure. Repeated failure leads to dropping out of school and so is one of the important causes of wastage and stagnation. So school authority should take initiative in introducing lunch programme or midday meals of nutrition diet along with school health programme to minimise the problems of wastage and stagnation.

(4) Unattractive school environment is also a cause of wastage. In Karbi Anglong majority of the schools are of poor and inferior quality and are existed in a very dilapidated and worst condition. Many schools face problem of sanitation. Most of the elementary schools of this district have no adequate furniture, even some schools do not have blackboard, chalks, teaching aids and little quantity are seen in schools. Due to the deteriorated schools buildings and equipment, the little children lose interest in coming school and as a consequence, they leave the school for good. To have a sound, interest education atmosphere the physical condition of the school building should be changed and improved, built in healthy environment. It can be done only with the joint efforts of the
Government, District Council, people and the teachers. The primary schools should be situated in a nearby area, so that the little students can avail of the easy access of their school. The Government should encourage the establishment of primary school in the backward and interior areas of the Karbi Anglong district. Because due to distance of the school from their homes children have to discontinue their studies. Attractive school building with adequate furniture and building. Necessary equipment and teaching aids should be provided to key up the interest of the children for schooling.

(5) The teaching methods which are prevalent in the primary schools do not make the desired effects upon the students. Incompetent and untrained teachers, lack of proper aids and implements of teaching, interesting methods of teaching fail to create interest in the children towards their studies. As a consequence they lose interest gradually in studies and leave school for ever. In order to check the wastage and stagnation the new and psychological method of teaching, i.e., play way and nursery methods should be adopted. Improvement of professional competence of teachers by providing training facility, pre-service and inservice training facilities may be made. Necessary guide-books, and modern methods of teaching literature should also be provided.

(6) Unsuitable curriculum is another reason. The present primary school curriculum is rigid and one track and it includes
a large number of subjects. The curriculum of the primary school is stereotyped and text-books are used as basic tools for only giving education. The lessons that are taught in the class-room are not related to the environment in which the Karbi students live. They only memorise sometimes without any understanding of the subject. The children of the urban as well as the villages have to study the same curriculum no matter whether their interest is towards it or not.

With a view to reduce these evil problems reform in curriculum has become necessary and expedient. Any curriculum cannot be regarded as appropriate and suitable for a indefinite period. It is necessary to change it in accordance with the needs and circumstances on the basis of experiments and experiences. Consequently, the curriculum of the primary schools should be related to the life of the children and to the community. And it should be modified and if necessary completely recognised keeping in view with the local environments and needs of the Karbi populace. Separate curricula should be prepared for the rural and urban students and the boys and girls. Utmost endeavour should be made of the part of the framers of the curriculum which should be simple, interesting and practical.

(7) Defective examination system is another major factor responsible for wastage and stagnation. In Karbi Anglong above 50% of the students fail in different examinations every
year. The large number of failure of students is because of the defective examination system. The examination system should be reformed. Monthly test should be held to evaluate the academic performance of the children. The present examination system which is full of many defects should be changed and reorganised as soon as possible. Without understanding the subject the present essay type examination system encourage memorization and cramming only. So the present system of evaluation needs to be urgently remedied by introducing a new system of examination which consists of written both essay and objective type along with oral examination.

(8) There is very little scope in elementary schools of Karbi Anglong for co-curricular activities. This is one of the causes for the dropout of children. Children of the elementary schools at their age enjoy every moment of their childhood. But due to lack of co-curricular activities in schools, their practical interests, aptitude, emotion, love for work are really neglected. Teacher should give opportunities to all children of his class to take initiative in taking part in different co-curricular activities.

(9) Uneven distribution of schools and teachers is another main factor responsible for wastage and stagnation. Though, without having any trace of schools in some places, particularly in the rural and remote areas, Karbi Anglong district has two
or more schools in the same area which are not equally
distributed. Due to distance of the schools from their homes
children discontinue their studies.

There is also inequality of distribution of teachers
in the primary schools. About 45% of the elementary schools
in Karbi Anglong district is single teacher schools. Generally
the pupils are deprived of teacher's individual attention in
such type of schools due to having single teacher and larger
number of pupils. In addition to it, appointment of untrained
teachers and their irregular attendance in the schools are also
the main causes for wastage. For all these causes parents
withdraw their children prematurely. As far as possible
trained teachers should be appointed, specially in charge of
class I. Well and adequate distribution of schools and teachers
can reduce these two evils of education.

(10) The transport bottleneck is a great hindrance in all
developmental programmes. Improper and bad communication
raises the problem of wastage in Karbi Anglong district. In
the hilly areas incessant rainfall occur in most of the months
following landslides which becomes practically impossible for
children to attend schools. In the light of this reason,
parents prefer to keep their little children at home rather
than sending them to school. Due to lack of transport facility,
proper road linking to school and besieged by deep forests on
both sides of the roads, the little children are embrangled
with fear to go to school and hence it goes without saying that
they have to leave the school. Karbi Anglong being a poor and backward district cannot afford free transport facilities to students to go to school and back home. So the authority should extend educational facilities to the population of small, scattered and in rural and remote areas. Provisions of proper and adequate transport and communication system should be made in this isolated district.

(11) Irregular admission policy is also responsible for wastage and stagnation in Karbi Anglong district. In primary schools it is seen that admission is made ostensible during the whole year. So it becomes difficult for the teacher to take special care for those late-comers. Ultimately the child will not do well in the examination and he is detained in the class. So, immediately, rule should come into force that admission should be completed within a few days of the beginning of the academic session.

(12) Truancy and long continuous absence from the school leads to wastage. Improper family environment is also responsible for pupil's withdrawal from school. Provisions of part-time schooling may be made for the benefit of children who cannot attend the school during regular session. Duration or timings or school calendar can be determined for the classes in the light of local conditions and the vacations should be changed to suit the local needs.
(13) Attendance in traditional social festivals is considered to be more important in most of the families of Karbi Anglong district than to attend their classes regularly. Therefore, the little children are more interested to enjoy their different traditional festivals in lieu of attending school. Frequent attendance in these festivals and merry-makings lead to lack of interest in their studies as a result the little children develop the sheer neglect in their heart for schooling. Hence the teacher should endeavour to encourage pupils for their studies by applying different methods and provision should be made to enforce compulsory attendance.

(14) One important cause of stagnation is the pupils' ignorance of the implications of examination. For a little boy of age 5 the examination at the year end is of no importance. This is due to defect in our existing examination system. The little children are interested in play so they should be taught with the help of playway method. Use of teaching aids in class-room make the pupils interested in lesson.

(15) Faulty administration of the school authority is also a cause of wastage and stagnation. There are very few schools which can claim to be successful in making the mental, physical and moral development of the child. Most of the schools have to face uninteresting and low standard of teaching with dearth of trained teachers, inadequate educational
implements and teaching aids which is a special feature for developing a sound educational environment. In such condition neither the students are able to throw themselves heart and soul into the sacred task of acquiring and learning of knowledge nor the teachers are able to do their teaching work with complete enthusiasm and skill.

With a view to solve these problems the teaching standard of the educational institutions should be raised and reconstituted with the provision for teachers training in phases, improved physical condition of the schools with necessary implements of education and proper provision should be made for the entertainments and sports and games of the pupils. Effective supervision and inspection provision are most essential and so it should be provided by the respective authority.

(16) As usual, the students have to pass their time in vicious environment in schools as well as outside the schools. In each class there are a number of such boys whose habits and behaviour, method of conversation etc. are deplorable. Such type of students never sincerely try to pass examinations every year and other students by coming into contact with them start ignoring their studies.

It is necessary, therefore, to change and improve the environment in which the students pass their time in the schools.
and outside the schools. It can be done only with the joint efforts of the Government, the people and the teachers. So far as teachers are concerned they should perform their duties by building a healthy environment in the schools.

(17) Generally it can be seen in this district that the rate of wastage and stagnation among girls is higher than among boys. Because girls are more needed for domestic work at home. Mothers usually need daughters to help them in work. This may not invariably be rooted in economic needs. In most of the rural society of Karbi Anglong district it prevails that education of girls is less important. Marriage is the ultimate aim for which a girl is reared and parents in rural and backward society usually give more stress upon training of their daughters to be a good housewife in future. In some places early marriages and betrothel still exists. Lack of social awareness very often stands on way of girls' education. Most of the parents of interior areas are reluctant to send girls to co-educational school or school having all male teacher. If such a school with female teacher does not exist in their locality they prefer to retain their daughters at home. When the researcher visited interior and remote areas for the study of educational wastage she, of course, saw few, quite grown-up girls in the primary schools. Such cases occur due to repeated failures in the classes. Another point that may appear to be less important for consideration is the question of school
dress for girls. A boy may go out to school wearing the usual clothes or even can go wearing just a half pant only. In the case of girls, parents usually would not allow them to go out putting on ordinary clothes. As such clothing for girls cost more than that of the boys. When parents cannot afford these, the education of their daughters end there. When the older girls reach the age of puberty, their parents would not send their daughters to schools. Many of the girls who are sent to schools, are withdrawn after few years for one or other of the causes mentioned above. Usually the girls as soon as they attain puberty or betrothed are withdrawn from the school before completion of primary school.

In order to remove these acute problems the female education should be encouraged and female teachers should be appointed and should make the parents and guardians conscious of the fruit of their daughters' education. Government and concerned authority also should give all help to develop and strengthen the women education.

(18) In Karbi Anglong district elementary schools face a tremendous difficulty regarding the multi-medium of instruction. According to basic curriculum a pupil must learn all the subjects in his mother tongue only. But until 1975 the Karbi children did not have the opportunity to learn subjects in their mother tongue as the Karbi dialect was not recognised as the medium of instruction in the schools. They have to learn
all subjects from their childhood in Assamese and in some schools English only. They speak Karbi dialect at home but they have to learn everything in Assamese or English (in a few schools). It is a fact that the students do not have the clear conception and do not understand everything with this foreign language. So as a matter of fact they cut a sorry figure in examination, and are retained in the same class or ultimately being unsucceess they give up schools. This is why the results of Karbi Anglong are very low in percentage always specially at primary level.

Now-a-days, the District Council and the Government have introduced different medium of instructions according to the demands of the different people of this district. In addition to the Hindi, Bengali, Assamese they have Karbi and Bodo medium of instructions also and they use Assamese, English and Hindi script. This is also a problem for the little children. The authority and District Council should take initiative for solution of this problem.

(19) Want of pre-school education is another reason for wastage and stagnation. The pre-primary schools help the reduction of wastage and stagnation of children in primary schools. Whenever children go to pre-primary schools it is seen that they progress satisfactorily in primary schools. And pre-primary schools reduce the need of older children who are kept at home to lookafter the younger children. As far as
possible, provision should be made for encouraging the starting of pre-primary schools to admit children of below 6 years of age. It will give good education and proper care for the pre-school children and at the same time relieve their elder brothers and sisters of 6-8 years of age.

(20) Lack of cordial pupil-teacher relationship is also a cause of wastage in schools. Rough and unsympathetic behaviour of a teacher may lead to premature withdrawal of children. And hence, they should know child psychology. The teacher must be a substitute of loving parents and friend, philosopher and guide to the children during the school hours. The most important work for a teacher is to make pupils interested in education. Improving of parent-teacher contact should be necessary.

(21) Repeated failure in the same class is one of the most important causes of stagnation. So the teachers and the authority should minimise the rate of failures in the lower classes.

(22) Failure of the authority in introducing compulsory primary education in the Karbi Anglong district is also to a considerable responsible for wastage and stagnation. As there is no such compulsion the parents do not bother to send their children to the schools specially in rural areas. The law of compulsory primary education to all pupils 6-11 years should be applied and come into force in Karbi Anglong district to
In addition to these above-mentioned causes, there are some other minor causes responsible for the creation of these two acute problems in the elementary education of Karbi Anglong district. Some of them are (1) underaged in the class, (2) lack of reading habit, (3) lack of facilities for home study of pupils, (4) natural disturbances such as regular flood, storm etc., (5) irregular attendance and frequent absence of teachers etc., (6) the examination system in the lower classes is the biggest stumbling block in the path of progress. But despite thirty-some six years of freedom, no bold educationist has come forward to advocate abolition of examination in lower classes.

Stagnation causes so much colossal waste of human energy and time that it would run into billions and billions of child hours. The quality of teaching has deteriorated, consciousness in regard to discharging of duties is at a very low ebb. Despite all the new methods of teaching and the enlightened training teachers receive, even now, there is so much emphasis on "Home work", that the average student has little chance of success at the examination if education at school is not supplemented by coaching at home. The block officers sometimes do now hesitate to employ teachers for work in other than what is enjoined to him. The Panchayats have at places injected an element of politics into the teacher
services and the teacher community. Coupled with this is the factor of low salaries of teachers. All these have formed such a vicious circle that teachers teach in half hearted manner and supplement it by allotting home work to young pupils. The fault lies in teaching. The teachers go through the courses hurriedly and at times skip over certain parts. For example, an exercise contains, say 40 questions, the students are asked to solve 5 or 6 questions and then the teacher passes on to the next exercise. There no individual attention is paid. The student's individual difficulties are not understood nor an attempt made to study them. And above all, teachers are lacking in sympathy. Students who are not so affluent as to have private tuition and not so intelligent as to keep pace with the progress, lag behind and once they lag behind they are left behind for ever. This is a grave picture but a real one. What has been written above may not be applicable to all the schools of the district.

Out of five categories of causes, i.e., economic, social, educational, psycho-social, and miscellaneous causes, both in case of wastage and stagnation, socio-economic causes ranked first, the educational causes the second and miscellaneous cause the third in order of importance. Analysis revealed that socio-economic causes are more responsible for wastage rather than stagnation but the educational causes are more responsible for stagnation rather than wastage. This is exactly what could be expected; stagnation is more related to
academic aspects whereas wastage is more related to the socio-economic aspects.

When visited the primary schools in Karbi Anglong, the researcher came to know that the stagnation and wastage is highest in class I due to variety of abovementioned causes. The extent of stagnation and wastage in other classes of the primary stage is comparatively small.

In order to reduce the evils of wastage and stagnation the State Education Department and the District Council authority of Karbi Anglong should treat every school as an individual entity and for every school to give individual attention to every child. The District Council authority or the Department should use the techniques which have been developed to measure the extent of wastage and stagnation from year to year in each class and in each school, and on the basis of these data, it should insist on every school making the best efforts possible to reduce these evils. What is needed therefore, is a nationwise programme of school improvement in which the reduction of wastage and stagnation would figure prominently.

"It has to be remembered that wastage and stagnation like headache and fever, are not diseases themselves; they are really symptoms of other diseases in the educational system, the chief among 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 needed to remove the first two educational weaknesses and the third cause may be removed only by improving the economy of the country.

It has been rightly suggested that reforms in educational system should be made as quickly as possible. The teaching standard should be raised, teachers should be trained, people should be encouraged to take up teaching profession, necessary educational implements should be provided, primary school building should be built in healthy environment. Elementary schools of the districts should be made them attractive and proper provision of games and sports should be given to the students.

This analysis also indicates the reforms that will have to be adopted in order to reduce this evil to a minimum. The causes of wastage can be made inoperation by raising the standard of instruction and reforming the system of examinations. By making the schools attractive to children so that truancy would be restricted to a few abnormal cases. The effect of the economic causes, however, is not so easy to nullify. The one reform that will remove all the economic difficulties is a substantial rise in the standard of living of the people. But the standard of living cannot be raised quickly or easily. A

12. Ojha, G.K., Compulsory Education in India, pp. 397, 398
more practical, and possibly somewhat novel, reform would therefore be to adopt a system of part-time instruction. The school therefore try to adjust itself to the conditions of child labour and all children who have to work for their livelihood are given part-time instructions.

An interesting development in recent educational thought is growing appreciation of the view that the introduction of compulsory education would make children more regular in attendance and thereby help to reduce the number of failures in annual examination; it also would overcome the opposition and indifference of parents and make them more willing to control the truancy of their children.

The overall purpose should be to reduce wastage stagnation during the sixth plan period by 80%. This may be done through a number of precautions, the most important of which are restrictions of fresh admissions to the beginning of the school years, development of pre-primary education, provision of part-time schooling, improvement of teachers, reduction of pupil-teacher ratio, liberal promotions from class to class, improvement of supervision, provision of adequate buildings and equipments and adoption of modern teaching methods which would make the school an attractive and happy place for children.

It is an accepted fact that in poor district - Karbi Anglong, provision of midday meals to children, in indigent
circumstances, can give a great fillip to the cause of education. The children as well as their parents of this class naturally consider it a great boon if the children get free meals. This scheme however worthy, has been introduced but at a few places only, and there too, only partially. This poor hill district cannot afford to follow the American example of having a centrally situated school for several habitations and providing free transport facilities to students to school and back home. The teacher's salary and emoluments should be standardised and attractive. Unless we can extend educational facilities to small and scattered population in the rural and remote areas we cannot improve the whole education standard of the district.

Very often it is easy to solve a problem theoretically. Sometimes theoretical solutions of a practical problem is meaningless, unless it is applicable in practice. So far as the causes of wastage and stagnation are concerned various studies throughout India have been made. Each study suggests remedial measures for reducing wastage and stagnation. But no measures based on the Research Studies have been taken so far to minimise the evils of wastage and stagnation.

Although wastage and stagnation have afflicted education system for a long time in Karbi Anglong district and a good deal of money and human energy is wasted on their account, no concerted action has been taken so far, to remove these evils.
A detail and intensive study of this problem should be undertaken by District Council and under the auspices of State Institutes of Education.

Several steps have been taken for achieving the objective of universalisation of elementary education. They include opening of primary and middle schools within easy walking distances, intensification of utilisation of existing facilities, conversion of single teacher schools into two-teacher schools, provision of non-formal part-time education on an extensive scale, appointment of women teachers in larger numbers, improvement of teachers competence through application of better standard of educational qualification and in-service training, special attention to girls, adequate provisions for incentives etc.

A number of appropriate remedial measures had been suggested keeping in view with the above findings. In all such suggestions, community involvement is given more importance. Further only those measures had been suggested which could be tried immediately and which do not involve heavy expenditure. Both the teachers and parents should be motivated to send their children to school.

Briefly speaking all have to fight at all levels to rootout the evil of wastage and stagnation.
OTHER RELEVANT PROBLEMS

In addition to the previous two fundamental problems, some other relevant problems also are stumbling blocks in the path of progress of primary education in this hilly and autonomous district. These are -

1. **Poverty**:

In this backward hill district almost all the parents are heart breakingly poor. As a result they do not intend to send their children to the schools. The poor parents cannot afford to give slates, text-books, exercise books, pencils, clothes to their children. Poverty stands in the way at the progress of primary education in the district. Until the hill brethren are freed from the prey of poverty, primary education will not give satisfactory results. Peasants with ridiculously small holdings, Karbi hawkers selling jungle honey, firewood and deer meat obviously seldom earn as much as the average of the earning of total population indicates. There are very large sections of the population, e.g., landless labourers in the villages, people depending on land "wholly or mainly" unowned, people living in jungles and outlying hilly districts, nomadic tribes wandering throughout the district whose income per head is far below the statistical average.
Most of these people of this backward isolated district have slender income which is hardly sufficient to provide themselves, their wives and children with the minimum food and clothing of the poorest quality and sometimes with the additional burden of supporting distant relatives who have no income and refuge. So it is expected that these Karbi hill brethren struggling for bare existence cannot send their half-starved and ill-clad children to school for a number of years and to bear the expenses of their education. The children as soon as they are seven or eight years old become economic assets to their parents as they help them in their work in various ways such as they graze cattle, help their mothers in milking cows and in domestic and field work, they gather cow-dung, fallen-twigs of trees, stray pieces of wood and even dry leaves to serve as fuel which their families cannot afford to buy. There are a number of minor jobs at home, in the field, which are assigned to them almost as soon as they are able to walk and to use their hands.

Due to the poverty instead of getting an opportunity of self-expression and self-development the children are forced to do uninteresting, often unpleasant work, which give them no scope for physical and mental development. The poor parents of the students have to make the choice of making them earn two full meals and perhaps a little more for the family by sending them to work.
So the poor economic condition of the people makes it impossible for them to get their children even through a full elementary course of education.

Now the question arises, if the masses of the Karbi Anglong district are too poor to bear the financial burden of educating their children the State and the District Council authority should shoulder it and should take up the entire responsibility of financing a scheme of free universal education.

2. Transport and Communication:

A glance at the relief map of Karbi Anglong district will show that its topographical conditions, varying from place to place, do not on the whole, favour the spread of education. The district is so difficult of access that the problem of establishing an adequate number of schools there, and making arrangements for proper inspection baffles the administration of Karbi Anglong and the other districts concerned. The population is spread out so thinly that villages and hamlets often consist of less than a dozen huts and are miles apart. They are generally connected by narrow winding paths going up and down the hills which are hard for little children to traverse. There are large forests and inaccessible areas in the districts. The rainy season lasts for about four months, these paths are blocked by water and the little habitations
are often completely cut off from one another. Thus almost all children except those who live in urban area have to discontinue their studies.

But it is not only in these regions that these obstacles in the way of education exist. Thinly populated population, harsh climate and poor communications are to be found in various degrees in plains and the level lands of the district also. Except the Diphu town, the population is distributed over very small units situated at long distances served by bad unmetalled roads. Natural barriers in the form of thick jungles or streams and rivulets without bridges or fords are a common feature in many parts of the district. In this Karbi Anglong district there are large areas where villages are few and far between and so it is impossible for little children to walk the long distance from their own village to the school specially in summer through thick jungles, and when the searching heat tires the children or in the heavy tarential rain which washes away the small tracks and paths to the school. In addition to these, due to the roaming of the wild animals hither and thither and other creatures in the jungle it is risky and difficult for pupil as well as inspecting staff to cross the jungle tracts.

There are difficulties in performing regular inspection by the inspectors, Deputy Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors etc., due to poor communication system. Because
Attendance Trend of HIRHIRI Govt. Primary School.

Jungle Track Surrounded by Forest leading to the School CHIKARIBEY GAON.
some schools are situated in most interior places, even at the tops of the hills. Sometimes the inspecting staff have to walk 15 to 20 miles for inspecting a school situated in the hill areas. There is also the risk of life because wild animals are frequently found on the roads. No motorable roads link the schools in the rural and remote areas with the villages that feed them. The only remedy of this drawback is the improvement of roads and provision of better means of transportation.

3. "Jhum" (Shifting Cultivation):

Due to jhuming cultivation the native people of the Karbi Anglong district have to find out fertile soil after every three years when the fertility of the soil becomes inadequate and barren for cultivation. It is learnt that when the villagers settle in a new place to start their cultivation they also have to set-up new schools with the shifting of their village. Some villagers are reluctant to establish schools as they think the schooling of the children is meaningless and waste of time. If established at all these schools are closed now and then or they become useless. Staying in the shifted villages and closure of the school, the students in this novel and unknown environments have to face a tremendous difficulty. And as a result the pupils have to give up their studies. The primitive jhuming system is one of the causes of the slow growth of elementary education in the
district. In order to do away with the uneconomic jhuming system the terrace and the permanent and settled cultivation should be encouraged. Government should also provide cultivators with financial assistance and modern agricultural implements.

4. Ignorance and apathy of parents and guardians:

Even now there is an apathy of Karbi rural masses towards the education of their children. A survey revealed that the Karbi parents' ignorance and apathy towards education is comparatively more in the children of hilly and interior places of the district. The main cause of this is that guardians of these children are mostly illiterates. Being themselves illiterates, they fail to understand the cultural and social importance of the education of their children. From their point of view, the time for schooling is a sheer wastage. So they do not intend to send their children to schools. On the other hand, they engage their children as their helping hands in their day-to-day activities. Even now the illiterate Karbi people still display apathy towards education. It is extremely difficult for a child born and bred in a family which has had no education for many generations to acquire even elementary education or to keep it up after he has acquired it.
To begin with, therefore, efforts should be concentrated on the teaching of the 3R's to the hill brethren of Karbi Anglong district who are ignorant of the world of knowledge due to the geographical and topographical condition of the hill district. It stands to reason that the educational problem of the school-going children becomes more acute if the homes are enveloped in an air of illiteracy and ignorance.

It would be an appropriate idea to implement adult education programmes with greater zeal and enthusiasm to the illiterate guardians. It is a crying need to impart literacy to illiterate people of the district which not only cure the ignorance and apathy to education but will also bring an allround development and awakening in the minds of the masses for the betterment of their own lot, as well as of their children and for the progress of their country.

5. Social evils:

The Karbi Anglong being a hill district is infested with social evils such as superstition, illiteracy, faith in ancient conventions and customs, ignorance and unwillingness towards medical treatment etc. These social evils create innumerable obstacles in the expansion of primary education of the district. Although citizens have been granted the rights of equality by law, yet because the parents think that the schooling of their children is a wastage of time and money
or for some other reason many students are still not admitted into schools. Most of the parents of the rural and interior places of the district oppose the system of co-education even in primary schools, so they are unwilling to send their girls to a mixed school. In time of illness the Karbis generally prefer their ancient traditional treatment by "divination" or "Thekere" (Medicinal man who knows bad as well as good charms) and medicines instead of modern medical treatment. As a result most of the children who fall victims of epidemic have to suffer or die. Most of the Karbis specially in the rural and interior places are adamant and unwilling to be benefited by the modern medicine and treatment which they call "foreign" and inauspicious treatment.

So the Government and the social workers should try to bring consciousness among the people regarding these disadvantages of the social evils by audio-visual methods. The educated young man and woman should volunteer themselves to remove the social evils around their neighbourhood.

6. Uneven distribution of schools:

In some parts of the district there are some small and scattered habitations (e.g., of less than 50 people in a village) for whom a primary school could not be opened. Uneven distribution of schools is a main factor responsible for slow growth of primary education in this hilly district. Some
interior and remote areas of the Karbi Anglong district have never heard the name of a school till today. One of the handicaps in the path of progress has been that the population in many parts of the district is scattered. It is easier to achieve success in easily accessible and comparatively compact localities. But in many areas the population is scattered in a number of hamlets. These hamlets are wide apart. In such places the standard teacher-pupil ratio cannot be maintained and naturally the cost of education per child goes up. When the population of a village is too small, say, less than 100 it is uneconomical and not possible to provide an independent school to meet its educational needs.

There may be a suggestion that all these such small villages should be abolished by amalgamation or otherwise and these big villages should have not only schools but a proper approach road, a drinking water well, medical facilities and so on. And only in such situation and environment the primary schools can be established to meet the educational needs of the masses of the district.

7. Dearth of teachers and lack of training facilities:

Yet another problem of primary education of the district is the non-availability of the desired number of teachers. Inspite of constant and vigorous efforts of the Government, the number of teachers could increase only to 1645
in the session 1981-82. There is a shortage of teachers in many schools in the district due to lack of accommodation, other facilities and delay in the payment of teacher's salaries etc. This poses a very serious and difficult problem before the Government also. It has been estimated that to provide universal education in the district even for the children only, thousands of teachers will be required. As compared to the eleven schools of Diphu town there is a great shortage of teachers in villages and interior schools of the district.

A large majority of primary school teachers of the district lack training and adequate education. Therefore, they are not intellectually alive and keen in their duty. In Karbi Anglong district there is no teacher training centre of any type. Hence the teachers have to undergo training in the different Basic training centres of the State. It is difficult on the part of the local teachers to take training in the distance places. A large section of the primary school teachers have taken the job not from any sense of a vocation but of any noble aim for sheer economic necessity. Though after provincialization they enjoy many facilities most of them live in distress, bitterness and frustration due to their unsatisfactory service condition and poor economic status. The proper selection of teachers and paying them adequately for the maintenance of a reasonable standard of living will be the main solution of the problem. It is observed that this district has not been able to provide "trained" teachers to
all the primary schools and a large number of teachers are still untrained. It is estimated that the number of trained teachers in the district is only about 15% of the entire strength of teachers in primary schools. It is understood from the field survey that many schools lack trained teachers. A large majority of schools do not have at least one trained teacher. The number of untrained teachers is still quite large in the district. There are about 1645 teachers already working in the primary schools in the district and it is not possible to train them by deputing them at a time for training for the usual 9 months course. The efficiency suffers, the quality gradually goes down. The chief educational impute in these schools is the large number of non-matriculate teachers. Most of the primary school teachers of the district are non-matriculate and non-trained. Only 10% of the total teachers have qualification less than high school level and middle passed, rest of them are educated only up to the primary stage. Only 10%-15% of the primary school teachers have the chance to receive training in the different Basic training centres of the State of Assam as there is no training institution for the primary teachers of any type. Due to distance difficulty a section of the local teachers are reluctant to undergo training outside the district. In addition to this, the chief reason of the non-availability of the desired number of teachers is the fact that there is no such number of educated persons to meet the need of the district. Able and well-
educated local persons are rare. So far as the question of women teachers is concerned, they do not even think of working in the interior and village schools. In such a situation the permanent shortage of the male and female teachers in primary schools is quite natural.

In the beginning, the teachers with required qualifications can be selected, no matter whether they are trained or not. Teachers should be encouraged to increase their qualifications or they should be sent to training institutions on Government expenses. They should be provided with more facilities and be attracted to teaching work by making them realise that more honour and respect are for them and that they should raise the standard of teaching. In order to implement it the two or three of training schools should be established in different parts of the district. It is also necessary that the primary schools should be given liberal grant-in-aid to enable them to purchase teaching implements because enthusiastic and trained teachers generally find it difficult to do much in the field of education without them.

8. **Medium of Instruction:**

It is hard to solve this complicated problem of mother-tongue in this hilly district as six languages (English, Bengali, Assamese, Hindi, Bodo and Karbi) are used as the media of instruction in different primary schools of the
district. In this way, it becomes a multi-media district regarding the primary schools. Those areas of the district where Bengali, Assamese, Karbi, Hindusthani and Bodo people live they demand the introduction of their mother-tongue as the medium of instruction in their primary schools. Originally like other districts of Assam, all the primary schools of the district had the Assamese medium. But as different communities began to settle in this hilly district they gradually began to demand their languages as their medium of instruction at least in the primary school stage. The Bodo population has the second position in number in the Karbi populated district of Karbi Anglong. It is interesting to note that Karbi dialect differs from village to village. In some areas, though people actually belong to the Karbi community, in reality, they do not speak the standard Karbi. Rather they prefer to speak Assamese besides their own dialect.

Being a multi-media district in respect of the medium of instruction the little children of the primary schools have to face tremendous difficulty in learning their lessons. As for instance, the Karbi children speak Karbi in their home and day-to-day life and have to learn lessons in Assamese in the Assamese medium schools and English in the English medium schools etc. They speak their respective mother-tongue at home and have to learn lessons through diverse medium of instructions which are foreign languages for the little children. So, it is hard row to hoe for them in gaining the
elementary knowledge of various kinds. On the other hand, the primary school teachers also have to face difficulty in teaching their pupils through these different mediums of instructions which are not their mother-tongues. The teachers also must know the language in which he has to impart lessons to the pupils. If he does not know this particular language it is a difficult task for him to impart lessons to the pupils in it. There is also another problem that after passing the primary schools the little students again have to face serious problem in enrolling themselves in the Middle or High schools where the medium of instruction is only Assamese. There is only one English medium High school (D.A.V. High school) in the district. Generally those students who learnt through Karbi, Bodo, Bengali, Hindi and English medium they find it difficult to get themselves admitted into the Assamese medium Middle or High schools. Now in the Karbi Anglong district the language problem has become very acute. The authority too is helpless as to which language is to be introduced for all as the medium of instruction whether mother-tongue or a regional language. The language question has created a hesitancy and an uncertainty in the educational policy of the primary schools still now. It is found that this problem has not ended so far and still remains unresolved in the district. Regarding the medium of instruction at school stage, there is a unanimous agreement that mother-tongue or the regional language should be the medium of instruction at this stage. It is true that
the foreign medium has put an undue strain upon the nerves of
the little children, makes them cramners and imitators. On
the other hand, the mother-tongue is always acquired by the
child without special efforts, and at the same time he is able
to earn some command over this language. So it becomes easy
for the child to grasp the subject when learnt in his own
mother-tongue. On the contrary if he learns the same subject
in some other language, then he wastes his extra energy in
understanding that language. In conclusion it can be said
that the medium of instruction at the school stage should be
mother-tongue or the regional language only. But being a multi-
liguual district most of the students of Karbi Anglong have to
face difficulty in acquiring knowledges in the primary schools.
Karbi Anglong is a land of many tongues and belonging to
different linguistic families. The situation is further
complicated by the presence of linguistic minorities in
different parts of the district. For them it becomes quite
difficult to learn anything in some other medium of instruction.
The problems are made still complex by the political pressures
on the planners of education.

As the Indian Constitution has rightly and justly
 guaranteed that all children shall receive primary education
in their own mother-tongue, and provide education to the
children of each minority through its own mother tongue.¹ Then

¹. Bhargava, B.P. and R.K. Gupta (Editors), The Constitution
of India, Part XVII, Chapter II, Article No. 350,
p. 138
the question of educating the aboriginal tribes living in jungles or outlying hilly tracts and speaking languages which have no scripts and no literature becomes a uphill task.

The other relevant problem is the "script" - because Karbi dialect (though now it is recognised as language) has no script of its own. And so at first the Assamese script was used but now with the changing modern attitude they prefer to use Roman script instead of Assamese script. Most of the teachers were acquainted with the Assamese script and they found it easy to read and write in this script. But when the Roman script began to be used, a large majority of teachers had to face difficulty in imparting the lessons to the pupils as they were quite ignorant of the Roman letters. How one can imagine that a teacher should know the English language when he is only M.V. or primary pass or quite ignorant of English letters? There are no arrangements for the training of different language teachers in the district. In this way, the teachers as well as the students find difficulty in imparting and acquiring lessons through the foreign language or a different medium of instruction. And it becomes a thorny problem which stands in the development of primary education in the district.

9. Lack of suitable physical facility:

It becomes tough to solve this problem in villages, if not in towns. Karbi Anglong district is mainly a rural and
hilly district where still now 693 villages are without a school. It may be a cause that there is no such number of people in a village for whom at least a school is needed. Allied to the problem of the establishment of schools, there is also the problem of buildings of the schools. At present in this hilly district there are only 15% such school buildings, which can be called proper and adequate. The rest of the schools are of inferior standard and unsuitable for the need. These schools lack sufficient space for seating all the children, accommodation, games and sports materials and necessary equipments. Moreover, these buildings are such that they adversely affect the health of the students because of inadequate warmth and ventilation. Almost all the primary school buildings of Karbi Anglong district except a few are temporary in nature, constructed by local people. A large section of schools have no arrangements for drinking water, urinal or latrine even of a temporary nature. Unattractive school environments always make the little children unwilling to go to school.

In order to solve the problem of physical facility of primary schools of the hilly backward district, the Assam Government and the District Council should provide adequate quantity of material as well as financial grants to the primary schools. Further, encouragement should be given by provincial grants for the establishment of healthy but inexpensive buildings.
10. Lack of compulsory primary education:

The Assam Compulsory Elementary Education Acts extend to the whole of Assam except the autonomous districts. According to the compulsory Primary Education Acts of Assam all the districts except the autonomous hill districts should endeavour to provide universal, free and compulsory education to all children of the age group of 6 to 10 years. The Government have not achieved complete success in this regard. In actual practice it may be pointed out that only a partial success has been achieved in this field.

Compulsory education would involve the adoption of radical social measures such as compulsory attendance of the pupils in the schools, failing it, the parents or guardians should be fined. And in this way, all the children will have the opportunity to receive schooling at the primary level. But due to the non-introduction of compulsory education Act in this hilly and autonomous district, a serious failure of the educational system is noticed. There are some causes of difficulties in applying the compulsory Act in this hilly Karbi Anglong district. The first and most important part of the work is the preparation of the census of the children of school going age. Information regarding girls is much more difficult to obtain than information regarding the boys. Again it is observed that very often the villagers do not assist in the work. They want children to work at home or on the farm. And
when both parents are away from home during the day time to work in the field, the older children of school going age have also to stay at home to take care of the infants. Usually a child of school going age must look after the cattle while they are grazing. After an intensive study of the average school attendance each month for a number of years in a number of villages, it is confirmed that the attendance is fluctuated in accordance with the local agricultural and festival conditions.

With the introduction of universal compulsory education the prejudice against the education of women can be overcome. The backward classes consisting of the aboriginal and hill tribes are also awakened from their long torpor by enlightened leaders who will demand on their behalf, education and other social privileges.

Compulsion will help in cases where the parent can send the child to school but will not. Where they cannot send the child for economic reasons, compulsion will have no application at all and social ameliorative measures must be taken. The thinly distributed population, harsh climate and poor communications are to be found in various degrees in the plains and the tableland also. Natural barriers in the form of thick jungles or streams and rivulets without bridges or fords are a common feature in many parts of the district which prevents the application of compulsory Primary Education Law
to the pupils of these areas. Social causes are also responsible for the non-introduction of universal compulsory Education Law in the district. The multi-lingua medium of the primary schools is the obstacle in the way of introducing compulsory education law. The physical and social environment and the administrative set-up present many difficulties and financial obstacles are so great that there seems to be no hope of surmounting them in the near future.

Unless we can extend educational facilities to small and scattered population in rural and remote areas we cannot enforce compulsory education laws there. The cause of the failure has been the inability to establish suitable machinery to enforce the compulsory laws, specially in the rural and interior areas of the district. Further, the village parent is notoriously ignorant about the ages of his children and so an enumerator is required to "guess" the age of the child in the absence of documentary evidence. In some families only women enumerators are allowed to hold census. It is generally difficult to organise a correct census of the children of school going age in villages. It is essential to devise more suitable methods for holding the census in rural areas and to create a better machinery for the purpose. The small size of the average village, the long distances that often separate them and frequently, the lack of swift means of communication make it imperative to appoint a large number of attendant officers if the whole work of enforcement is to be entrusted
to a cadre of paid officials. In fact, there would have to be more attendant officers than inspecting officers for primary schools because while the later merely visit a school two or three times in a year, the former have to contact every defaulting parents personally before passing an attendance order. In rural areas the problem becomes more difficult. Moreover, the teachers and the committee members are as a rule, unwilling to start prosecutions against their fellow-residents in the locality. The last and probably the most important cause of the failure to enforce compulsory attendance is the failure of the educational system to take into account the economic conditions of the parents. Life will not adjust itself to schools if the school system does not adjust itself to the economic condition of the people, the poor will not be able to receive any education at all.

For the above reasons, the compulsory primary education should be applied to the district of Karbi Anglong for the speedy development of the education of the district. The better results will be obtained if the school committees are authorised to supervise the local school, to lookafter the current and even special repairs to the school building, to grant free studentships, prizes and free educational equipment to poor children etc. If steps on these lines are taken, the village people will begin to take increasing interest in their local schools and very soon an enlightened leadership will be built up to deal satisfactory with some of the thorny problems
of administration of rural education in general and the enforcement of compulsory education in particular. Primary school teachers should play an important role in the enforcement of compulsory education. It is, therefore, essential to train all rural primary teachers in the procedures of enforcing compulsory attendance and education law in the district.