CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION
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Political participation may be defined in various ways. The term ‘Political Participation’ refers to those voluntary activities by which members of a society share in the selection of ruler and, directly or indirectly, in the formation of public policy. Almond and Powell observe, “Political participation can be defined as the involvement of members of society in the decision-making process.”\(^1\) According to Michael Rush and Philip Althoff, “Political participation is the involvement of individuals at various levels in the political systems.”\(^2\)

Thus, the term refers to the activity of private citizens to influence government decision-making. Political participation may vary in degree from one society to another, but typically, they include voting and other electoral activities. The term political participation covers all kinds of activities which involve the people in shaping and influencing the political decision-making process and in the selection of their rulers, casting of votes in elections, making of organised demands on the political system, participating in party politics, participation in political movements, conferences, discussions, strikes and demonstrations, communications with the representatives and other political leaders, involvement in political communication etc. all form part of political participation.\(^3\) Again, participation in a political process has several levels. These are political awareness, disposition to form and hold opinions on public issues, campaigning, voting and contesting for political office, participation in decision making and so on.

No matter which aspect of political participation we consider, a rational bent of mind enjoins responsible participation in a political process.\(^4\) Thus, it is clear that political participation implies the real involvement of people in politics i.e., in

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\(^{2}\) Michael Rush & Althoff, An Introduction to Political Sociology. p-14.


\(^{4}\) Nangla, B K., Political Sociology. Rawat Publications, Jaipur. New Delhi. 1919. p238
power, political activity and process which affects the people in a political system. However, the efforts to influence the decision-making or policy formation process of the government may be legitimate or illegitimate, violent or peaceful, successful or unsuccessful.

Modern political scientists have considered many activities, usually performed by the citizens as ‘political participation’ besides voting. J. L. Woodward and Elmo Roper hold that the following five activities form part of political participation. These are - (i) voting at polls, (ii) supporting possible pressure group by being members of them, (iii) personally communicating directly with legislators, (iv) participating in political party activities and thus acquiring claim over legislators, (v) engaging in habitual dissemination of political opinions through word of mouth communication to other citizens.5

Lester Milbrath divided the activities included in political participation into Gladiatorial activities, Transitional activities and spectator activities. Gladiatorial activities include the activities which are part of routine of political parties such as elections to political post, participations in the elections to legislature, gathering fund for the party, movements to increase membership and organisation of meetings everywhere to form public opinion in its favour etc. Transitional activities include activities of the helpers and well wisher of the political parties such as hearing the lectures of the leaders, donating to the fund of the party and maintaining contacts with the leaders of the party. Spectator category include voting, influencing others vote, participating in political debates, being influenced by political stimuli, wearing badges of the political party and distributing leaflets etc.6

Again, Lester Milbrath has estimated that in American population 1 to 3 percent persons participate in the first type of activity, 7 to 9 percent in the second type activity and 60 percent in the third type of activity. But it is clear that one person

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may not participate in the activity of one category only. It is due to because the
nature of political participation is always changing. Milbrath also said that in
American population 1/3 has no interest in political activities.

“The Center for Study of Developing Societies” has identified the following kinds
of activities which form part of political participation: 1) voting, (2) canvassing
for candidates, (3) getting out voters, (4) organisation of meetings and rallies, (5)
participation in processions, (6) distribution of pamphlets and campaign literature,
(7) other campaign activities, (8) campaign through associations and groups, (9)
attending public meetings and rallies, (10) membership of political parties, (11)
conducting party leaders in resolving problems and (12) conducting government
officials in solving problems.

Political participation also relates to the developmental works and activities.
Through the formulation and implementation of developmental policies and
programmes, government seeks to increase participation in the decision making
process which strengthen the political system in a democratic polity. Country like
India, formulates every policy and programme of the government eyeing on the
more involvement of people in the governmental process. Now, in India, more
stress has been laid on the decentralisation of power which will really empower
the grass root people. Involvement in governmental process through various
institutions of local-self government also makes citizens responsible towards their
rights and duties and also their responsibilities.

As more participation of people in the political process helps in strengthening the
political system, hence, the voting age in India has been reduced from 21 to 18 in
1989 during the period of the then Prime Minister of India, Late Rajiv Gandhi.
Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi had tremendous faith on the potentialities of youth,
therefore, to give more and more chances to the youths of India and to materialize

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7 Ibid, p113.
1995 p189.
his dream of making India one of the strongest nations in the world with the
youths in power he had done this. At present, the youths of India with their active
participation in the decision making process support to the stability of the political
system.

The following table and graph demonstrates the various types of political
participation in the context of American political system. Though there are various
classifications available in this respect, yet the classification of Verba and Nie is
considered as more sophisticated one. Authors of "Politics: An Introduction" have
noted this study indicates an increasing fact that participants tended to be
specialists in a particular mode. This finding has been confirmed more recently in
the work done on political participation in Britain (1992). It is at the background
of American Political system. Analysing this as a background we need to look into
of Indian sphere. In Indian political system too a set of civil society members are active.
We need to examine our socialization process.

**Table: 1.1** Strength of different types of political participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SI No.</th>
<th>Types of political participation</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Those who regularly vote</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Those who always vote</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Those who are active in at least one community organization</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Those who have worked with others in finding solutions to community problem</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Those who have attended to persuade others to vote</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Those who have actively worked for a political party</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Those who have contacted local officials about some problems</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Those who have attended at least one political party meeting in last 3 years</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Those who have contacted a state or national govt about some issues or problems</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Those who have formed a group to solve a community problem</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Those who have given money to a party candidate</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Those who are presently a member of a political party or organization</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Verba & Nie (1972).*
Thus, political participation refers to the active and willing participation of the masses in the political process particularly in decision-making or policy formation process. Political participation does not mean participation in governmental activities only but also participation in the non-governmental and group activities concerned with public issues. It implies active and effective representation in all the decision-making organisations.

It is to be noted that a trend in the opposite direction makes up the case of 'political apathy' that 'refers to a state of withdrawal from or indifference to such activities.'

Awareness and participation are closely related terms. Awareness tends to promote participation while participation in turn would certainly make the participant more politically aware. An understanding of politics creates knowledge about public events, which in turn, creates interest in politics. Political awareness denotes the interest and concern of citizens in public affairs and politics. It is a process by which people keep themselves informed about social, economic and political realities in geographical settings, their political rights and duties, functions of political institutions and more importantly their role out the political institutions.

1.1: Factors Affecting Political Participation:

Political systems differ from one society to another, hence, the involvement of people in the political process of the political system may also differ from one society to another. It is not equal in all the political systems. Participation of people in modern democracies is large as compared to the political systems of the ancient times. The involvement of people in the decision making process of the government i.e., political participation, is duly affected by several important factors. Some of such common factors are psychological factors, socio-economic

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factors, political factors and situational factors which always influence the people mostly to take part in the decision or policy formation process of the government. In every political system the nature and level of political participation is dependent upon several such factors. Some of the important factors are discussed as following.

Political participation is very much dependent upon the psychological factors. Urge for power is the most important psychological factor of political participation. It is true that every man seeks power because through power he can dominate others and winning over others. Love for power and other values always impel people to get involve in the political process to a large extent. Again, in a society where political activities are valuable, more people will take to recourse to political participation. This is a common phenomenon in the day-to-day politics in India. On the other hand, if political activities are abhorred in a society then naturally less people will participate in politics.

Loneliness is another psychological factor, due to which people participate in politics since they want to meet each other. It is a psychological need which compels political leaders to remain politically active till his death, otherwise, he will find life a lonely burden, as they formerly used to be surrounded by people all the time.

Besides psychological factors, social factors are also affecting political participation. Social factors like education, social stratification, sex, race, religion, ethnicity and rural-urban gap are always affecting political participation. Education tends to be the most important social factor which influence political participation in a greater and better way. Education widens man’s field of interests. It also makes man perfect and makes man conscious towards their rights, duties and responsibilities as a good citizen. Therefore, the nature and level of participation in societies which have a high literary rate is always different from a society inhabiting by a majority of illiterates. It has been seen that in the democracies of the West, most of the political leaders are highly educated. But, in
some other countries the trend is almost the opposite. In the United States of 
America, education appears to be the most important factor in voting. Americans 
with high level of formal education are much more likely to vote than those 
having low levels of formal education, apparently because education seem to 
contribute to the belief that citizen should participate on a political level, the 
educated can better negative the complicated registration process in some states.  
Studies by G. M. Conery and H. M. Field have shown that due to the distinction of 
income, even equally educated persons show different rate of political 
participation. On the other hand, J. F. Foscut has shown that in the same 
income group, the political participation differs according to their educational 
level. Education is, undoubtedly the most important factor of political 
participation. Because through education people can make themselves conscious, 
aware and informed about the day to day happenings, especially, the political 
happenings which indirectly induce them to take part in politics. Much empirical 
research was done in the United States and much of them were connected to the 
Michigan Survey Research Centre, especially under the leadership of Warne 
Miller and Philip Converse. These investigators also collaborated with colleagues 
outside the United States, especially in Europe providing further studies 
addressing participation especially voting. Under the leadership of Stein Rokkan, 
Scandinavian, scholars produce substantial body of work on participation as part 
of their more extensive studies of political behaviour. These studies pointed a 
clear socio-demographic and psychological picture of voters (and occasionally of 
participants in campaigns). In contrast to non-participants, participants in general 
have more money and education, were more interested in politics, more partisan, 
more efficacious, more likely to be men, more involved in organisation, and more 
rooted in their community.

10 The Concise Encyclopaedia of Democracy, pp293-94
11 Dr. Vatsyayan, Political Sociology, p116
12 Ibid. 116
Sciences, El Sevier Sciences Ltd Vol -16, 2001, pp11078-80
Being an important social factor of political participation, education has been adopted as the fundamental right of the citizen in the developed as well as the developing countries of the world.

Besides education, other social factors such as caste, religion, sex and language also play an important role in influencing political participation. In developing countries like India all these factors appear to be affecting always in moulding political behaviour and increasing political participation. Caste based politics, caste based elections, caste consideration in the formation of the government are the realities of Indian politics. In the American political system, the level of political participation among the Negroes is low. The Whites in the U.S.A. form the basic core of political stratum. Ethnicity and urban-rural gap is always a factor of political participation. Leadership very often remains in the hands of the urban elites. In so many countries in the West, leadership belongs to the higher income group but in poor countries political leaders may belong to the middle or lower classes. People of higher income group are more interested in politics than the lower income group because higher income provides leisure, lessens burden and relaxes anxieties. Therefore higher income Americans are more likely to vote than low income Americans. In India people take interest in politics for various reasons.

But, it is clear that income has no proportionate relationship to political participation. Studies by Campbell, Gurin and Miller have shown that in U.S.A. the level of political participation does not increase with of income. On the other hand, it cannot be said that increase in national per capita income leads to increase in political participation. In the words of R.B. Lane, "Cross-cultural and cross-state data do not at all support the view that national or state wealth and electoral participation are related in the same way as individual wealth as participation in the United States and throughout the world." Social status, the other social

14 The Concise Encyclopaedia of Democracy, pp293-94.
15 Dr. Vatsyayan. Political Sociology, p117
16 Ibid. p117
factor, also influence political participation. It is seen that people belonging to lower social status show lower rate of political participation as compared to the people of higher social status. In British politics, the role of social status as a determinant of political participation is clearly reflected in the British party system, House of Lords, Privy Council and Monarchy.\footnote{Ghai U.R.; Comparative Politics & Govt p196.}

Again, data gathered from U.S.A., Great Britain, Italy, France, Germany, Mexico, Sweden, Norway, Japan and India show that males have higher rate of political participation than the females. Females are more conservatives, detached, and less interested in politics. This is due to the fact that they are more involved with their families. This is also due to the reason that the females have ethics, more stability and higher cultural value which make them misfit in politics.\footnote{Dr. Vatsyayan. Political Sociology, p117.} Women in India avoid politics due to association of criminals and money required in politics. Studies have shown that among females also, political participation is less among unmarried girls as compared to married women. Several studies have shown that married males and females show higher rate of political participation in comparison to unmarried males and females.\footnote{Ibid, p117}

Socio-economic development, which is affecting political participation to a great extent always also ensures involvement of large numbers of people in the decision making process. Democratic countries of the world in contemporary times regard socio-economic development as the most important norms for the development of the nation. On the other hand, modern democracies try to turn the swing into reality that “political democracy is meaningless without economic democracy” with inmeasurable and quickest socio-economic progress. So, the main motto of every democratic country is to establish political equality and social justice for achieving the goal of the system. The government of every political system of modern world whether developed or developing, lays stress on achieving more and more socio-economic development of its people. Because, only through socio-
economic progress stability of the system, unity and harmony among the people 
can be brought the political system in the much needed society today. Studies 
indicate that people are more involved in politics in industrialised urbanised 
societies than in the rural and agricultural society having primitive economic 
system

Developing countries like India with more population and plurality of needs 
designed to implement various programme with the object in view to bring 
quicker socio-economic development. These have been given more importance 
eyeing on the more involvement of people in the progress of government 
Realising this fact, the framers of the Indian Constitution included certain chapters 
in the constitution such as Fundamental Rights, Directive Principles of State 
Policies etc which are working or helping in bringing about socio-economic 
progress of the state

However, there are some exceptional instances where the level of political 
participation does not depend on socio-economic development of the people. Best 
examples are China and North Vietnam in this regard where we notice high 
involvement of people in the decision making process in spite of belonging to the 
socially and economically backward classes of the society. Studies have shown 
that some under-developed countries represent a high rate of voting participation 
than economically most developed countries like U.S A

Besides, socio-economic factors, political factors are always the major 
determinants of political participation too. Nature of political system, the 
constitution of the state, organisation of the government, nature and organisation 
of political parties, nature of press and mass media etc. are all the determinants of 
political participation. People of a political system are regarded as the basic force 
of a democratic country, hence, they are encouraged to participate in the process 
of the government freely and actively. The constitution provides various rights to 
them, especially, the political rights e.g., right to vote, right to contest elections, 
right to hold public offices, freedom to criticize the policies and programmes of
the government without any fear etc which will ensure involvement of people in large numbers in the process of the government. Developing countries like India to ensure more and more involvement of people in the political process without any discrimination among the people on the ground of place of birth, sex, race, religion and caste etc. Justice - social, economic and political have been established in the Preamble to the Constitution of India as one of the basic objective and ideal of the constitution.

Political parties also play an important role in participation. Political parties communicate opinions and views of the people to the government. They also highlight the problems of the people and suggest remedies. Political parties impart political education to the people through various activities such as organising public meetings and rallies, through election campaigning, with the formation of the government and also publishing its election manifestos. On the other hand, political parties teach how to choose a perfect candidate, propagate in the election constituencies, explain the process of voting, helps in taking political decision, extends cooperation to making election a success and finally making political system stable and strong through peoples' large participation. Again political parties wage political movements which sometimes involve even the most detached persons. Political parties also works as agents of politicalisation, i.e., the task of transforming political culture from one generation to the next. It means that political parties introduce the new generation with the values, beliefs, attitudes, norms and goals of the political system, which in turn, helps in making the political system stable and strong and also increases the interest of the people to participate in the activities of the political system.

The level of competitions among political parties also affect the turn out in nations where parties are competitive, participation tends to be high, where a single party, constantly wins election, turn out is low. In parliamentary democracies, the presence of a large number of political parties tends to discourage turn out because voters realize that the actual struggle for power occurs as party bargain in the legislature after the election. Moreover, countries with unicameral system after
having higher turn out than do democracy with strong upper house In a unicameral system the election results are more likely to lead the decisive outcome.  

It is true that political participation is not uniform in all the societies of the world and a section of society usually abstains from participating in political life, in the ancient Greek city states, for example, the right to participate in any form of political activity was limited to the adult male citizens, women foreigners and slaves were excluded from participation Likewise, the right to vote was limited to male citizens. As like that Switzerland has long been known as a country of genuine democratic participation In Switzerland still we find some remains of pure democracy. Some of the Swiss cantons elect their officials and pass laws in annual open-air meeting But no better evidence of complete citizen participation in government politics can be found.

It can be said that in most of the political systems of the world people take part in politics with great interest and remain active in public affairs But they do not constitute the large portion of the society. This is also true in case of the countries with good and popular government and in those countries were maximum opportunities are given for political participation.

1.2: Statement of the Problem:

Students constitute one of the most dynamic and progressive components of all societies. By virtue of their concentration in educational centres and homogeneity, education and training, youthful idealism and unbounded energy, comparative freedom from job and family responsibility and active political awareness they present an easily mobilisable compact mass which, when harnessed, has generated considerable force or power that has produced an immediate impact on society and

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20 The Concise Encyclopaedia of Democracy  
21 The Concise Encyclopaedia of Democracy, pp293-94  
22 Dillon Conleyh, Leiden Carl, Stewart Paul D, Introduction to Political Science (An East & West Edition), 1962, p233
influence the pace of social change. "Students as a stratum are more responsive to
political trends, to changes in mood, to opportunities for action than almost any
other group in the population." Again, students' politics contribute an important
area of inquiry in social sciences. Scholarly interest in the role of students in
politics has grown immensely since the sixties reflecting the political importance
of students in many countries.

Student's political activism has become a global phenomenon. Despite their "fitful
and transient" character, students movements have basically affected "the history
of our contemporary world." Social revolutions have sprang for students
movements, while governments in a number of countries have failed in recent
years mainly due to massive students protest. The emergence of massive and
militant students movements has been one of the dramatic and crucial social
phenomena during the decade of 1960s.

They have proved themselves as crucial political force in many countries and
played a key role in political change. They have convinced many in most
countries that behind the wall of the campus there is a proven political force, a
potentially invaluable in political struggles. In developing societies, student
activism has actually brought down government and forced some of them to revise
policies. In the developed countries while the student movement has not
succeeded in toppling the governments, it has focused attention and the major
problems facing their society and educational system. "They have dramatized the
problem of society and the university, and in some cases have been sufficiently
effective to precipitate political change."

Students have been in the fray in many countries both democratic and dictatorial,
and student movements are not unknown even in totalitarian states. But the

24 Altbach. Philip G., "India & the World University Crisis" in P.G. Altbach (ed) 'The Student
underdeveloped nations stand out prominently and seem to provide a fertile soil for student unrest and indiscipline. In many parts of Asia, Africa and Latin America, students are a force to be reckoned with. With far from ignoring them, governments and leaders of opposition go far in conceding the student community and seek to win them over.

Students' participation in politics in India is not a recent phenomenon. It actually started much before independence. In response to the call of the eminent leaders of the time, students boycotted their classes and jumped into the freedom movement with abundant zeal and enthusiasm at their command. It was during the years between 1921-1942 that the politicization of the largest numbers of students took place. Many students were drawn to the civil disobedience movement through their personal attraction towards leaders like Gandhi, Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Jay Prakash Narayan, or because of their sense of patriotism generated by the movements.  


Political leaders especially Left wing, organised student wings and held classes to give political education. The Quit India movement of 1942 surpassed all the previous movements against the British governments and brought the largest number of students to the political foreground.

The process of politicization of the student community took place at different ideological levels, students under the Congress leaders, students under the influence of Socialists, students under the influence of Forward Block and students under the influence of Communists. A significant number of leaders belonging to different political parties today were significant agitators in those days.

After more than five decades of independence there have been lots of debates about the functioning of Indian democracy. A group of academics are critical about the functioning of the representative government. After the enactment of
Indian constitution in 1950, representative institutions have been slowly evolving over the past half-century. As a legacy of colonial power we also inherited number of representative institutions. But the seed of democratic ideas was sown properly with the rise of national movement under the leadership of Gandhiji. As a leader of national movement, Gandhiji brought common people in the forefront and turned the movement into a mass movement where the students also an integral part.

The awakening started among the students about the exploitation of the colonial rule in India when students became aware about various revolutions like the American war of independence and the French revolution. These revolutions encouraged them to fight against the colonial system. This is a global phenomenon. Students all over the world are in the forefront in different social movements. The students of India also became the part and parcel in all the phases of India's national movement.

Students of Assam in spite of its geographical situation were active participants of the freedom movement in India. Though the students studying in Kolkata played the leading role in the very beginning and the formation of 'Assam Association' in 1903 also held in this regard but total participation of Assam’s students in the freedom movement in India started with the formation of Assam Chatra Sanmilan in 1916. And till the day of India's independence the student community of Assam followed the guidance provided to them by Indian national Congress and Assam Pradesh Congress Committee while fighting against the colonial rule of the British. Unfortunately, historians of India did not pay much attention to this region while writing history of the freedom struggle. It is therefore important to find out the level of awareness of the student community regarding the movement as well to the political process of the country today.

In independent India too, student community have been playing an important role. In Assam, students were involved in different movements. Assamese students had to draw the attention of the central government to set up a refinery in Assam in
spite of all the crude oil Assam had. Similarly, students played an active role in Official Language Movement regarding the issue of Medium of Instruction etc. Among these, the six-years long 'Asom Movement' of 1979 is worth mentioning. This student movement had lot of significance. It is specially to be noted that after the signing of 'Assam Accord' between the then Prime Minister Late Rajiv Gandhi and the AASU leaders on August 1985, another regional party taking the name of 'Asom Gana Parishad' was formed and it formed the government in Assam with a Chief Minister who was the university student at that time.

With the reduction of voting age from 21 to 18 years in 1989, we find that leadership is more or less concentrated with the younger generation. Thus, our main objective will be to analyse the mindset of the youth particularly in the area of political decision-making. Students are very important component even during the freedom movement and they fight tremendously against the foreign rule which we have mentioned earlier. If a group of students have lost their faith in present political system and started revolting against the same, we find to analyse the reason behind. Thus our study will be an attempt to look into the behaviour of the young students who have become voters for the first time. We will be interested in finding out the socialisation process, their commitment to the society as well as their interest in the political process. Though numerous study and student participations in politics have already being done in India and Assam but specific study in this field has not yet been undertaken at Sonitpur, hence, there is no report about student participation in politics in Sonitpur district. Therefore, we have chosen this subject to find out the level of involvement of students in politics and to find out the appropriate result of their political participation.

1.3: Aims and Objectives of the Present Study:

The present age of ours can be regarded as the age of democracy. Hence, most of the countries in the world have adopted democracy in their political system. On the other hand, participation of people in the decision-making or policy formation process is a must in a democratic polity. Political participation is a term which
covers wide range of activities other than voting and contesting election. So that in contemporary time student's participation in politics is gradually increasing.

It is a matter of great importance that the trend of students participation in Indian politics has changed after the reduction of voting age from 21 to 18 in the term of the then Prime Minister of India Late Rajiv Gandhi in 1989. And then a vast majority of young Indians became shareholder of the decision making process. In other parts of the country some study has been done on students involvement in politics. In Assam very little work has been done on the subject. Therefore, we propose to make an in-depth enquiry about the degree of political participation of this group of students of colleges belonging to 18-20 age group. The basic objective of my research will be to collect information on the subject and to find out their socialization process, and finally to find out the differences made by this group of young voters in our political process.

1.4: Hypotheses of the Study:

1) Students belonging to the age groups of 18-20 are not politically active
2) Political parties make use of these groups in the time of election
3) Neither college education nor family help in the political socialization process

1.5: Methodology:

The study will mainly be a combination of historical and empirical one, in course of investigation observation as well as interview method will be adopted in order to produce data in the relevant field. A questionnaire will be prepared and used for the purpose. To make our research a success we will collect data both from primary and secondary sources. Different official documents relevant published and unpublished works, journals and all other information to be collected from different sources. Therefore, to have a clear understanding of the problem both
qualitative and quantitative method will be adopted for the research. After collecting data, computer analysis will be done.

1.6: Sampling:

Sampling is the most important technique in social science research. As we plan to study the political participation of under-graduate students in Sonitpur district, hence to gather information instead of considering each and every student of the district, only a small portion will be selected for analysis from which conclusion will be drawn. Students of 7 Grant-in-Aid colleges (now provincialised) of Sonitpur district will be our target group. Of these colleges, around 210 students will be considered for collection of information where students of ST/SC and OBC category will be the considered category. These colleges are based both in the urban as well as rural areas, therefore, sample will be considered both from the Urban and Rural colleges.

1.7: Schemes of Chapters:

A scientific and systematic chapterization is always an integral part of research work without which a researcher cannot draw a fruitful conclusion of the research. With the objective in view, we have outlined a scheme of chapterization which will be included a total 6 chapters.

Chapter - One:

The first chapter relates to “Introduction” about my research work. A broad discussion of Aims & Objectives of the study will be covered in this chapter. Hypotheses of the study, Methodology, Sampling, Scheme of Chapters, profile of the study of the area, and also the Review of Literature will be stated promptly in this chapter.
Chapter - Two:
This chapter entitled "Political Awareness and Students Community" will deal with the theoretical background of my research. In this chapter, the first unit will be related with the social movement. The second unit will deal with student movement and the third unit will discuss broadly the role of students in international perspectives and the last part of this chapter will elaborately discuss the origin of the student-awakening and the beginning of student activities in India.

Chapter - Three:
The third chapter entitled "Role of Students in the Freedom Movement of India" also includes 5 units. The first unit will discuss the history of students' involvement in various social activities. The rest unit will discuss at length the involvement of students in the freedom struggle of India.

Chapter - Four:
Chapter Four entitled "Role of the Students of Assam in the Freedom Movement of India" will mainly be related with the role played by Assamese students in the freedom struggle of India. The chapter includes a total 9 units.

Chapter - Five:
The Chapter 5 entitled "Role of the Students of Assam since Independence" will broadly elaborate the role that has been played by the students of Assam since independence. This chapter also includes a total 7 units.

Chapter - Six:
Chapter 6 entitled "Political participation of new generation of students" is the core chapter of my research. In this chapter all the data collected from the seven
GIA colleges (now provincialised) of Sonitpur district regarding the level of political participation of students has been thoroughly analysed in this chapter.

Chapter: Seven

It will be the last chapter entitled "In search of Remedies and Alternatives" of my research work. Summary, some distinctive feature of the study and suggestions will be included in the final chapter.

1.8: Review of Literature:

We had read and consulted several books and journals for our study. Besides, we have done library works in different libraries in the country for the purpose. Though, we have found valuable books written on Social Movements, Labour Movements, Peasant Movements, freedom Movements of different countries in the world and India but we have not found books related to our subject as we expected. But some of the books and journals have helped us to a great extent.

"Student Movement in Assam" (1996) by Prof. Meeta Deka can be regarded as the pioneering work in the field of student movement in Assam. Prof. Deka has depicted a clear picture of student movement covering a century (1853 to 1985) in her book. She highlighted the socio-economic, political and cultural root of student protests in Assam and identified the factors that motivated them into political action. In the book some special features of student movement in Assam were also highlighted and compared the same with various student movements of India and international level. Sheila Bora's "Student Revolution in Assam" (1992), is another outstanding work which has helped us to a great extent in our research work. The book only discussed broadly the role played by the Assamese students in the freedom movement in India. It contains the role played by the students from the time of formation of Assam Chatra Sanmilan in 1916 to the time of India's Independence in 1947. Some burning issues of Assam such as Language issue of 1836, migration problem of Assam and the active part played
by the students and people of Assam for the establishment of Assam University (now Gauhati University) in Assam have broadly discussed in the book. “Assam in the Freedom Movement” (1991) by Prof. Anuradha Dutta, “Bharator swadhinata Andulanat Assam” (1999) by Dr. Sagar Baruah, ‘Political history of Assam” (1999) Vol-I, (et.al) by H.K. Barpujari, “Landmarks of the freedom struggle in Assam” (1998) by K.N Dutt, “Political History of Assam” - Vol-II (et.al) A.C. Bhuyian and Sibopada De, “A Comprehensive History of Assam” (1997) by S.L.Baruah, are some of the notable works which have helped us tremendously in collecting data for our research which were used while discussing the heroic role played by the students of Assam in the freedom movement of India. But it was also found that all the writers of these books have viewed the subject matter from their own angles. “History of the Assamese Movement since 1947” (1990) written by Dilip Kumar Chottopadhyay is another relevant work in the field of Assamese Movements that arouse after Independence in Assam Mr Chottopadhyay discussed various important issues such as Food Crisis, Official Language Movement, Medium of Instruction Movement, and finally the famous Assam Movement in his book. Though the book has not highlighted promptly the role played by the students of Assam in these movements but in the last chapter of his work, the writer elaborately discussed the pros & cons of Assam Movement of 1979-85 with appropriate data “The Assam Movement : Class Ideology and Identity” (1993) by Prof. Monirul Hussain is another outstanding work on Assam Movement. The book beautifully describes the social bases of the Movement with relevant data. Prof Sandhya Goswami’s “Language Politics in Assam” (1990) is also an important work which helped us in our research while studying language movement in Assam. “A study of the role of Assamese students in the struggle for freedom in India (1826-1947)”, 2001, is another book written by Dr Ramesh Chandra Kalita on student movement. In the book the writer broadly discusses the role played by the students of Assam in the freedom movement of India. Much stress has been given by the writer on the role played by the leftist students in the freedom struggle of India in the book. Anil Rajimwale’s “History of Student Movement in India” (2001), is another outstanding book written on the student organizations and student movements in India. The book highlighted the
beginning of student activism in the pre-independence India. Workings of various organizations for the development of Indian societies in the pre-independent India also thoroughly discussed in the book "History of Modern Orissa" (1989) by Mr. J.K. Shamal is another book which helped us in our research for gathering knowledge about the role played by students of Orissa in the freedom movement as well as in social movements in Orissa in contemporary times Kalinkngkor Dutta's "Freedom Movement in Bihar" (1958), also helped us to know the role played by the students of Bihar in the freedom struggle of India as well as their role at present time "Role of Students in the Freedom Movement (Special reference to Madras Presidency), 1990, written by V. Sankaran Nair, is another important work in the field of student movement in India. The book specially focus the role played by the students of South India in struggle for freedom. Bipan Chandra's "India's Struggle for Independence" (1997), is another pioneering work in the field of freedom movement of India The book thoroughly discussed the pros and cons of India's freedom struggle "The Rise of Modern China" (2000), by C. Y. Hsu, is a book of international repute which elaborately depicted the tremendous role played by the students of China in transforming the political system of China from primitive to a modern one. A.C. Singh's (ed.), "Youth Movement in North East India" (1995), is another book which highlighted the problems and prospects of the youth movements in the North East Region "Nationalist Upsurge in India" (2000), edited by A.C. Bhuyan, is a relevant work In the book the role played by the students of Assam in the freedom movement of India discussed in general and the revolutionary role played by them discussed specially in the book V.R. Trivedi's "Documents on Assam" (1995), Vol-I, is another important book The book included all the important documents on Assam relating to various movements and issues which helped us greatly in our research

1.9: Profile of the Area of the Study:

Sonitpur is an administrative district in the state of Assam in India. Sonitpur lies between the extension of 27°1'5" North to 26°30'38" North Latitude and
There are three sub-divisions in the district such as Tezpur, Biswanath Chariali and Gohpur. Tezpur is the district headquarters. The district occupied an area of 5324 sq. km and has a population of 1,677,874 (as of 2001 census). The boundaries of the district are as follows: In the northern part of the district, there is Arunachal Pradesh, in the southern part there is Brahmaputra river, in the eastern part there is Lakhimpur district and in the western part of there is Darrang district.