SECTION VI

CHAPTER : XVI

SUMMARY FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

* Summary findings
* Suggestions
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Summary Findings:

The present study is based into the background of agricultural process in plains area of Assam, the area of field investigation is in the district of Barpeta and Nagaon in the state of Assam. The study is being conducted on the basis of case study and survey method. The purpose of the study is to know the practices adopted by different group of people like immigrant Muslim, Tribal like Boro-Kabha, Rajbanshi and mixed people of different villages in the study area.

The data were collected from 600 sample households belonging to thirty villages under Nagaon and Barpeta district with district wise representation of fifteen villages covered by three blocks and five villages in each block represented by twenty numbers of households in each village.

The field study is carried out to find out the variation of production, income and spending in respect of study villages. On the basis of practices, investment, cost of production, generation of income, cropping pattern, processing of raw crops, economic viability of the improved agricultural operation are studied. The study
is conducted in two different periods viz. between the year 1985 and 1993 with a view to know the changes in the study area.

Total six sections consists of seventeen chapters excluding alongwith an introduction are designed to cover every possible aspects relating to the agricultural practices and development of households of small, marginal and large size group of holding in respect of entire state of Assam in general and Nagaon and Barpeta district in particular.

Chapter I under section I discussed living pattern and socio-economic life of ethnic group. Chapter II of same section discussed regarding the occupational structure. From the study in this chapter it is clear that occupation is confined in agriculture within the period between the year 1985 and 1993 in both the district. Participation in services, business and trade is limited.

From Chapter III, under section II, it is clear that expenditure on inputs is limited, however trend of fertilizer, pesticide consumption is more among the sample villages of immigrant Muslim people of Nagaon district with comparision to Barpeta district. From the study in this chapter it is also clear that expenditure per sample household is at Rs. 131.00 and bighawise expenditure is at
Rs. 11.00 at Nagaon district and at Rs. 64.00 per sample household and at Rs. 5.00 per bigha at Barpeta district. Small section of mixed populated village at Barpeta and a few number of immigrant village of Nagaon District are responsive to high yielding varieties seed and fertilizer. From Chapter IV under the same section it is clear that cropping intensity between the period 1985 and 1993 is remain more or less same in both the district. Area allocation against jute cultivation is less among the mixed populated village and among immigrant village is more at Barpeta District. Allocation of area against vegetable crops among the mixed populated villages at Barpeta district and at immigrant Muslim village at Nagaon District is more. No noticeable change is observed between the period 1985 and 1993 in respect of production. From Chapter V under the same section, it is clear that processing of raw crop by the peasant at immigrant village is separate with comparision to other group. Sample households at immigrant Muslim villages cultivate mixed crop in the same plot of land, cultivate same crops even three times in the same plot of land in a year. From Chapter VI under the same section, it is clear that awareness to new agricultural technology is poor among the sample households, however sample households of immigrant villages use fertilizer, pesticide disproportionately, no extension official, to guide them. There is possibility of environmental hazards due to ignorance regarding
other side effect. From Chapter VII under the same section, it is clear that farm mechanisation is poor in study area. Even rich households has no initiative to apply. Households of large size group of holding lease out the land to the tenant and hardly invest on mechanisation at the same time tenant has no capacity to invest. In study area at Nagaon district number of holding under 15 bigha is 80 percent and area covered by 37 percent out of total holding and area of holding and rest 63 percent of land area are at the hands of 20 percent number of holdings. Similarly in Barpeta district in the same size group of land 89 percent number of holding covered by 60 percent area of land out of total holding and area of holdings and rest 40 percent area of land are at the hands of 11 percent number of holding. The holdings are fragmented and subdivided. Under this situation mechanisation is a problem.

From Chapter VIII under section III, it is clear that net return is negligible due to cost of production among the households of small size group of holding. From this chapter it is also clear that the sources of income is the result of involvement of family labour which may be treated as wages of labour only. From Chapter IX under the same section, it is clear that residual income is negligible and found better at immigrant Muslim villages. From Chapter X under the same section, it is clear that Productive Expenditure is negligible except immigrant
Muslim Villages of Nagaon District. At mixed populated villages, household hardly spent on productive side except a small section of villages of Barpeta District. Younger groups of some of the households under large size group of land holding spent on non essential items and no initiative to spend on productive items. Though they earned surplus, yet the households hardly spent on productive side. This is the negative approach. From Chapter XI under the same section, it is clear that purchase of land is limited, credit support for capital transaction is poor. New investment among the sample households did not exceed the replacement requirement of capital as a result no progress.

From Chapter XII, under section IV, it is clear that rural cooperation failed to serve to the sample households. From chapter XIII of the same section, it is clear that households faced difficulties to sell their produces. At Barpeta district households sold vegetables at Rs. 20.00 to 25.00 per quintal when retailer were not available. In case of Nagaon District, households found some advantages due to good market link with Tezpur, Karbi Anglong, Guwahati, Dimapur, due to location of sample village nearest to National highway.

From Chapter XIV, under section V, it is clear that households hardly got any landlord status of land though there is established provision at Assam (temporarily
settled area) Tenancy Act, 1971. Very often half share of produce were collected by the landlords from the tenant though there is a provision of one fifth share between the landlord and tenants. From Chapter XV, under same section it is clear that various schemes were undertaken due to plan allocation yet at study area, no such impact found except a small section of household of large size group of holding who were benefitted.

From the study area, it is clear that the households has limited occupation and mainly depends on agriculture. Service, trade and business is negligible, confinement in agriculture of the households of lower size groups of holding and as a result these sections have less capacity to purchase input and cropping pattern, crop production remains same. Processing of raw crops are different in different localities among different group of people. Net return from agriculture is less, spending on productive side is almost nil or negligible in most of the sample villages. New investment below what is required for replacement of capital. Institutional reforms like land reforms rural co-operative, market are not favourable.

On the other hand though the households of large size group of holding are involved even some of them at services, trade and commerce and though they have the capacity to purchase input, yet they are not interested to spend on productive enterprise. Some of them, especially of
young section spent rather on non essential items. These young persons are even allured by easy money. This becomes the practices, productive side is being neglected. Even some of them derived benefits from plan allocation from different schemes, but not involved properly with the productive enterprises. This is the position of mixed populated villages. Needs of tribal villages are limited and spending on productive side is also limited. Some development at Nagaon District among the immigrant villages is observed. Their investment exceeded the replacement requirement of capital. They purchase inputs and their cropping pattern is also rising. Disproportionate use of fertilizers and pesticides by these group is a matter of serious concern. These groups knows nothing abut the possible danger at the environment. No guidance from agricultural extension authority in respect of application of fertilizer and pesticide is received by this groups. Their occupation is not confined in agriculture alone but spread to trade, business and other activities like wage labour also. Service is negligible. The case is not similar in Barpeta district among the immigrant Muslim people due to flood and erosion and inadequate infrastructure, isolation from town. Their investment is poor. Cropping pattern is underdeveloped, production and income is limited. They are facing poverty and no other alternative except living on wages labour which are also not available in the villages.
This situation can be enlightened throughout Assam. Occupation pattern is confined in agriculture where about 70 percent people are engaged in agriculture. Other sector like Horticulture, livestocks, dairy, pisiculture is underdeveloped. Cottage and village industries are about to finish. Service, trade and commerce is limited. Income pattern is limited which is earned from agriculture. Peasants of Assam find it very difficult to purchase inputs like fertilizers, pesticides, machine, high yield seed. Adoption of new agricultural technology is rare among the peasants of lower size group of holding due to low residual income. Low residual income is due to contact system with landlord for lease in land. This has eroded the income of lower size group of peasants. Moreover, the peasant of lower size group of holding are forced on distress sale and compelled to sell just after the harvest at very low price and forced to take loan from the rich man at higher rate of interest. New investment hardly replace the requirement of capital.

Land reform measure are not implemented in the interest of tenants. Creation of favourable market are rare. Plan allocation has not benefited them. Though their is a established extension machinery, yet their services are rare and not at all satisfactory.

On the other hand households of large size group holding through their occupation is not limited in agriculture
alone, other occupations are also not uncommon; yet their investment on agriculture is negligible. They lease out the land and get half share. This practices are more or less common in almost all the places of Assam. This has brought net income more to the landlord. A recent development is that increased income among some of the households are being utilized for non essential items which are spent by young sections. They are also allured by easy money, productive side is being neglected. The income earned by these groups are eroded on luxurious items and even influent by 'Demonstration effect' which are as a result of influence of the western living, life style of others. The situation thus developed is a clear indication of retardation of production.

Suggestions:

This study among the sample households of Nagaon and Barpeta district shows that the households of large size group of holding except of small section of villages under mixed populated villages of Barpeta District and immigrant Muslim villages of Nagaon district spent less on productive side. Most of the households from large size group of holding lease out the land to the tenants and investments are not made at the productive field. On the otherhand the households of small size group of holding has less capacity to invest on productive field.
Generation of income from the households of small size group of holding is necessary to gear up production. Creation of employment in the rural based industry is a solution. Diversification of the rural economy can help to absorb the sizeable section of small size group of holding. Investment on production will be possible only when the households of small size group of holding get the alternative source of income from other sectors.

Investment should be exceeded to replacement requirement of capital and this will be possible at the alternative arrangement of employment for the households of lower size group of holdings. The alternative arrangement like rural based industries will create favourable market for the agricultural produces. Land reforms measures should be practically implemented in favour of tenants. Status of land should be given to the actual tillers of the lands. At the same time rural co-operative, Farmer's Co-operative should be practically viable to support credit, inputs and other necessary helps to gear up production.

Change of socio-economic life will change the outlook irrespective of different groups of people like Boro-Rabha, immigrant Muslim, Rajbanshi, and mixed populated community.
Capital intensive nature in agriculture can help to increase production but in respect of application, some experiences from different sources are essential to examine. High cost of technology though is helpful to increase production, yet all effects should be counted not individual point of view alone but point of society and environment should also be examined to derive maximum benefits in short as well as in long run, otherwise Capitalistic farming will harm more than benefit to the society.

In the context of necessity to meet the growing demand of population, to create new demand to industrial goods more production and income is necessary. Hence modern technology should be adopted on consideration in respect of social development and environment.

This suggestion will be applicable throughout Assam in the context of the situation that in majority of the area investment does not exceed to replacement requirement of capital as a result progress in respect of production is limited. Under such situation modern light technology with utilization of indigenous resources are helpful in entire Assam to meet the growing demand of food and other raw materials to the industries.

However the following specific suggestions are
mentioned for the development of agriculture.

1. Mixed farming must be encouraged. Training like dairying, goat rearing, pig rearing, sheep rearing, poultry keeping etc. should be given.

2. The training of small farmers in the modern agricultural technologies should receive greater attention which is received less at present.

3. The modern communication media such as videos, television, cassette recorder etc. have also to be used to popularise the new technology including all other social and environmental effect from new agricultural technology.

4. Profitable market is essential to provide incentive to the cultivators.

5. Irrigation facilities to small/marginal farmers should be given priorities. The irrigation from the source of surface water nearby agricultural field or river should be encouraged. Instead of large/medium irrigation where involvement of heavy investment along with long gestation period also possibility of greater indirect loss to the society as a whole should not as far as practicable be encouraged.
6. Development and popularisation of low cost farm technology is essential. Technologies which will be suitable to dryland areas shall also be developed especially to overcome the problems of frequent monsoon failures and lack of adequate irrigation water.

7. Transportation, grading and marketing of farm produce of small farm have to be solved. The farmers have to be educated as well as infrastructure should be developed to help them.

8. Supply of credit in support of input; technical guidance and supervision is essential to small and marginal farmers.

9. All inputs and credits needs of small farmers should be routed through single agency.

10. Mixed cropping in the same plot of land, for example bringal and other vegetables like potato may be encouraged.

11. In a year vegetables crops like cabbage etc. may be grown even three times at the same plot of land, which may be encouraged.

12. Formation of small farmers organisation or Farmers societies or Farmers Co-operative will facilitate
adopt in of new technologies as well as help in the efficient distribution of inputs.

13. The different between small and big farmers are significant and attitude, value and belief towards new technologies as well as the farming have to be taken into account in the overall developmental programmes of small farms.

14. Close interaction between scientists and small farmers in respect of small farm family's circumstances is needed. Scientists should understand the local condition.

15. Trials must be conducted on the field of small farms before the experimental recommendation are released.

16. The NGO (Non Governmental Organisation) should be encouraged to provide necessary help.

17. The extension organisation should be reoriented to the needs of the small farmers. Extension officials should be entrusted with specific responsibility.

18. Spending habit according to the needs of the society should be encouraged. Spending on gold, ornaments, other socio-religious festivals should also be discouraged.
19. Land reforms measures should be practical in shape so that the tiller can get the status of land. Right of land is the security to the cultivation and incentive of production.

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