Chapter IX

CONCLUSION

The selection of a major tribe from Morigaon district for the present study impact of modern education on the traditional life of the Tiwas is an example of regional cultural change in tribal areas of Assam. The area of study represents an overall socio-cultural change among the tribes of our country. Obviously, the findings of the study will be the suitable indicators to support the similar propositions from the tribal study of traditional and cultural diversification in other tribal areas of the country.

Morigaon, is one of the most backward district of Assam where major area is covered by Tiwa people. The vast majority of the Tiwa tribe is still dependent on the local resources for their survival. Traditional occupations of the Tiwas are cultivation, agricultural labour, hunting, fishing, silk rearing and handloom. All these occupations enable them to survive because of the availability of natural resources. The geographical conditions and population growth among the Tiwas have systematized the agriculture of this region and the use of modern technology has transformed the traditional practices (Chapter II).
The Lalungs belongs to the Bodo race like Bodo Kacharies, Moran, Chutia, Rabha, Mech, Garo etc. They called themselves Tiwa as they belonged to Mongoloid group of people speaking Tibeto-Burman dialect.

The population growth rate of Tiwas from decades to decade varies widely and trend is rather peculiar. In 1891 census the total Tiwa population was 47,560 whereas in 1901 census it was lower than that. The variation of population was probably due to conversion into Koch.

According to 2001 census report the Tiwa population in the state had 1,70,622 and they are the single dominant among the other tribe in Morigaon district.

Like other tribal communities the Tiwas have also different social organizations and clan system. The traditional family pattern of the Tiwas was joint family system. But due to the pressure of population, spread of modern technology and urbanization occupational pattern joint family system has been diminishing day by day (Chapter III).

In each and every society the marriage system reforms the function like regulation of sex life, establishment of family, economic cooperation, emotional and intellectual interstimuation of the parents and social solidarity. The Tiwas preferred four types of marriages like
conventional marriage, adopting son-in-law, marriage by elopement and marriage by simple dowry.

Kinship system represents one of the basic social institution. Kinship is universal and in most societies it plays a significant role in the socialization of individuals and the maintenance of a group solidarity. The kinship terminology prevalent among the Tiwas may be termed as descriptive. It was observed that Tiwas terms of references are more in number than the terms of address.

The Tiwas have their various festivals, which are closely linked with rhythmical tunes of *khrambar, kiringadhol* and *gomona* form an important part of their festivals. The Tiwas important festivals are the three *Bisus, Barat, Sagramisawa, Wanswa misawua, yangli misawa, jun beel mela* etc. *Loholahi* and *lali hillali* are the songs sung in different socio-religious occasions. The former is sung mainly during wedding and harvesting occasions while the later is sung during marriage ceremonies, *karam* and other festivals. (Chapter IV)

The bachelor's dormitory forms an integral part of tribal societies in India. Called by different names by different tribes, the institution project the socio-cultural life of a particular tribe. It serves as a center of discussing important matters of a tribal village including wars and hunting expeditions.
The functions of the bachelor’s dormitory has changed considerably in the traditional villages while this institution is completely absent in some Tiwa villages. The bachelor’s dormitory functioned as an institution of non-formal education in the past. In the pre-literate stage, the function of the bachelor’s dormitory was training of the young boys in the ways of life by involving them in actual situation. There were no schools and as such the Tiwa villagers used to send all their male child to the village dormitory. It was mandatory for the households to send their male children to the dormitory. The boys learned to fend for themselves and they used to learn how to be good households. They also got first hand knowledge of the methods of cultivation as they used to cultivate the fields owned by the dormitory as well as render assistance in the fields of other households on a co-operative basis. Thus the dormitory boys used to learn the spirit of co-operation in all fields.

This traditional institution is now gradually dying as it fails to keep the dormitory tradition intact, due to the rapid change brought about by development works including spread of education. Due to the propaganda by missionaries and social workers the institution is also slowly dying. Now the parents do not send their sons to samadi.
Modern schools have contributed much towards the decline of *samadi*. Sometimes we find that the tribals lacks originality of thoughts and imitate the others. It is so because they have developed the traits of life through imitation. This has led to dearth of talents in the tribal society. Due to the advent of modern education and changing culture the importance of dormitory institutions become decreasing. Today, however, there are *samadis* in a few Tiwa villages but little stress on the training of the youth is given. We can say that the modern social system has dealt a heavy blow to this institution (Chapter V).

The Tiwas believe that the death is delayed due to illegal or unjust activities during the yester years. They generally prefer death inside a house. Previously deadbodies of wealthy and respectable persons only were cremated but now-a-days cremation is the general rule for every person for Tiwas. The deadbodies of minor accident cases, pregnant women etc. are buried. After the death the four corners of the bamboo mat are broken where the deadbody lies. The body is covered with a new white cloth. The *giyati*, both male and female belonging to different clans arrive, who have to perform important role in the death ceremonies. In the meantime the female *giyati* cooks the meal for the dead, which constitute rice, egg and bringal. The *giyati* takes all the responsibility of the cremation rites.
In the Tiwa society, after death a *karma* ceremony is celebrated. It is specially related with the death and *giyati* takes an important role in this occasion.

Formal education has changed the ways of life, social aspirations, the attitude towards Tiwa culture both in material and non-material aspects and has a tendency towards the destruction of tribal norms.

Hindu deities and customs too have been invading their ways of life and thoughts. Performance of *swaraswati puja*, *holi* etc. has become common among the educated Tiwas. Like other Assamese people, the Tiwas of the district observe the three *bihus*. But the festivals like *sagramisawa*, *yangli* etc. are fast losing importance amongst the plains Tiwas.

In their cultural aspects of living the Tiwas have special housing pattern, dress habit and food habit. But presently they are found to be largely acculturated to the manifold habits of the rural non-tribal people. With the impact of Hinduism, the rigidity has been considerably removed from their culture.

Due to the spread of modern education and cultural contact with the urban folk, the mode of dress particularly among younger
section have started changing. In order to meet the growing demands of their wards the parents or guardians have to borrow money against payment of exorbitant rates of interest. It has become a common feature of the grown up males and females in almost all the tribal societies that have touch with the educational agencies to take over to modern dresses. Wearing of traditional dresses and maintaining traditionality in beliefs, customs, rituals etc. is now considered to be a symbol of backwardness (Chapter VI).

Women in Assam enjoy a higher status as compared to the greater Indian society, considering that the caste-society of this region is devoid of practices like dowry, child marriage and bride burning that are rampant in most parts of India.

The Tiwa community is one of the composite part of great Indian nation. Though many characteristics of the Hindu social system are found in the functional system of the Tiwas, its peculiar characteristics are also much more evident in all respects of their social life. Same is the case to the status of Tiwa women.

In Tiwa family different women member assume different status which vary from one another. In practical situation what I have seen in Tiwa village is that the housewife takes primary role in the maintenance
of domestic affairs and the husbands role may be considered as secondary to his wife. This shows that, Tiwa women enjoy a great extent of right and freedom in the family which is a sign of good status of women in the society (Chapter VII).

The Tiwa women in the district plays a very important role at the time of transplanting and harvesting of paddy. Leaving aside the ploughing, Tiwa women equally participate in all shares of economic activities along with male. She takes a major contributory roles to economic sufficiency of the family by way of indulging herself in poultry, farming, animal husbandry etc.

After the independence of India, as a consequences of the introduction of modern political system the status and roles of a Tiwa woman in the perspective of political life haa changed to great extent. The Tiwa women, along with their male counterpart in national level, enjoys similar and equal rights and freedom as provided by the Indian constitution (Chapter VII). Growing expansion of modern education, growth of population degradation of economic conditions, growing unemployment problems etc. are the contributory factors leading to the increasing political consciousness among the Tiwas of Morigaon district.
Chapter VIII is mainly dealing with the impact of modern education with some findings. The present study has been able to show the influence of modern education in their day to day life as well as culture and tradition. Its impact on marriage, family system, child marriage, women status, dress habit, food habit, festivals, traditional medicine etc. are more significant. The area of study represents an overall socio-cultural change especially in the rural areas of Morigaon district.

The following suggestions may be considered as future initiative in this regard:

a. Education is the pre-requisite for all kinds of change and development. Proper and appropriate education to all sections of the community is required for each and every tribal people. As the culture is dynamic, so the member of a society should be well equipped with modern education so that they can save their cultural and traditional identity.

b. The size of the households and their educational level also affect the education of their dependents. The role of the educational institutions should give prime importance to the attainment and the performance of the students.
c. Due to the lack of employment opportunity in urban areas the majority of educated Tiwa youths are unemployed. Therefore, the Tiwa villages needs today the two most important developments simultaneously. Firstly, the traditional Tiwa economy i.e. necessities of modern technological application by the rural people. If the green revolution occurs, the poverty will be eradicated and prosperity of people will diversify the economic activities. Technological improvement certainly may change the traditional character of rural culture of tribal masses. Secondly chemical, cement and metal industries may utilize local resources. Industrialisation together with modern education will not only provide new job opportunities in public and private sectors but will also reduce the physical distance between rural and urban areas. The improved means of transport and communication will bridge the gap of remote and inaccessible villages. The educational standard of the local Tiwas thus will be enhanced which ultimately strive for good jobs in modern occupations. The educated sections of this community should monitor the point seriously.

d. Samadi or Bachelor’s dormitory plays vital role in Tiwa society. The dormitory society can develop a museum in each locality so that they can preserve the ancient monuments, different musical instruments, war weapon, dresses etc. for the next generation. This organization
may also convert to a centre for preserving traditional games and sports which are disappearing from the community.

e. Tiwas are rich in oral literature performing art and material culture. But educated Tiwas are not interested to preserve these rich resources. By utilizing modern technology they can preserve and publish these among the common people. If they preserve these properly, that will help them to keep their traditionality intact and pure.

f. Impact of education does not mean any destruction of old tradition. With proper modification the Tiwas can exhibit and popularize their traditional dresses and traditional dishes like Missings or Nagas. For that purpose they can arrange exhibition cum sales programmes in connection with Junbeel Mela, Barat festival and any other common puja festivals which will be more attractive to modern non-tribals.

Today the Tiwa society is passing through a radical change in total life style related to material and non-material aspect of culture. For centuries, they had settled in forests and hills so they could not be confronted with the modern values and ethics; influenced by modern education, the abandoned the traditional life pattern and adopted the new one. In course of time the modern education has changed the old values and cultures of the Tiwa community mobilizing them to transform
their entire primitive institutions which in the past were at the nerve centre of the Tiwa socio-cultural life. Above all the formal education provided a package of benefits to decertify the old tribal linkage. Now it is clear that the old tribal institutions had evolved some social values which were essential to keep themselves disciplined. But these social institutions at present have withered away and modern educational system has taken its place even in all aspects of their daily life.

Although modernism has penetrated into their culture, yet a section of people are maintaining many of their traditional socio-cultural traits. These traditional manners and customs are left to the care of the old people. Of late, like many other small ethnic groups the reemergence of folklore has become a striking feature amongst the Tiwas, which perhaps been related with the crisis of identity. But this trend is not found in every aspects of folklore and culture, but confined only to certain particular fields, such as performing art form, dress and ornaments etc. It may be noted that new ideas are introduced into their culture without destroying the very fabric of the traditional ideologies. A selective assimilation rather than merging of identities is preferred by all sections of the Tiwas. As a result of the modern educational impact, the social consciousness develops among the Tiwas who were once far away from the mainstream of modern
civilization. For centuries, they are living in forest and remote areas so they could not be confronted with the modern values and ethics as well as culture. On the contrary, due to the spread of modern education, the Tiwas have started adopting the modern trend of culture. They are getting better education in the formal educational institutions and as such their total way of life has been changing day by day. Under the changing perspective the new generation of the Tiwa society should come forward to accept the changing pattern of life and to retain the ageold socio-cultural tradition with modern world view.