CHAPTER – II

FIELD AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter attempts to give an idea about the field of the present study. The study is directly concerned with the environmental situations of the towns of Assam. In the first step of developing a research work, it basically depends on a definite field which is scientifically as well as methodologically termed as universe or field under study by the researcher. The universe may be finite or infinite. In finite universe, the number of items are certain and quantifiable but in case of an infinite universe the number of items are not certain and quantifiable. In such cases, we cannot have any idea about the total number of items. The population of a village, city, number of employees, households etc. are the examples of finite universe whereas, the number of stars in the sky, listeners of a specific radio programmed are the examples of infinite universe. In the literature of research, a universe or field is a definite geographical area, such as state, district, town, village etc. A field or universe consists of sample items where researcher collects his/ her relevant data. The number of items is selected from the universe which can constitute a sample. All the items in any field of inquiry represent as a universe or field of research. The field or universe of the present study is reflected with the urban areas and the area is situated at the Tezpur and Tinsukia towns of Assam.

A Brief Description of the State of Assam

Assam is a first and foremost a state of North East Region and is included as a State of India. The area of Assam is 78438.08 sq.km. It has 27 districts, 56
sub-divisions, 214 towns (statutory + census) and 26395 villages. According to the last census of India i.e. 2011 the total population of the state of Assam is 31,169,272. The male population is 15,954,927 and the female population is 15,214,345. The total rural population is 26,780,516 and the total urban population is 43,88,756. The population density of the state of Assam is 397 and sex ratio is 954. The literacy rate of the state of Assam is 73.18%.

According to Mahatma Gandhi, “Assam is a land of magnificent vegetation. Some of the river sceneries are hard to beat throughout the world. I have seen the gorgeous scenery on the Thames. But, I cannot recall anything as superior to the lavishness with which nature has decorated the great stream on whose banks I am writhing these notes” (Young India, 1921).

. . . . Assam is very beautiful with its luscious greens, exotic animals, migratory birds and Ahom architectures. It is just like a paradise an earth the green hills of sub tropical forests really mind blowing . . . (census of India, 2011, Assam)

Assam is called the “Land of Rising Sun”, because it is situated on the North Eastern Sentinel of the frontiers of India. Assam is the anglicized form of the name of the premier state of North East India, a region which is very strategically situated and closed to India’s International border countries viz. China, Myanmar, Bhutan and Bangladesh. Assam is the state which richly endowed with the places of tourist attraction. It is described as the second largest state of North East India after Arunachal Pradesh. Assam is situated in the Himalayan foothills and so known as the land of blue hills and red river.
The word ‘Assam’ is derived from the Sanskrit word ‘Asoma’ meaning ‘peerless’ or ‘Unequalled. So, it has its own capacity of attraction. Assam has its own historical heritage and geographical and cultural characteristics which have some impacts on socio-economic life of the people. In the epic age, Assam was known as Pragjyotish or the place of eastern astronomy. In classical Sanskrit literature, Pragjyotish is also called Kamrupa. According to some historians, the ancient name of Assam was Pragjyotishpur – the city of eastern light, which later changed to Kamurupa the land where Kamdevag the God of love was reborn. Some scholars have stated that the word Assam denotes the unparallel beauty of the state. Lord Baden Powell in his book Indian village community states that the Bodo community named this ancient land ‘Sa-Sum’, which through the passage of time got translated in to modern word ‘Assam’.

The modern name of the province Assam is of recent origin. It is connected with the Ahoms who entered the Brahmaputra valley in the beginning of the 13th century. They say that this was the term applied to them by the native tribes at the time of their invasion of the valley and was an index of the awe and admiration with which the later regarded the Ahom conqueror and conciliated them. Dr. Banikanta Kakoti suggests that ‘Asaman’ may be a later day Sanskritization of an earlier form ‘Acham’. In Tai, the root ‘Cham’ means to be vanquished. With the Assamese prefix ‘a’ ‘Asam’ or ‘Acham’ would mean ‘Undefeated’, ‘Victorious’. (History of Assamese Literature : Birinchi Kumar Boruah.)

The geographical location of the Assam is visible in T-shaped and the state is situated in the hearts of the North East Corner of Indian subcontinent. It is
located from latitude 24.10° N. to 27.58° N and longitude 89.49° E 97.26° E between
the foothills of eastern Himalaya and the Patkai and Naga Ranges. The boundary
of the state is surrounded by Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh on the North,
Nagaland, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh on the East, Meghalaya, Mizoram and
Tripura on the South and Bangladesh Meghalaya and West Bengal on the West.
Assam is connected with rest of the Indian Union by a narrow corridor (called the
Chikens Neck or ‘Bottle Neck’) in West Bengal and that runs for 58 km below
foothills of Bhutan and Sikkim. The geographical location of Assam occupies a
strategic position in the political map of India. The state forms the core of the
North Eastern Region of the country and provides the focal points of transport and
communication lines serving its neighbouring states.

Geographically, Assam is a shadow of its former self. It has been reduced
to one third of its original size in thirty years time.

Assam, as it is today may be divided into three important physical regions.
These are as (a) Brahmaputra valley (b) Barak or Surama valley and (c) the hilly
areas of Karbi Anglong and North Cachor Hill (Dima Hasao) districts. The climate
condition of Assam differs from the rest of the country. It is humid, tropical type in
the plains and subalpine in the hills, with heavy rainfall and vegetation in the green
all the year round. The average temperature in summer and winter are 29°C and
16°C respectively. The winter season extends from the month of October to
February and rains predominate the rest of the year. Fair weather coupled with fall
in temperature follow the withdrawal of monsoon.
The rainfall in Assam is one of the highest in the world. It varies between 178 and 305 cm. All this rainfall is concentrated mainly in four months, June to September. Assam is known to many as a nightmarish land of earthquakes, some tremors of the most violent nature have been recorded even in recent times. Being situated in the earthquake belt, Assam experiences earthquake shocks very often. The main rivers of Assam are the Brahmaputra and the Barak and these rivers continue to flow throughout the year.

From the historical analysis and present day scenario of Assam shows that it has been regarded as the melting pot of various cultural, linguistic, racial, tribal and ethnic groups. All the major races of the world migrated to Assam and made their settlement which contributed to the buildup of Assamese society and culture.

**A Brief description about Tinsukia Town**

The Tinsukia town came into existence about two hundred years ago. At that time, it was known as ‘Bengmora’ the capital of the Muttock king Sarbananda Singha. The modern Tinsukia (Tinisukia in Assamese) emerges in the last decade of the nineteenth century. King Sarbananda Singha’s Minister Godha Borboruah had a three cornered (‘Tinikonia’ or Tinisukia) tank dug in Bengmorah. The tank is still known as Tinikonia Pukhuri. In the course of time, the versatile town of Bengmora came to be known as ‘Tinsukia’ or Tinisukia.

Tinsukia is located at the eastern corner of Assam at 25.15, N latitude and 95.15, E longitude and is situated on NH 37 at a distance of 491 kilometer east of
Dispur, Guwahati, the state capital of Assam. Tinsukia is the district headquarter town of the district of same name. It has a Municipal Board and the town consist of 15 (fifteen) number of wards. The Tinsukia town has been recognized under the Assam Municipal Act, 1956. Tinsukia Municipal Board was established on 14th October of 1919, under the Chairmanship of M.E. Slater and it is one of the oldest Municipalities in North East. The Tinsukia Municipal Board covers 10.54 square kilometer. According the census 2011 report, the present population size is 2,00,000.

Tinsukia town is one of the main commercial hubs of the state next to Guwahati. Strategically located in Upper Assam, it is connected to oil towns of Digboi, Duliajan and Naharkatia and coalfields of Ledo and Margherita, Namrup Fertilizer plant which earlier under Hindustan fertilizer corporation and is presently functioning independently as Brahmaputra valley fertilizer corporation limited and located very near to Tinsukia. This is the feeder town for the surrounding tea estates and orange cultivations of Makum region. The town is the main transportation conduit for agricultural and other products of Arunachal Pradesh. Amongst the highest revenue generating towns of the state, Tinsukia needs to uplift its infrastructure on a priority basis for farther development and growth.

**A Brief Description about Tezpur Town**

Tezpur is a small sleepy town on the bank of the mighty Brahmaputra. However it has an ancient and vivid cultural heritage being one of the holiest
Hindu religious pilgrimage destinations in the North-East India that embraces a tradition of flamboyant art, architecture, sculpture, monuments traceable to tales of Indian mythology. The culturally active population of this town has produced much state worth figures pioneering in the field of Assamese literature drama, cinema, music, modern art, politics, activist, player etc. Tezpur is also known by various other names in ancient time that includes Harupeswar, purapur, Tizopur, Kanyapur, Hattapeswar etc. As per Dr. Banikanta Kakoti, noted littérature and historian the Austric origin word ‘Tizo’ means ‘reptile’ and this place derived its modern name Tezpur from the fact that it was once fall of Snakes and reptiles. Another school of thought asserts that the Sankrit word “Teza” meaning “Blood” and “Pura” meaning city and the combine word “Tezpur” is signifying a mythological war (Hari-Hara Yuuddha) between the armies of Lord Krishna and Mahadev Shiva, that took place in this area and flooded it with blood, so the name of the place become as Tezpur. Tezpur town is located on the bank of the River Brahmaputra and it is 181 kms distance from Guwahati. Its location co-ordinate is 26.37° latitude and 92.47° E longitude and altitude is about 79 meters high above mean seal level. The Tezpur town covers an area of 7.10 square kilometer, previously it was the head quarter of Darrang District and since Darang district was divided into two districts on 3rd August 1983, Tezpur has been the Head Quarter town of Sonitpur District. Tezpur town has consist of 19 (nineteen) wards and having the population size is 1,00,477 (according to 2011 census).
Tezpur town is a transport and commercial cum services town. Tezpur town serves entire district of Sonitpur as well as part of neighbouring districts, i.e. Darrang, Nagaon and Lakhimpur. Moreover, the people of Arunachal Pradesh depend on Tezpur town and as it is the gateway to Arunachal Pradesh.

Methodology

Methodology is a way to solve the research problem systematically. It is the systematic and logical of principles that leads scientific investigation. The terminology of methods and methodology are quite different from each other. Method is a tool or technique used to collect data. It is a procedure for obtaining knowledge based on empirical observation and logical reasoning. Methodology is logic of scientific investigation. Methodology means description, explanation and justification of methods and not the methods themselves. Methodology of any social sciences like sociology, we refer to use the methods such as survey method, experimental method and so on. Methodology refers to philosophy on which researcher is based. This philosophy includes assumptions and values that serve as basis for research and are used for interviewing data and reaching conclusion. It is said that methodology used in natural sciences is more rigorous than that of social sciences. According to C.R. Kothari, “when we talk of research methodology, we not only talk of the research methods but also consider the logic behind the methods, we use in the context of our research study and explain why we are using a particular method or technique and why are not using others, so that research
results are capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself or by others” (1990, p.11).

Therefore, methodology is one of the important aspects of social research. Social research has defined by P.V. Young (1992 p. 30) in following ways “social research may be defined as a scientific understanding which by means of logical and systematized techniques aims to (i) discover new facts or verify and test the old facts, (ii) analyse their sequences, interrelationship and casual explanations which were derived within an appropriate theoretical frame and references (iii) develop new scientific tools concepts and theories which would facilitate to reliable and valid study of human behaviour”.

A sound methodology is an important part of any kind of systematic study i.e. research. So, the research depends upon the well purposeful research design which will be able to follow up the methodological strategies. This chapter also deals with the methods and scientific procedures which are used by the researcher to complete the whole study. The methodologies of the present study consist of the following broad as well as basic steps.

**Articulation of the Topic**

Articulation or the formulation means the proper identification of the research topic. It is an important strategy in methodological foundation of research work. At the very outset, the researcher must single out the problem, what he wants to study. He must decide the general area where he has to do the work. The
articulation of research topic into a specific research problem constitutes the first step in a scientific enquiry. Essentially two steps are involved in formulating research problem viz. understanding the problem thoroughly and rephrasing the same in meaningful terms in analytical point of view. The present study has done on environmental change which occurs due to the urbanization. So, our studied topic is entitled as – “Urbanization and Environmental Change: A Comparative Study of Tinsukia and Tezpur Towns of Assam.

**Field of Study or Selection of the Universe**

In social science research the terminology of universe has identified a definite geographical area or location of a society where researcher does the work. When a researcher undertakes a research work he must mind basically two important things, firstly, what will be the scope of study and secondly, what will be his universe or population. In our present study, we have selected two towns from two districts i.e. Tinsukia and Sonitpur districts of Assam. In Tinsukia district, there are thirteen (13) officially recognized towns at present. According to 2001 census the total number of towns in Tinsukia district was ten (10) but we have found the decadal increase of three towns in the district of Tinsukia on the census report of 2011. These towns are Tinsukia town (district headquarter and having municipality board), Doom Dooma (town Committee), Makum (town Committee), Digboi town (town committee), Digboi Oil town (census town), Margherita town (town committee), Bahbari Gaon town (census town), Borgolai Grant No II (census town), Lido town (census town), Lido Tikok (census town), Kachujan Gaon (census town), Chapakhwa Town (census town) and Forest village,
Lakhipather Town (census town). The last three towns of Tinsukia district are declared by 2011 census. On the otherhand, Sonitpur district has presently eight officially recognized towns but in the 2001 census it was found in six recognized towns these towns are Tezpur town (the district headquarter and having municipality board), Rongapara (town committee) Dhekiajuli (municipal board), Biswanath Chariali (town committee), Gohpur (town committee), Majgaon (census town), Barika Chuburi (census town), and Gutlong Gaon (census town). The last two towns of Sonitpur district are declared by 2011 census of India.

From these towns of two districts, we have selected the Tinsukia and Tezpur towns for the purpose of our study. The main reasons for selection of the studied towns are –

Firstly, these two towns are the district headquarters and having their municipal boards.

Secondly, these two towns are located with the touch of National Highways.

Thirdly, the geographical locations of these towns are different from each other. This can provide a comparative picture of urban growth in Assam.

Fourthly, these two towns are highly urbanized comparatively than that of other towns of the respective districts.

**Hypothetical Assumptions**

Urbanization is one of the important processes of social change i.e. social environment. With the process of urbanization there has been the increasing
tendency of migration from rural areas to urban social set-up. Simultaneously, the process of urbanization on such changes has been directly reflecting the population composition, occupational pattern and habitat, institutional change and more importantly the ecological profile of the city as well as towns. This study presumes that, with the increasing rate of urbanization, there have been visible changes in the structures of urban social as well as natural environmental changes.

Formulation of hypothesis in research work is one of the important strategies. Hypothesis is a statement of variables of our research topic and shows the two important variables, one is urbanization which treated as independent variable and other one is environmental change which treated as dependant variable. The process of urbanization has been increasing the tendency towards the environmental change. So, this research work has been done on the basis of hypothetical assumptions between the variables i.e. urbanization and environmental change on the perview of existing literature and personal observations. Four hypothetical assumptions were formulated at the beginning of the study and these were tested through the field observation and focus interviews. The results obtained in the context of hypothetical assumptions are presented below in specific chapter wise paragraphs.

(i) There is a positive relationship between urbanization and population changes.

(ii) There is a positive relationship between urbanization and occupational change.
(iii) There is a positive relationship between urbanization and institutional change.

(iv) There is a positive relationship between urbanization and ecological change.

Keeping in view of the convenience of my study, these were tested through the field observations, focus interviews, case studies and descriptive sample surveys.

**Sampling procedure and the Respondents**

To select the sample towns and wards, certain specific procedures were adopted. For the purpose of all the town and wards of Assam i.e. Tinsukia and Tezpur town, the official data are available to gather our research oriented information. For the purpose of our study, we have decided to select and study three municipal wards from each selected town. Accordingly, the nature of wards is one central or core, one middle and other one periphery ward of the each town. The Tinsukia town consisted of 15 wards with 22,005 households and the Tezpur town consisted of 19 wards having 13,749 households. We have decided to study three municipal wards from each selected towns purely on purposive basis and keeping in view of the theoretical understanding of the problem of study.

The procedure of selecting samples from the universe can be shown as follows –
### Table – 2.1 (I)

**Sample procedure of Tinsukia Town**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Name of selected town</th>
<th>No. of municipal wards</th>
<th>Selected wards</th>
<th>No. of Households</th>
<th>Sample households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tinsukia</td>
<td>Tinsukia town</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1. Ananda Nagar Ward 3 (central)</td>
<td>3194</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. Dohotia Chuk ward 8 (middle)</td>
<td>906</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Daily Bazar ward 13 (periphery)</td>
<td>1439</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Municipality Office of Tinsukia Town, Assam.

### Table – 2.1 (II)

**Sample procedure of Tezpur Town**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of District</th>
<th>Name of selected town</th>
<th>No. of municipal wards</th>
<th>Selected wards</th>
<th>No. of Households</th>
<th>Sample households</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Souitpur</td>
<td>Tezpur town</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1. Kumar Gaon and Kachari Gaon Ward 3 (central)</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2L.B. Road and Mahavirab ward 7 (middle)</td>
<td>652</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Hajaraapara and Biswajit Borah Path ward 13 (periphery)</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Municipality Office of Tezpur Town, Assam.
The simple reasons for selecting these wards are that these are variations of urban functions from the core of the city to its periphery in terms of population, commercial as well as service related activities, residences, establishment of major semi major industries, recreation centres, slum areas, land values and variety of other increased urban activities.

Finally, we have decided to study 100 (one hundred) households from each sample ward. Thus the total number of selected households of the present study is 600 (six hundred) and these are selected on the basis of sampling method as available in sampling techniques. So, the present study and its sampling design is both purposive and as well as random sampling. So, there were 600 respondents upon which I have carried out my research work. All the respondents were the head of the household.

Research Design

In simple meaning the very word design means plan of action or a blue print of research activity. When a researcher has select a problem for study then he appears a systematic plan for doing the research work properly. Our present study has shows the plan of action through its aim and objectives of its explorance. Hence our research design has been formulated in the frame of explorative research design.

Pilot Study

To complete the field work, different stages of visiting were carried out. The first stage was carried out during the month of January of 2011. In this stage,
we have gathered the preliminary information about the location, population composition, number of wards and their population size under the field study. The second stage of visiting was carried out in the month of June, 2012 and gathered the necessary informations for preparing the interview schedule. A pilot study was carried out in the months of November and December of 2012 and interview schedule was finally prepared for the purpose of data exploration from the field.

**Techniques and Sources of data collection**

In any kind of research, data are very important requirement and they were collected from the universe with the help of certain techniques. The techniques of data collection differing from one research design to another research design. Our research design signifies as explorative one. Therefore, it basically depends on observation method, interview schedule methods.

For our research study, both primary and secondary data were collected. The secondary data were collected from various offices i.e. municipal office, census office, district statistical office and research reports, books, journals etc. To collected primary data, we applied interview schedules field observation methods.

**Interview Schedule**

For the focus exploration of data, a moderate size of interview schedule was prepared for intensive field work. The schedule contains both structured and unstructured questions. For the systematic and detailed study about the research problem, we have arranged the questions into five major headings, viz.
respondent’s socio economic background, urbanization and population change, urbanization and occupational change, urbanization and changes in social institutions, urbanization and ecological changes. The partwise distribution of the questions in the interview schedule was as follows. Respondents socio-economic background: 10 questions, Urbanization and population change: 14 questions, urbanization and occupational change: 15 questions, Urbanization and institutional changes: 16 questions, urbanization and ecological changes: 6 questions. The questions were framed on the basis of logical sequence. The nature of the questions include in the schedule are of various types. Besides, seeking of the responses on the sample of ‘Yes – No’ type and some specific attempts were made to design the items in the schedule which sought categorical responses from the respondents. The schedule contains 62 questions and a copy of schedule is enclosed in the Appendix.

**Field observation**

Observation is an ancient as well as prime technique of data collection. This method was utilized as highly useful techniques for this study. Observation may be defined as a process in which a person observes some real-life situation with the help of sense organ i.e. eye and record the pertinent occurrences. It is an important technique which was adopted to collect data in the present study. Through field observation, we tried to collect as much details of the field as were possible by staying in the towns of Assam. Besides these, observation helped us to know the attitudes of the respondents towards the issues of study.
**Duration of field work**

As we already stated earlier that the preliminary phases of data collection were done in different stages. The final round of data collection was completed within the year of 2013.

**Tabulation of Data**

After completing the data collection they were systematically edited and the edited data were classified in proper way. In the next stage, the classified data were presented in the tabular form where data were statistically presented in simple frequency distribution table.

**Analysis of data**

In tabulation process the frequencies have been converted into percentages and the data were compared between the towns and derive conclusion. Several procedures have been followed to analyse the data. In this work we have framed sixty-one (61) tables on the basis of respective question wise responses. Tabulation was done by hand employing the method of simple frequency count. The frequencies have been converted into percentages. In each table, the data have been presented in terms of frequencies and percentages which have been worked out up to two decimals.

**Generalization**

After the analysis of data, generalization has to be made out. The syntheses of findings have a broad conclusion and the general propositions which may lead further research study in future.
Difficulties and Experiences

We can gather our experiences through theoretically as well as practically. As we know that the social phenomena are very much complex in nature. So, in social science research work, interaction with people involves a varied experiences and difficulties. During the time of data collection, we have encountered with number of difficulties as well as experiences.

Because, selecting of urban area i.e. towns for the study provided us some interesting experiences. During the period of field visit in the towns, we have gathered different kinds of experiences. First of all, it was noticed that the urban peoples are very much complex than the rural peoples. When we approached them for interview then they intentionally focused their different problems. Such as – they have not adequate time for giving an interaction with the researcher, someone have their misconception about the interviews etc. But when we specifically told them that it was purely for academic purpose then their misconception and the motive of negligence regarding our visit was removed. This gave us immense pleasure. The dwellers, it appeared to us were proud of giving interviews to us.

Chapter planning

This research work has been organized into eight chapters. The chapter planning of our work has been given below –

The first chapter deals with the topic of under study and it is basically an introductory one. This chapter attempts to introduce the subject matter of the
research work in a theoretical framework. This chapter discusses the following headlines i.e. introduction of the problem, key concepts and their interrelationship, theoretical framework, review of literature, objectives of study and significance of the study. The second chapter makes an attempt to analyse the field or the universe of study followed by the methodological strategies. The third chapter makes a discussion about the socio-economic background of the respondents. Certain selected indicators have been examined to understand the socio-economic background of the respondents, such as age, sex, religion, castes etc. The fourth chapter narrates about the issue of urbanization and population change. In this chapter, we have tried to make out how urbanization is responsible for the changes of population structure in towns. The fifth chapter presents on perview of urbanization and occupational changes. We have presented the empirical findings about occupational changes due to urbanization. The chapter sixth discusses about the institutional changes due to urbanization. In this chapter we have discussed about certain institutional changes i.e. family, marriage, caste, religion, polities, education etc. The chapter seventh deals with the comprehensive analysis about urbanization and the changes of ecology of the towns. It has analysed the urbanization and the growth of urban ecological environment and its degradation. The chapter eight makes a synthetic discussion about foregoing chapters and this chapter is entitled as summery and conclusions.
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