

CHAPTER VI

CHAPTER VI

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Education and communication are considered important variables related to the process of social change in a developing society. Education is an institution by which society transmits its cultural traits and socializes its members for different roles. In the simplest societies where there is little specialization of function, education is not organized as a separate activity. It is provided by the family, the kin group and the society as a whole through participation in their everyday routines of living. In developed societies, the formal education acquires greater importance and the period of systematic instruction increases and a specialized group of teachers is formed (Bottomore 1971 : 262). In developing societies, like India education has been one of the most influential instruments of modernization. The education system has contributed to modernization by growth of new forms of rationally organized structures in the shape of schools, colleges and universities, which serve cultural networks for the diffusion of knowledge and cultural categories which are modern in ethos (Singh, Y. 1986 : 106). In a tribal society which is passing through the process of transformation, secular education acts as an agent of modernization. Therefore, the expansion of education in tribal society can be taken as an indicator of social change. Similarly, the growth of mass media communication may also play an important role in the modernization of these societies. Therefore, in the present chapter an attempt is made to analyse the changing status of education and com

~~-munication analyse the changing status of education and communication among the Barmans of Barak Valley.~~

EDUCATION

Among the Barmans, the process of education started during the role of *Kachari King Harish Chandra*, who was a eminent scholar and he was described as a '*Lord of Hedembo*' in the inscriptions on the wall of a rock cut temple at Maibong. His son Lakhichandra was also a known scholar of Sanskrit and Bangla languages. He has written some books and was followed by his cousin Krishna Chandra and Govinda Chandra. Krishna Chandra has written *Rash Leelamrita*, a lyrical dance drama. But during that period the education was only confined among the members of royal families and royal clans and the masses were not encouraged to get education and therefore, no formal educational institution was established during the Kachari rule. Under heavy influence of Hinduism the Karachi rulers appointed some Sanskrit and *Bangali* scholars for educating the royal and aristocrate families of royal clan. Therefore, the education during that period was elitist in nature and initiated the process of stratification among the Barmans. The traditional dialect of the Barman was *Dimasa* and they adopted Bangla script for writing *Dimasa* dialect. Gradually *Dimasa* developed as a written language having Bangla script. Because Cachar was located at the fringe of undivided Bengal. Moreover, the Karachi king realised that for developing contacts with neighbouring states and to accelerate the process of Hindusation knowledge of Sanskrit and Bangla languages is important. Another reason for adopting Bangla scripts was that the Kachari king devel -

oped martial ties with Koch, who had already adopted Bangla scripts and later on Assamese under the influence of Sankar Dev. It is noteworthy that the Koch had also been a part of wider Bodo-Kachari linguistic group (Gait, 1972).

Education in Cachar during the first part of the nineteenth century was in very low. When British occupied Cachar there was practically no educational institution in the district. However, there were some *tols* (Sanskrit schools) where Brahmin and Kayastha imparted informal education.

After annexation of Cachar Captain Fisher, the first Superintendent of the district, suggested establishment of schools in the district in the model of Bengal Presidency and accordingly three schools were established at Silchar, Hailakandi and Khagora. In 1870 -71 the number of schools rose to five, of which one was government English school while other four were vernacular schools. The number rose to 131 by 1874-75 of which 108 were primary schools. The primary schools for girls were fully financed by the government. The number of primary schools increased to 248 in 1900. A Normal school was also established at Silchar in 1874. Besides the government institutions at Silchar, there was one government aided high school at Hailakandi in 1904. The middle schools were setup at Silchar, Borkhola, Katigora and Norshingpur (Cachar District Gazetteer 1991 : 93).

Thus, during the British rule a number of educational institutions were established in Cachar district. But these educational institutions were mainly confined in urban areas. The spread of secular education, however, took place more rapidly

after independence. Some specific measures were taken by Government to improve the level of education among the rural population in general and tribal population in particular. As a result most of the villages in Assam have at least one Lower Primary School. In Cachar district there are 1545 Lower Primary Schools, 296 Middle English Schools, 36 Junior Basic Schools, 6 Senior Basic Schools and 24 Madhya Vanga Schools. In pre-independence period, the Barak Valley intensified with establishment of G.C. College Silchar in 1935 and Karimganj college 1946. In post-independence period, however, a number of colleges were established in Cachar, Hailakandi and Karimganj districts. Most of the colleges of in the Barak Valley were affiliated to Gauwahati University till the establishment of a Central University at Silchar in 1994. Prior to establishment of Assam University, there were seven degree colleges in Silchar. One Regional Engineering college (1967), one Medical College (1968) and one Law College (1960) were established in the dacade of 1960s at Silchar which enhanced the process of technical and professional education in the region. All these professional instituotons are affiliated to Assam University. Opening of Central University in the region facilitate the establishment of seven new colleges in Cachar district, five in Karimganj district and four in Hailakandi district. Therefore, at present the total number of affiliated colleges in the Barak Valley has reached to 36 (Cachar-18, Karimganj-11, Hailakandi-7) including three professional institutions as mentioned above.

In order to analyse the status of education among the Barmans of Barak Valley, it shall be appropriate to assess the status of educational institution in the three study villages.



Nikama M.E. School

The village Kumacherra has one M.E. School established in 1985. At present this school has five teachers, two from the village itself and remaining three from neighbouring villages. All the teachers belong to Barman community. It fulfils the educational needs of the villagers upto middle level (7th standard only). The medium of instruction in the school is Bengla. After completion of the middle level education the students usually go to the neighbouring villages, namely Harinagar and Joypur, for further studies. The villagers are now trying to establish a high school in the village it self.

The village Dormikhal has only one Lower Primary School established in 1961 which can fulfills the educational needs of the villagers upto the primary level. The medium of instruction of the Lower Primary School is *Bangla* and majority of the students are Barman, where as teachers are both Barmans and non-Barmans. The facility of further education upto higher secondary level is, however available in the neighbouring villages.

There are four educational institutions in Nikama village namely Nikama Lower Primary School, Nikama Middle English School, Nikama Madhya Vanga School and Nikama Higher Secondary School. The Nikama Higher Secondary School is an extension of Nikama High School just before 5 years. All the four Schools located in the same campus were established at different points of time. The Schools campus is located in the middle of the village. Nikama Lower Primary school was set up in 1929. At present 99 students are studying in this school and it has four teachers including a Head Master, Mr. Arun Das. He himself manages the accounts of the

school because there is no provision for clerical posts in the lower level schools. Nikama Middle English School and Nikama Madhya Banga School were established before independence in 1930 and 1936 respectively. Now 340 students are studying in the Middle English School headed by a Barman lady Mrs. Prava Rani Barman. This school has 14 teachers and about 100 students and upto seven standard. Nikama High and Higher Secondary School has a capacity of 300 students. It is from eighth standard to twelve standard. It has 24 teachers. Mrs. Viva Rani Barman (Dutta) is the present Principal of this school.

All the four schools have Assam-Type building in the same campus. The Higher Secondary section is under construction and very soon will be completed. All the four educational institutions are well maintained and have good number of students from both the communities i.e. Barman and Bengali. The medium of instruction is *Bangla*. For college level education and for other professional courses the students mainly go to Amraghat, Motinagar, Sonai and Silchar.

LITERACY RATE

The literacy rate is one of the important indicators of development. The patterns of literacy rate in the study villages may provide vital information about the process of development among the Barman, as education is considered as an agent of modernisation. Here an attempt has been made to analyse the literacy rate in two different ways, the first one is the most general trend that is the ratio of male and female literacy in all the three study villages and secondly, to analyse the literacy rate in different clans of the Barmans.

Among the Barmans the clan plays a significant role. The existence of clan hierarchy is noticed among the Barmans of the study area. There are fifteen clan groups existing in the three study villages out of total 39 male clans. These clans may be classified into two categories mainly Royal clans and Non-royal clans. The royal clans in the three study villages are *Thaosan, Halflongbar, Hasnusa and Fonglosa*. The non-royal clans of these study villages are *Johrisa, Warisa, Khersa, Bodo, Rajiyung, Jeedgung, Kemprai, Langthasa, Hojai and Johrasa*. During the Kachari rule and during the British rule the royal clans enjoyed a higher status in the society in terms of economic prosperity, political power and education.

Therefore, an attempt is made to analyse the literacy rates and level of education in the three study villages. In Nikama village eight clans are found namely *Thaosan, Halflongbar and Fonglosa*, of royal group and *Hojai, Khersa, Johrasa, Warisa and Khersa* belonging to non-royal group. In case of Kumacherra, out of seven clans *Langthasa, Diphusa, Bodo or Buttery, Zeedgung, Kemprai* are of non-royal group, while remaining two clans namely *Fonglosa and Hasnusa* are of royal group. In Dormikhal, there are six clans in the village. Among them two belong to royal group i.e. *Halflongbar and Fonglosa*, and remaining four clans namely, *Langthasa, Kemprai, Khersa and Rajiyung* belong to royal group.

Before we analyse the data along the clan line it shall be in the fitness of the things first to analyse the comparative literacy rate among the three study villages.. The table 6.1. presents a comparative picture of the male and female literacy rates in the three study villages.

TABLE 6.1.

LITERACY RATE IN THE STUDY VILLAGES

Sl. No.	Name of the village	No. of Total males	No. of Total literate male	Percentage male literates	No. of Total female	No. of Total literate female	Percentage of literate females	No. of total person	No. of total literate person	Percentage
1	Kumacherra	291	175	60.14	262	147	56.10	553	322	58.22
2	Dormikhal	152	103	67.76	167	105	62.87	319	208	65.20
3	Nilkama	132	99	75.00	126	79	62.60	258	178	68.99

The data presented in table 6.1. show that in Kumacherra village the rate of male literacy is high (60.14%) in comparison to female literacy rate (56.1 percent). However, the overall literacy rate is 58.22 percent in this village. It suggest that the literacy rate of the village is good and more than half of the villagers are literate where literacy of India in comparison with the village 52.11 percent (1991 census). In case of Dormikhal the rate of male literacy is 67.76 percent where females are 62.87 percent literates. However the overall literacy rate of the village is 65.20 percent. So it suggest that in Dormikhal village both males and females are almost equally literate and percentage is also high in comparism to all India literacy rate. In Nikama the male literacy rate is highest amongst all the three study villages i.e. 75.00 percent but in case of female literacy there is a sudden fall with 62.69 percent whereas overall village literacy rate is 68.99 percent.

If we put the above mentioned three villages on a continuum of development, the village Kumarcherra would be relatively at the lower end as it is typical traditional village, the position of the village Dormikhal would be in the middle of the continuum scale and Nikama would be on the higher side of the scale. But sudden decrease in female literacy rate of Nikama suggests that with the development the gender stratification started in the village where as in case of both Kumacherra and Dormikhal it is observed that both male and female literacy rate show balanced rate of literacy. When we analyse the data along the clan line, particularly the sexwise distribution of the literacy rate between the royal and non-royal clans some significant differences are observed in the literacy rates. The sex wise literacy rate among the royal and Non-royal clans of Kumacherra village is shown in the table 6.2.

TABLE 6.2**SEX WISE LITERACY RATE AMONG THE ROYAL AND NON-ROYAL CLANS OF KUMACHERRA**

Sl No.	Clan Group of person	Total No person	Total No. of literate person	Percentage
1.	Male	267	159	59.55
	Non-Royal Female	220	129	58.64
2.	Male	35	19	54.29
	Royal Female	31	15	48.39
	Total	553	32	58.23

The data presented in the table 6.2 indicate that in Kumacherra village most of the population belong to non-royal group. Out of total population (553 persons) of the village 267 males and 220 females belong to the non-royal group. The average literacy rate among the non-royal males is 59.55 percent, while it is 54.29 percent on case of royal males, which is relatively less in comparison to non-royal males.

In case of female literacy a significant difference can be observed between the royal and non-royal clans. The average female literacy of the non-royal clans is 58.64 percent, while it is about 10 percent less in case of royal females with an average female literacy of 48.39 percent.

From the above analysis we may infer that as far as the literacy is concerned the non-royal clans are relatively advanced in comparison to royal clans in Kumacherra village.

The status of literacy rate among different clans may present more clear picture. The clanwise distribution of male literacy in Kumacherra village is shown in the table 6.3.

TABLE 6.3

CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE LITERACY IN KUMACHERRA

Sl. No.	Name of the family Clan	Total No. of Males	Total No. of literate Male	Percentage
NON-ROYAL CLAN				
1.	Diphusa	13	8	61.53
2.	Langthasa	203	122	60.09
3.	Bodo	4	3	75.00
4.	Kemprai	36	19	52.63
5.	Zeedung	11	7	63.63
ROYAL CLAN				
6.	Hasnusa	23	12	52.17
7.	Fonglosa	12	7	58.33
	Total	302	178	58.94

The data presented in the above table indicate that in village Kumacherra out of five non-royal clans Bodo clan possess highest literacy rate with 75.00 percent followed by *Zeedung* clan with 63.63 percent. The Kemprai clan of non-royal group shows relatively less literacy rate with 52.77 percent. In case of other two non-royal clans,

namely, *Diphusa* and *Langthasa* literacy rates are 61.53 percent and 60.09 percent respectively.

In case of two royal clans *Fonglosa* has highest literacy rate with 58.33 percent while *Hasnusa* clan has 52.17 percent literacy rate. Thus, it becomes clear that there is some variation in male literacy rates within and between royal and non-royal groups of the village.

The analysis of female literacy on the line of clan order in Kumacherra village is shown in the table 6.4.

TABLE 6.4
CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE LITERACY IN
KUMACHERRA

Sl. No.	Name of the family Clan	Total No. of Females	Total No. of literate Female	Percentage
NON-ROYAL CLAN				
1.	Diphusa	9	5	55.55
2.	Langthasa	164	97	59.14
3.	Bodo	5	3	60.00
4.	Kemprai	32	18	56.25
5.	Zeedgung	10	6	60.00
ROYAL CLAN				
6.	Hasnusa	24	11	45.83
7.	Fonglosa	7	4	57.14
	Total	251	144	57.37

The data presented in table 6.4. indicate that in village Kumacherra among the five non-royal clans *Bodo* and *Zeedgung* possess highest literacy rates with 60 percent in case of female non-royals. It is followed by *Langhasa* clan with 59.14 percent. The remaining two non-royal clans *Diphusa* and *Kemprai* possess almost equal literacy rate i.e. 55.55 percent and 56.25 percent respectively, which is relatively low in comparison to other non-royal clans.

In case of female royal clans *Fonglosa* has 57.14 percent literacy rate which is not only relatively high in comparison to the female literacy rate (45.83 percent) of *Hasnusa* clan of non-royal origin but also high from *Diphusa* and *Kemprai* clans of non-royal group.

Thus, we can say that although average female literacy rate among the non-royal clan is relatively high in comparison to average female literacy rate among the royal clans but at individual clan level significant variation between different clans of both the groups can be observed as far as the female literacy rate is concerned.

In case of Dormikhal village the sexwise distribution the literacy rate between royal and non-royal clans is shown in the table 6.5.

TABLE 6.5

SEX WISE LITERACY RATE AMONG THE ROYAL AND NON-ROYAL CLAN OF DORMIKHAL

Sl No.	Clan Group of person	Total No person	Total No. of literate person	Percentage
1.	Male	78	55	70.51
	Royal Female	67	42	62.69
2.	Male	74	48	64.86
	Non-Royal Female	99	63	63.64
3.	Male	152	103	67.76
	Total Female	167	105	62.87
	Total	319	208	65.20

The data presented in table 6.5. indicate that the average literacy rate in Dormikhal village is 65.20 percent. The average male literacy rate is relatively high (67.76 percent) in comparison to average female literacy rate (62.87 percent).

The literacy rate among the royal male is 70.51 percent where as among the non-royal males it is 64.86 percent which is relatively low in comparison to the male literacy rate of royal clan.

When the data is analysed along the clan line we find some significant variation. Out of six clans in the village Dormikhal four belongs to non-royal group while remaining two clans belong to royal clan group. The clanwise male literacy among

the different clans of Dormikhal village is shown in the table 6.6.

TABLE - 6.6

CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE LITERACY IN DORMIKHAL

Sl. No.	Name of the family Clan	Total No. of Males	Total No. of literate Female	Percentage
NON-ROYAL CLAN				
1.	Langthasa	50	35	70.00
2.	Khersa	3	2	66.67
3.	Kemprai	12	5	41.66
4.	Rajiyung	9	6	66.67
ROYAL CLAN				
5.	Fonglosa	42	30	71.42
6.	Halfongbar	36	25	69.44
	Total	152	103	67.76

The data show that in village Dormikhal out of four non-royal clans *Langthasa* possesses highest literacy rate with 70 percent and it is followed by *Khersa* and *Rajiyung* clans with 66.67 percent each. However, in case of *Kemprai* clan of non-royal group the male literacy rate is as low as 41.66 percent. Among the royal group *Fonglosa* possesses highest literacy rate with 71.42 percent, while *Halfongbar* of same group possesses 69.44 percent. Here one can note that the male literacy rate in *Fonglosa* clan is highest among all the clans of the village. Thus, it can be inferred that there is a significant variation in male literacy rate among different clans. In case of Dormikhal village there is no sharp difference between royal and non-royal groups as we have observed in male literacy in case of Kumacherra village.

The analysis of female literacy in the line of clan order in Dormikhal village is shown in the table 6.7

TABLE - 6.7
CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE LITERACY IN
DORMIKHAL

Sl. No.	Name of the family clan	Total no. of females	Total no. of literate females	Percentage
NON-ROYAL CLAN				
1	Langhasa	71	50	69.44
2	Khersa	6	3	50.00
3	Kemprai	14	6	42.85
4	Rajiyung	8	4	50.00
ROYAL CLAN				
5	Fonglosa	25	15	60.00
6	Halfongbar	42	27	64.28
	Total	167	105	62.87

The data show that in Dormikhal village out of four non-royal clans *Langhasa* possesses highest literacy rate with 69.44 percent in case of females. It is followed by *Khersa and Rajiyung* clans with 50 percent each. The remaining non-royal clan *Kemprai* has lowest literacy rate with 42.28 percent.

In case of female royal clans *Fonglosa* has 60.00 percent literacy while *Halflongbar* with 64.28 percent literacy rate come at list first rank among the royal clans.

Here one can note that the lowest literacy rate is found incase of *Kemprai* the non-royals clan.

The analysis of data along the clan line, particularly the sexwise distribution of the literacy rate between the royal and non-royal groups shows some significant variation. The sex wise literary rate among the royal clan and non-royal clans of Nikama village is shown in the table 6.8

TABLE - 6.8
SEXWISE LITERACY RATE AMONG THE ROYAL AND
NON-ROYAL CLAN OF NIKAMA

Sl. No.	Clan Group of person	Total No person	Total No. of literate person	Percentage
1.	Male	34	27	79.41
	Royal Female	33	24	72.73
2.	Male	98	66	67.35
	Non-Royal Female	93	58	62.37
3.	Male	132	93	70.45
	Total Female	126	82	65.08
	Total	258	175	67.82

The data presented in table-6.8 indicate that in Nikama village maximum number of population belong to non-royal group. Out of eight clans only three belong to royal group and remaining five belong to non-royal group. Out of total population (258) of the village, 34 males and 33 females belong to the royal clan, while 98 males and 93 females belong to non-royal group. Thus, the population of royal clan is less, in comparison to non-royal clans. The male literacy rate in royal clan group is high as 79.41 percent of the male members of this group are literate. Among the non-royal population, out of every ten about six males are literate. As far as female literacy is concerned in royal group of population it is relatively high (73.73 percent) in comparison to non-royal group (62.37 percent). It is clear from the data that in this village the literacy rate is higher in the royal clans in comparison to non-royal group.

In Nikama village, there are altogether eight clans. Of them, three clans namely, *Halflongbar*, *Thaosan* and *Fonglosa* belongs to the Royal groups while the other five clans - *Hojai*, *Khersa*, *Warisa*, *Johrisa*, and *Johrasa* belong to nos-royal clan group. Clanwise diatribution of male literacy rate in Nikama village is shown in table 6.9.

TABLE - 6.9

CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF MALE LITERACY IN NIKAMA

Sl. No.	Name of the family clan	Total No. of males	Total No. of literate males	Percentage
ROYAL CLAN				
1	Haflongbar	3	3	100.00
2	Thaosen	2	2	100.00
3	Fonglosa	29	22	75.86
NON ROYAL CLAN				
4	Hojai	26	20	76.92
5	Khersa	19	13	68.42
6	Warisa	35	21	60.00
7	Johrasa	11	7	63.64
8	Johrisa	7	5	71.42
	Total	132	93	70.45

The data presented in the table 6.9 show that out of three royal male clans *Haflongbar* and *Thaosen* has highest literacy rate with 100.00 percent each. *Fon-*

glosa clan have 75.86 percent literacy rate which is relatively low in comparison to *Haflongbar* and *Thaosen*. Among the five non-royal female clan Hojai possess highest literacy rate with 76.92 percent which is followed by Johrasa having 71.42 percent. *Khersa Johrisa* and *Warisa* clan have 68.42, 63.64 and 60.00 percent literacy rate respectively.

TABLE - 6.10

CLANWISE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE LITERACY IN NIKAMA

Sl. No.	Name of the family clan	Total No. of females	Total No. of literate females	Percentage
ROYAL CLAN				
1	Haflongbar	6	4	66.67
2	Thaosen	5	3	60.00
3	Fonglosa	22	17	77.27
NON ROYAL CLAN				
4	Hojai	30	21	70.00
5	Khersa	16	10	62.50
6	Warisa	28	16	57.14
7	Johrasa	12	7	58.33
8	Johrisa	7	4	57.14
Total		126	82	65.03

The data presented in the table 6.10 indicate that out of three royal female clans *Fonglosa* has highest literacy rate with 77.27 percent while *Halflongbar* and *Thaosan* clan have 66.67 percent and 60.00 percent literacy rate which is relatively low in comparison to *Fonglosa* clan of the royal group.

Among the five non-royal female clans *Hojai* possesses maximum literacy rate with 70.00 percent which is relatively high amongst all the non-royal clans and second highest among all the clans of the village. It is followed by *Khersa* and *Johrasa* with 62.50 percent and 58.33 percent respectively. While other two clans namely *Warisa* and *Johrisa* possesses same literacy with 57.14 percent.

LEVEL OF EDUCATION :

The expansion of education can also be analysed in terms of the level of education of the villagers in the study villages. For analytical purpose, level of education is categorised into following categories : (i) Non-School going (ii) Illiterates (iii) Primary level (iv) Middle level (v) High School level (vi) Higher Secondary level (vii) Graduate level (viii) Post-Graduate level (ix) Technical education. The distribution of the villagers into these categories in the study villages is shown in table 6.11

TABLE - 6.11

LEVEL OF EDUCATION IN THE STUDY VILLAGES

Sl. No.	Level of Education	Name of the Village			Total
		Kumacherra	Dormikhal	Nikama	
1.	Non-School going	177 (32.01)	89 (27.89)	68 (26.35)	334 (29.55)
2.	Primary level	78 (14.10)	49 (15.36)	46 (17.83)	173 (15.31)
3.	Middle level	144 (25.49)	62 (19.44)	41 (15.89)	244 (21.59)
4.	Higher School level	67 (12.12)	37 (11.59)	39 (15.11)	143 (12.65)
5.	Higher Secondary level	36 (6.51)	39 (12.23)	38 (14.72)	113 (10.0)
6.	Graduate level	– (0.0)	18 (5.64)	11 (4.26)	29 (2.57)
7.	Post-graduate level	– (0.0)	3 (0.9)	2 (0.77)	5 (0.44)
8.	Technical	– (0.0)	7 (2.19)	2 (0.77)	9 (0.79)
9.	Illiterates	54 (9.79)	15 (4.70)	11 (4.26)	80 (7.08)
	Total	553 (100.0)	319 (100.0)	258 (100.0)	1130 (100.0)

The data show that in Kumacherra village the level of education is restricted at Higher secondary level as no-one in this village has attained higher education. About one-third of the total population is of non-school going persons and about one-tenth of the villagers are illiterate. The highest frequency (25.49 percent) is observed at the middle level followed by primary educated (14.10 percent). Only 12.12 percent villagers could attained education upto High School level. Only a few (6.51 percent) have attained the level of Higher Secondary education. Thus, in Kumacherra village the level of education is restricted upto secondary level and majority of them have primary or middle level of education.

In Dormikhal Village, the education has spreaded at all levels. The percentage of non-school going persons and illiterates is relatively low with 26.55 percent and 4.70 percent respectively. Although, most of the villagers have attained primary (15.36%), middle (19.44%), High School (11.59%) and higher secondary level (12.23%) of education. But as many as 18 persons (5.64 percent) have obtained graduate degree and 3 persons have successfully completed their post-graduation. Apart from this 7 persons in this village have passed technical courses from institutions like I.T.I. etc. Thus, in Dormikhal village, a significant amount of educational mobility can be observed at different levels of education.

In Kumacherra village, the spread of education at different levels can be observed. The percentage of higher educated persons are relatively low (5.8 percent) in comparison to Dormikhal village. But one significant development in this village is that one girl has completed M.B.B.S. degree from Silchar Medical College and has joined as a faculty in the Silchar Medical College.

It is clear from the above analysis that in all the study villages the most of the people have primary or secondary level of education but in case of Kumacherra the level of education has halted at secondary level but in other two villages namely, Dormikhal and Nikama, the education has expanded beyond secondary level. Although, amount of mobility to higher level is limited in Dormikhal and Nikama but it may provide sufficient impetus to the process of social and cultural change in those villages. Thus, it can be said that the Barman society of Barak Valley is gradually passing through the process of modernization.

At this juncture, an analysis of educational attainment of male and female population of the village may classify some other dimensions of this process. The distribution of male and female population of the study villages in relation to their level of education is shown in the table 6.12 and 6.13 respectively.

TABLE - 6.12

LEVEL OF EDUCATION AMONG THE MALES IN STUDY VILLAGES

Sl. No.	Level of Education	Name of the Village			Total
		Kumacherra	Dormikhal	Nikama	
1.	Non-School going	85 (29.21)	42 (27.63)	30 (22.72)	157 (27.30)
2.	Illiterate	28 (9.62)	7 (4.60)	5 (3.79)	40 (6.96)
3.	Middle level	83 (28.52)	33 (21.71)	22 (16.67)	138 (24.00)
4.	Higher School level	35 (12.03)	10 (6.58)	18 (13.64)	63 (10.96)
5.	Higher Secondary level	17 (5.84)	11 (7.24)	25 (18.94)	53 (9.22)
6.	Graduate level	– (0.0)	11 (7.24)	6 (4.55)	17 (2.96)
7.	Post-graduate level	– (0.0)	3 (1.97)	1 (0.76)	4 (0.70)
8.	Post-graduate	– (0.0)	3 (1.97)	1 (0.76)	4 (0.70)
9.	Technical	– (0.0)	7 (4.60)	1 (0.76)	8 (1.39)
	Total	291 (100.0)	152 (100.0)	132 (100.0)	575 (100.0)

TABLE - 6.13

LEVEL OF EDUCATION AMONG THE FEMALES IN STUDY VILLAGES

Sl. No.	Level of Education	Name of the Village			Total
		Kumacherra	Dormikhal	Nikama	
1.	Non-School going	92 (35.11)	47 (28.14)	38 (30.16)	177 (31.89)
2.	Illiterate	26 (9.62)	8 (4.60)	6 (3.79)	40 (6.96)
3.	Middle level	83 (28.52)	33 (21.71)	22 (16.67)	138 (24.00)
4.	Higher School level	35 (12.03)	10 (6.58)	18 (13.64)	63 (10.96)
5.	Higher Secondary level	17 (5.84)	11 (7.24)	25 (18.94)	53 (9.22)
6.	Graduate level	– (0.0)	11 (7.24)	6 (4.55)	17 (2.96)
7.	Post-graduate level	– (0.0)	3 (1.97)	1 (0.76)	4 (0.70)
8.	Post-graduate	– (0.0)	3 (1.97)	1 (0.76)	4 (0.70)
9.	Technical	– (0.0)	7 (4.60)	1 (0.76)	8 (1.39)
	Total	262 (100.0)	167 (100.0)	126 (100.0)	555 (100.0)

The data reveal that in Kumacherra and Nikama villages the percentage of non-school going females is relatively high (35.11 percent and 30.16 percent) in comparison to their male counterparts (29.21 percent and 22.72 percent respectively). However, in Dormikhal village, the percentage of non-school going males and females is almost equal (27.63 per cent and 28.14 percent respectively.) There is no significant difference between males and females in the study villages as far as the occurrence of illiteracy as concerned. At the primary level the percentage of females is low (12.57 percent) in comparison to their male counterparts (15.42 percent) in Dormikhal village. While in other two villages, namely, Kumacherra and Nikama, no significant difference is observed between males and females at this level. At the middle level, although percentage of females is relatively low in comparison to males in all the study villages but in Nikama village the difference between males and females is lowest with 1.6 percent, relatively higher in Dormikhal with 4.34 percent and highest in Kumacherra with 4.39 percent. At high school level, the percentage of males and females is almost equal (12.03 percent and 12.21 percent) in Kumacherra village while in Dormikhal village, the percentage of females is very high (16.16 percent) in comparison to their male counterparts (6.58 percent). In Nikama village also the percentage of females is relatively high with 16.67 percent in comparison to their male counterparts (13.64 percent). At higher secondary level, the females are ahead than their male counterparts in Kumacherra and Dormikhal villages but in Nikama village the percentage of males is relatively high (18.94 percent) in comparison of females (10.31 percent). At the level of higher education, the males percentage is high both at graduate and post-graduate and technical levels in

both Dormikhal and Nikama villages. In Kumacherra both the males and females could not attained higher level of education.

From the above analysis it is now clear that both the male and female population in all the three study villages are educationally mobile. But in the case of Kumacherra village, the mobility in the educational ladder could not go beyond the higher secondary level. However, in case of other two villages, namely, Dormikhal and Nikama, both the male and female have reached to the level of higher education. Thus, it can be inferred that the amount and range of educational mobility is relatively high in Dormikhal and Nikama villages in comparison to Kumacherra village which is located in a remote area of Cachar district. It suggests the pace of modernization is faster in Nikama and Dormikhal villages. However, Kumacherra village is lagging behind in this regard.

To sum up, the education during the Kachari rule was elitist in nature and it initiated the process of stratification among the Barman, in the sense, that, it created two strata, one of those who belongs to royal families and clans and attained certain level of education particularly in Sanskrit and Bangali literature. Another stratum was formed by the illiterate tribal masses who were not encouraged at all to get education by the ruling class. During this period, the traditional dialect of the Barman namely *Dimasa* developed as a written language having *Bangla* script. It was the result of growing contact with the people of undivided Bengal particularly natives of Sylhet area. During the British rule a number of educational institutions were established in Cachar district but the spread of secular education was, however,

confined to urban areas. In post-independence period, the spread of secular education took place more rapidly as a number of educational institutions were established both in rural and urban areas in order to accelerate the process of modernisation in Indian society, which provided an opportunity to the members of the Barman Society to enhance their educational status.

Among the three study villages the literacy rate is lowest in Kumacherra (58.22 percent). Dormikhal village has a relatively better position (65.20 percent) while Nikama village has highest literacy rate (66.99). The female literacy rate is relatively low in comparison to their male counterparts in all the three villages. Although in Kumacherra and Dormikhal village the difference between the male and female literacy is almost similar (4.04 percent and 4.89 percent respectively), however, in case of Nikama, it is (12.31 percent) relatively very high which indicates that sex discrimination increased in Nikama village as a result of changes in tribal ethos and adoption of Hindu ethos in their social life.

The clanwise analysis of male and female literacy rate in the study villages indicates that rate of literacy among different clans varies marginally in case of both male and female population.

The level of education also varies in the study villages, the percentage of non-school going is highest (32.01 percent) in Kumacherra and lowest (26.35 percent) in Nikama. Among those who have completed their education, the data show that the percentage of primary educated is highest (17.83 percent) in Nikama and lowest (14.10 percent) in Kumacherra. In case of those educated upto middle level the

number is highest (25.49 percent) in Kumacherra and lowest (15.89 percent) in Nikama. However, the percentage of those who educated upto high school level, Dormikhal village has lowest (11.59 percent) and Nikama has highest (15.11 percent) percentage. Among those who have completed twelve years of schooling Kumacherra has lowest (18.63 percent) position, while Nikama has highest position (29.83 percent). As far as higher education is concerned, in Kumacherra village not a single person has attained graduate or post graduate degree. But in Dormikhal and Nikama villages some of the members of both the sexes have attained higher education and technical education.

It can be said that in all the study villages sufficient amount of educational mobility has taken place at the primary and secondary levels but in case of Kumacherra village it could not go up beyond the higher secondary level. However, in case of other two villages, namely, Nikama and Dormikhal, both the males and females could reached to the level of higher education. Thus, amount and range of educational mobility is relatively high in Nikama and Dormikhal in comparison to Kumacherra which is located in remote part of the Cachar district. It suggests that the pace of modernization, as reflected in terms of educational attainments of the villagers, is faster in Dormikhal and Nikama villages while, Kumacherra is lagging behind in this respect due to its locational disadvantage.

II. COMMUNICATION

Communication is the process by which two or more people exchange ideas, facts, feelings or impressions in ways that each gains a common understanding of

the meaning, intent and use of messages (Leagans 1961). Interpersonal communications have been a striking feature of traditional communication system in tribal societies. Interpersonal communication can be categorised into different types on the basis of its place and nature of performance.

In traditional Barman society, different places of interpersonal communications namely market (bazar), religious places and residence of village chief (Khunag's residence). However, in contemporary Barman society, the youth clubs have emerged as important institutions where interpersonal communications take place.

The Market : In Kumacherra village, there are few permanent shops at the entry point of the village. The villagers usually purchase articles of daily use from these shops. The villagers usually sit in group at this place in the evening and interpersonal communications take place between them. In every Sunday a weekly market is organized near this place. The residents of the neighbouring villages also come to purchase articles of household consumption in this weekly market. The shopkeepers come from nearby villages and towns. Thus, it facilitates not only interpersonal communications among the villagers of different villages but also as a unit of rural-urban articulations.

In Dormikhal village also there are few permanent shops at the crossing point from where approach road to the village starts. The villagers usually sit here and wait for the bus. This is one of the important place where interpersonal communications takes place. A weekly market is also organized on both the sides of the approach road on every Wednesday. In this weekly market the villagers sell their agricultural products and other trading activities also take place. This weekly market

started during the British period. Since 1974 this market is under the jurisdiction of village panchayat. Thus, it is an important place where interpersonal communications between people of different villages and town occur.

In Nikama village, although there are few permanent shops but these shops are scattered and do not form a market complex as in cases of the other two study villages. The major centre of marketing activities is a neighbouring village, namely, Ganganagar where there is a permanent market complex. The villagers go to this market whenever the need arises. A weekly market is also organised at Ganganagar market complex on every Saturday. In this weekly market mainly agricultural products are sold. This market place operates as a centre of not only economic exchanges but also a centre of interpersonal communication among the people of different villages and towns.

Thus, in all the study villages weekly market is an important place of interpersonal communications. However, small market complex in Kumacherra and Dormikhal facilitate the process of interpersonal communication among the villagers as a routine affair. But in case of Nikama where shops are scattered no such complex exist within the village.

RELIGIOUS PLACES :

In Kumacherra, the *Than* of Sibrai (temple of Lord Shiva) is an important place where people gather in the evening for prayer. Apart from religious activities information is also exchanged among the villagers.

In Dormikhal, the followers of Saibaba (a religious Saint) organise an evening prayer in the village. The place of prayer rotates from the house of one devotee to the other everyday. After the prayer interpersonal communication among the devotees take place.

In Nikama, no such religious activity is organised.

KHUNANG'S RESIDENCE :

Traditionally, the *Khunang* was the head of the village. He was the representative of the Barman king at the village level. He enjoyed the highest power in the village. Under him some functionaries were supposed to discharge their duties. These functionaries were *Delik, Daolatho, Farai, Hangchaobukhu*. The house of *Khunang* was the centre of interpersonal activities in the village. The *Daolatho* was the agent of the *Khunang* whose task was to gather relevant information within and around the village and communicate the information to the *Khunang*. Therefore, *Khunang's* residence had a significance as it was the centre of all communications. This system continued even after the downfall of Kachari King in 1832 as Britishers did not interfere in tribal polity and system and *Khunang* became the agent of British administration. In post-independence period, the institution of *Khunang* is still in existence and his house is continuing as centre of village activities. Therefore, his residence is one of the important place where decisions are taken and communicated to the villagers.

Apart from these traditional forms of communication which are already un-

der the process of modernization some new groups and institutions of interpersonal communication have been emerged in the Barman villages. The Youth clubs, Mahila Samiti and specialised opinion leaders are entities which have grown in the village in the post independence period and represent to the forces of social change in the village.

THE CLUB

The emergence of Youth Clubs and *Mahila Samiti* in the Barman villages is a phenomenon which came into existence in post-independence period. These clubs and Samities are the centres where youth and women participate in leisure time activities such as games, gossips, discussions etc. In Kumacherra, *Dimasa Hosom* is the name of Youth Club. It is a centre of leisure time activities of village youth. In Dormikhal this need is fulfilled by *Dormi Youth Club*. In Nikama, apart from a Youth Club, namely, Nikama, Mahila Samiti where housewives gathered in the afternoon and make gossip.

Thus, in all the there study villages Youth Cubs exist while in Nikama a Mahila Samity, also exist. These institutions are important centres where the members exchange information among them.

Apart from these institutions one specialized opinion leaders have also emerged in the villages. A number of persons can be included in this category. The teachers in educational institutions play the role of specialized opinion leaders as they not only provide specialized advice in educational matters but also in other spheres of social life. Similarly, the government officials and staff who work as government

functionaries at the village level, such as, village level workers, *Angan Wadi* workers, staff of Dispensary etc. also act as specialized opinion leaders in the village. The students who have gone outside the village for getting higher education or technical education have an elite status in the village and are consulted by the villages in many cases.

Thus, expansion of educations in the study villages gradually accelerating the process of change by exposing the villages not only to the contents and ethos of secular education but also affecting the traditional inter personal communication system of the village to a great extent.

MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATION

The growth of mass media is an important parameter of modernization in a society. In last two decades the growth of mass medias in rural India has taken place in a significant manner. The villagers are coming in contact with the wider world through modern mass media communication. The patterns of mass media communication can be analysed in terms of the exposure of the villegers to newspaper, radio, television and cinema.

NEWSPAPER : In Kumacherra, there are 12 subscribers of newspapers. It covers 10.01 percent of the total households of the village. The most popular newspapers are local Bengali dailies, namely, Jugasankha and Sonar Cachar published from Silchar.

In Dormikhal, number of newspaper subscribers is higher with 46.97 percent

of the total households. Similarly, in Nikama as many as 40.28 percent of the total household subscribe a newspaper. In these village Banagla dailies published from Silchar are subscribed.

Thus, readership of newspaper is low in Kumacherra but high in case of Dormikhal and Nikama.

RADIO : Transistorised radio acts as the major mass medium for the villagers. In Kumacherra village about one-third (31.53 percent) of total households own a radio sets. In Dormikhal as many as 43.55 percent of the total households have radio set. The ownership of radio set declines to 32.76 percent in case of Nikama village. Most of the villagers tune their radio set to listen news, film songs, programmes related to agriculture and Dimasa programmes broadcast from Silchar All India Radio.

Thus, radio is an important medium of mass communication in all the three villages.

TELEVISION : As an audio-visual medium, television has emerged as a principal source of information and entertainment both in urban and rural areas in last two decades. The ownership of a television is now status symbol in rural areas. The patterns of T.V. ownership in the study villages are shown in the table 6.14.

Table - 6.14

PATTERNS OF T.V. OWNERSHIP IN STUDY VILLAGES

S.No.	Name of the villages	Total No of House households	No. of T.V. Sets	Percentage
1.	Kumacherra	111	17	15.32
2.	Dormikhal	62	21	33.87
3.	Nikama	58	23	39.66

The data reveal that the phenomenon of television has entered in all the study villages. In Kumacherra it is owned by 15.32 percent of the total households while in Dormikhal and Nikama the percentage of T.V. owners is relatively high with 33.87 percent and 39.66 percent respectively.

In rural situations of India the ownership of mass media is not accurate indicator of the exact number of their users/beneficiaries. In rural life people share their assets with other villagers. Therefore, a newspaper is read by more than one family, the important programmes related to agriculture or news are listen in group situation. Similarly, T.V. viewership is, in fact, much more higher than the number of owners of television in the village. Thus, another way of analysing the data is to compute number of persons or households against one T.V. set/Raido set/Newspaper in a village. The data presented in the table 6.15 give a picture of mas media communication in the study villages from this point of view.

TABLE 6.15

PATERNS OF MASS MEDIA COMMUNICATIONS IN STUDY VILLAGES

MEDIUM	KUMACHERRA	DORMIKHAL	NIKAMA
NEWSPAPER			
No. of persons per Newspaper	46	11	9
No of households per newspaper	9	2	2
RADIO			
No of persons per radio set	16	12	14
No of households per radio sets	7	5	4
TELEVISION			
No of Persons per T.V. set	33	15	11
No. of Households per T.V. set	7	3	3

The data reveal that Nikama village is most advanced village as far as expansion of mass media is concerned. Number of persons per newspaper is low in Nikama (9) and Dormikhal (11) while it is more than 4 times high in Kumacherra (46).

The number of persons against per radio set in Kumacherra is 16, more or less similar pattern is observed in the other two study villages - Dormikhal and Nikama were it is 12 and 14 respectively. It suggests that there is no much difference in the expansion of radio in the study villages.

But in case of television, in Kumacherra, number of persons against one T.V. set is 33 which is more than 2 time greater in compansion to Dormikhal and exactly 3 times greater than Nikama.

From the above, it is clear that in case of Dormikhal and Nikama there is no much difference in the coverage of mass media communications but the village Kumacherra is lagging behind as far as expansion of mass media is concerned.

The education during the Kachari rule was elitist in nature and initiated the process of stratification among the Barman, in the sense, that it created two starta, one of those who belonged to royal families and clans and attained certain level of education particularly in Sanskrit and Bengali literature. Another stratum was formed by the illiterate tribal masses that were not encouraged at all to get education by the ruling class. During this period the traditional dialect of the Barman, namely, Dimasa developed as a written language having Bangla script. It was the result of growing contact with the people of undivided Bengal particularly natives of sylhet area. During the British rule, a number of educational institutions were established in Cachar district but the spread of secular education was however, confined to urban areas. In post- independence period, the spread of secular education took place more rapidly as a number of educational institutions were established both in rural and urban areas in order to accelerate the process of modernization in Indian society, which provided an opportunity to the members of the Barman society to enhance their educational status.

Among the three study villages literacy rate is lowest in Kumacherra (58.22

percent). Dormikhal has relatively better position with 65.20 per cent while Nikama village has highest literacy rate (66.99 per cent). The female literacy rate is relatively low in comparison to their male counterparts in all the three study villages. Although in Kumacherra and Dormikhal village, but the difference between the male and female literacy is almost similar (4.04 percent and 4.89 percent respectively), however, in case of Nikama, it is relatively high (12.3 per cent) which indicates that sex discrimination increased in Nikama village as a result of changes in tribal ethos and adoption of Hindu ethos in their social life.

The clan-wise analysis of male and female literacy rate in the study villages indicates that rate of literacy among different semfongs varies marginally in case of both male and female population.

The level of education also varies in the study villages. The percentage of non-school going is highest (32.01 per cent) in Kumacherra and lowest (26.35 per cent) in Nikama. Among those who have completed their education, the percentage of primary educated is highest (17.83 per cent) in Nikama and lowest (14.10 per cent) in Kumacherra. In case of those educated up to middle level, the number is highest (25.49 per cent) in Kumacherra and lowest (15.89 per cent) in Nikama. However, the percentage of those who educated up to high school level, Dormikhal village has lowest position (11.59 per cent) and Nikama has highest (15.11 per cent) position. Among those who have completed twelve years of schooling Kumacherra has lowest (18.63 percent) position, while Nikama has highest position (29.33 percent). As far as higher education is concerned, in Kumacherra village, not a single person has attained graduate or post-graduate degree. But in Dormikhal and Nikama

villages some of the members of both the sexes have attained higher education and technical education.

It can be said that in all the study villages significant amount of educational mobility has taken place both at the primary and secondary levels but in case of Kumacherra village it could not go up beyond the higher secondary level. However in case of other two villages, namely Nikama and Dormikhal, both the male and the female could reach to the level of higher education. Thus, amount and range of educational mobility is relatively high in Nikama and Dormikhal in comparison to Kumacherra, which is located in a remote part of Cachar district. It suggests that the pace of modernization, as reflected in terms of educational attainments of the villagers is faster in Dormikhal and Nikama village while, Kumacherra is lagging behind in this respect due to its locational disadvantage.

The education during the Kachari rule was elitist in nature and initiated the process of stratification among the Barman, in the sense, that it created two strata, one of those who belonged to royal families and clans and attained certain level of education particularly in Sanskrit and Bengali literature. Another stratum was formed by the illiterate tribal masses that were not encouraged at all to get education by the ruling class. During this period the traditional dialect of the Barman, namely, Dimasa developed as a written language having Bangla script. It was the result of growing contact with the people of undivided Bengal particularly natives of sylhet area. During the British rule, a number of educational institutions were established in Cachar district but the spread of secular education was however, confined to urban areas. In post- independence period, the spread of secular education took place

more rapidly as a number of educational institutions were established both in rural and urban areas in order to accelerate the process of modernization in Indian society, which provided an opportunity to the members of the Barman society to enhance their educational status.

Among the three study villages literacy rate is lowest in Kumacherra (58.22 percent). Dormikhal has relatively better position with 65.20 per cent while Nikama village has highest literacy rate (66.99 per cent). The female literacy rate is relatively low in comparison to their male counterparts in all the three study villages. Although in Kumacherra and Dormikhal village, but the difference between the male and female literacy is almost similar (4.04 percent and 4.89 percent respectively), however, in case of Nikama, it is relatively high (12.3 per cent) which indicates that sex discrimination increased in Nikama village as a result of changes in tribal ethos and adoption of Hindu ethos in their social life.

The clan-wise analysis of male and female literacy rate in the study villages indicates that rate of literacy among different semfongs varies marginally in case of both male and female population.

The level of education also varies in the study villages. The percentage of non-school going is highest (32.01 per cent) in Kumacherra and lowest (26.35 per cent) in Nikama. Among those who have completed their education, the percentage of primary educated is highest (17.83 per cent) in Nikama and lowest (14.10 per cent) in Kumacherra. In case of those educated up to middle level, the number is highest (25.49 per cent) in Kumacherra and lowest (15.89 per cent) in Nikama. However, the percentage of those who educated up to high school level, Dormikhal village has lowest position (11.59 per cent) and Nikama has highest (15.11 per cent)

position. Among those who have completed twelve years of schooling Kumacherra has lowest (18.63 percent) position, while Nikama has highest position (29.83 percent). As far as higher education is concerned, in Kumacherra village, not a single person has attained graduate or post-graduate degree. But in Dormikhal and Nikama villages some of the members of both the sexes have attained higher education and technical education.

It can be said that in all the study villages significant amount of educational mobility has taken place both at the primary and secondary levels but in case of Kumacherra village it could not go up beyond the higher secondary level. However in case of other two villages, namely Nikama and Dormikhal, both the male and the female could reach to the level of higher education. Thus, amount and range of educational mobility is relatively high in Nikama and Dormikhal in comparison to Kumacherra, which is located in a remote part of Cachar district. It suggests that the pace of modernization, as reflected in terms of educational attainments of the villagers is faster in Dormikhal and Nikama village while, Kumacherra is lagging behind in this respect due to its locational disadvantage.