

# **Chapter- I**

## **Framework of the study**

The present chapter is aimed to discuss about the framework of the study. The chapter deals to understand the concept of social and cultural change, existing survey of literature and to analyse the process of socio-cultural change in India. Lastly discuss about the objective of the study, methodology, data collection and analysis, variable of the study and scope of the present study.

### **Concept of Social and Cultural change**

Society with their cultures which forms the subject matter of sociology is always exposed to one form of process of change or the other. The process of socio-cultural change has been focused by many sociologist of the field of academic discipline (Slawu, 2010). Socio-cultural change is the concepts of sociology. T.B. Bottomore define social change “as a change in social structure (including here change in the size of the society), or in particular social institutions, or in the relationships between institution” and define cultural change as “to variations in cultural phenomenon such as knowledge and ideas, art, religious and moral doctrines etc.” (Bottomore, 1971). According to him social and cultural changes are closely linked in many cases and both two concepts are closely linked to changes of societies. When we discuss about the social change in one side it linkages to culture in other side.

Concept of social change is a widely discussed about the subject matter but its theoretical position in sociology remained controversial during the formative phase. At that time sociology was deeply attached to historical reconstruction and generalization of social change. Sociologists like Comte, Spencer, Marx, and Pareto contributions about social and cultural evolution and its laws were oriented to historical reconstruction similar to the works of Henry Morgan, McLennan,

Bachofan and Henry Maine. During that period social change was the central concern of sociology and it had a nascent ideological bias that of universal progress of mankind and unliner course in social evolution for all societies following the western model (Singh, 1974).

During the decade 1920-58, the concept of social change became unpopular among the sociologists and sociological focus shifted from evolution of social change forms to their function sociological study focus shifted from evolution of social forms to their functions. In this period Macro-sociological generalization gave way to small group studies and micro-sociological theorizing focus sociology studies shifted to system integration and boundary maintain functions of social forms. Those study emphasis on field studies and collection of first hand empirical data. This period sociological studies reflected on social system with organic system and of a process of biological evolution. At that time Spencer functionalism approach may be dominated in the field of sociological study.

During the decade following 1958, a revival study of social change can be observed in western sociology. The theoretical presuppositions of functional analysis come increasingly under fire (R.Dahrendof, 1958; C. W Mills, 1959; Homans-1964) during this period. The sociologists of functionalist orientation to demonstrate the effectiveness of their model for analysis social change also (Smelser 1959 and 1963; Parson 1964). The most important factor for emerged revival of interest in social change was the process of decolonization of Asia, Africa and Latin America. In these countries, revolutionary change was dominant national aspiration and ideology than continuity. In the western sociologists the younger generations interested to study their own country in a new value and a new social order, which can be overcome the structural-functionalist approach. Consequently, analysis of social change again became a central concern of sociology. The theoretical framework was gradually emerged in contemporary sociological paradigm namely functional perspective and conflict perspective. The functional paradigm can be

traced in the work of Talcott person particularly in his theory of evolutionary universal and pattern variables schemes. Parson largely concerned the conceptual structure in the thought of classical sociologists and elaborated new concepts 'social action' within the framework. Person structural functionalist system theory has been corporate structural modernization model studies social, economic and political development. The central concept of Person social system and social change is differentiation. Smelser model of structural differentiation is based on structural modernization and it determine of socio-economic development of developing country. Marxist model studies mainly emphasis on economic interest of different group in a society. Karl Marx studies mainly based conflict perspective which led to conflict between different classes mainly bourgeoisie and proletariat class for economic purpose.

The theoretical growth of sociology in India has been deeply influenced by its development in the west, particularly the United Kingdom (U.K) and the United States of America (U.S.A). In the field of social and cultural system in India a number of the British and European scholars work various descriptive studies from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning their studies attempted to analyse the process of social and cultural change in Indian society. But Indian sociological tradition does not seem the theoretical fluctuations such as evolutionary, functionalist and neo-evolutionary for the analysis of social change in west. In India, the concept social changes have been developed by sociologists who are clearly oriented to the structural functional methods. Indian sociologist have more concerned with the process of social accommodation and adaptation rather than with abstract theory building which is so much in evidence in the western sociology of the past and contemporary times. Indian Sociologist Radhakamal Mukharjee only systematic effort is made towards abstract theorization or model-building may be found in his studies. Therefore most of the sociological studies in India tend to be substantive rather than theoretical. Consequently, the analysis of change in one form or another

is inherent in most sociological writings right from its early days (Singh, 1974).

During the first quarter of twentieth century sociology as distinct from historiography and social philosophy emerged slowly in India. The pace in this regard was set by early British and European 'orientalist', 'missionaries', and 'administration', turned ethnographers and cultural historians (Cohan, 1968. 3-28;). In the Indian tradition finds a metaphysical rather than sociological treatment of change. The major categories of Indian tradition are 'hierarchy', 'holish', 'continuity', and transcendence (Yogendra Singh 1973) and change as such forms less than agriculture central category in Hindu metaphysic and social philosophy. The concept of change in tradition links with the differentiation of the timeless and eternal.

The Indian sociological formation of the concept of social change was beginning in the writings of the British and Indian scholars in the last quarter of 19<sup>th</sup> century and onwards. Gradually, some approaches emerged to study social change and those are following types- (1) Evolutionary approaches, (2) Cultural approaches; Sanskritization- Westernization; Little and Great Tradition and Multiple Traditions, (3) Structural approaches, Differentiation and Mobility approaches (4) Dialectical-Historical approach and (5) Cognitive-Historical Approach (Singh, 1974). These approaches are briefly review and summarized to conceptualize of the problem.

### **Evolutionary Approach**

Sociologists and ethnographers were conducted studies on the basis of three themes i.e. the village community, caste, family through evolutionary approach in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. A number of scholars were influenced by the evolutionary approach and concentrated to study on the stage through which institution like caste, family, marriage and kingship and village community passed in the course of their growth (Tylor, Starcks, Lubbok, McLennan, Morgan and Frazer). Evolutionary formulation implies that social forms and traditions in India were

lower stage of growth compared by the western forms and structure. Their studies were mainly concentrate change of social institution like family, marriage, kingship system. Cohan (1968) studied about the change of traditional custom in the village communities of India. The origin of caste and its racial composition formed the frequent them for evolution speculations work were conducted by Crook (1896), Lbbetson (1916), Risley (1915), N.K Dutta (1931), Ghurya (1945), Guah (1937), and Hutton (1946). These studies emphasis was the uniformity to the origin of caste system in India. The studies of village and land system were similarly oriented either to finding out the historical stage of growth and succession forms (Henry S. Maine, 1890; Baden-Powel 1892 and 1908). The evolutionary process of theoretical formulations of Indian society implies that social form and traditions in India at lower stage of growth compared to the western forms and structure. Therefore the studies were sometime overt and sometime silent, this type of interpretation of the Indian social system and culture evoked a feeling of resentment among many Indian scholars like B.N. Seal, Radha Kamal Mukhargee (Singh, 1967).

During the second quarter of the twentieth century Indian sociology and social anthropology became essentially empirical and the analysis of field-data replaced speculative generalizations. The empirical data shifted from the process of change to that of integration and functioning of the system. All these studies were conducted in micro level and strictly empirical character which analyzed strictly in terms of observation and functions of the systems concerned between two points of time. All sociologists and scholars emphasized that social and cultural change occurs through the process of evolution. Stark (1958), conducted study on social change, his study was formulated the process of change in Indian Traditions. He analyzed social change in sociological point of view where the essential reality by rule of correspondence forms an essential component for verification in each postulated categorical or conceptual model.

## **Cultural Approach**

Cultural approach is an important approach to study social change in India. M.N.Srinivas (1952) formulated two concepts namely 'Sanskritization' and 'Westernization' to systematically studies social and cultural change in India. Sanskritization represents actual for aspired for cultural mobility within the framework of the 'established 'great tradition' and stratification system of caste system in India. Srinivas define Sanskritization "as the process by which a 'low' caste or tribe or other groups takes over the custom, ritual, beliefs, ideology and style of life of a high and in particular a 'twice born' (dwija) caste" (Srinivas,1966). Sanskritization as a concept not only identified a very crucial aspect of the process of change in Indian culture and its institutions but the use of this term soon led to beginning of a debate in Indian sociology which has not yet come to conclusion(singh,1974). Sanskritisation process studies social change through caste hierarchy system of Indian society and the social system of caste hierarchy of social position of expectations about conformity to ideal Hindu conduct norms. Sanskritisation is the process of cultural and social mobility of relative closer of the Hindu society particularly in India. Sanskritisation is an extremely complex and heterogeneous concept of social change. It is not a concept at which synchronic analyses could ever arrive in order to explain material obtained by synchronic analysis (Staal, 1955-56). Sanskritization helps to identify the cultural or 'positional' and not the structural for of social change. However, it existence of structural constrains on pressures in social system. It is a process to dominant castes or groups that offer themselves model of cultural mobility as function of power by the lower hierarchy group.

Srinivas concept of 'Westernization' and 'Secularization' is closely associated with Sanskritisation. Westernization refers to all cultural changes and institutional innovations in India as this country came into political and cultural contact with western nations, primarily the United Kingdom (U.K). Secularization is

a counterpart of the process of westernization specially as it emerges after independence as a national ideology. This type of ideology calls for a spirit of religious and cultural tolerance and its co-existence amongst the religious groups. It also refers to various legislative and constitutional provisions that have been made in India to reinforce its foundations. Srinivas has thus attempted to portray the most important processes of social change in India through these three concepts.

Little and great tradition in the process of social change in India has also been studied and analyzed with the help of the concept of tradition and its social organization. This Approach emanates from the work of Robert Redfield in Mexico. Those societies have a deeper historical past and civilization of maturity, Redfield postulated a series of cultural and social organizational level at which the process should be analysed (Redfield, 1955-56). Redfield mention that each civilization consist a traditions, one of the elites or reflective few where it is formally articulated and other of the folk or unlettered peasants. The former he called 'Great tradition' and the latter 'Little' Tradition. Each tradition has its own social organization that is institutionalize roles, statuses, and personal. Both tradition take together symbolize a world view which represent the unity of civilization (Singh, 1974). These traditions are not impervious to change organizing form within and without. Each tradition developed in terms of its own internal creative urge, an orthogenetic process. But simultaneously tradition also came under external impact of tradition outside their own civilizational matrix. This process of change may happen through historical contact, war and political domination or migration or communication. Civilization and their social structures also change through these external contacts or hetrogenetic process. Redfiled assumed that all civilization begins with orthogenetic or primary process of growth and keep on transforming themselves through heterogentic contact. Presumably, at some point of time the hetrogenetic contacts among civilizations might lead to universal form of civilization. Milton Singer (1959) and Marriott (1955) has been applied this process to study Indian society to

understood the reality of social change. After the study Milton Singer formulates a series of statements about cultural change in India. Singer writes about cultural change of Indian society is “ (i) that because India had a ‘primary’ or ‘indigenous’ civilization which has been fashioned out of pre-existing folk and regional cultures, its ‘Great Tradition’ was continuous with the ‘Little tradition’ to be found in its divers regions, villages, castes and tribe. (ii) That this cultural continuity was the product as well as the cause of a common cultural consciousness shared by most Indians and expressed in essential similarities of mental outlook and ethos. (iii) that this common cultural consciousness has been formed in India with the help of certain process and factors.....i.e., sacred book and sacred objects.....a special class of literati (Brahman) and other agents of cultural transmission.....(iv) that in a primary civilization like India’s cultural continuity with the past is so great that even the acceptance of ‘modernizing’ and ‘progress’ ideologies does not result in linear form of social and cultural change but may result in the ‘traditionalizing’ of apparently ‘modern’ innovations (Singer, 1955-56). Singer concludes that the reliance of the Indian tradition is such that changes take place in it through selective adaptation rather than basic transformation.

MaKim Marriott has also supported this view in his studies of social change in India. His study characterizes the mode of interaction between the ‘Little’ and ‘Great’ traditions in the Indian village as ‘parochialization’ and ‘universalization’. The first is when elements of the ‘Great’ tradition percolate downward and became organic part of the ‘Little’ tradition losing thereby their original form. The second process operates when elements of the ‘Little’ tradition (deities, customs, rites etc.) circulate upward to the level of the ‘Great tradition and are ‘identified’ with legitimate form. Marriott gives many examples of such circular process of change from his observation in India. According to him Sanskritization does not proceed as an independent process, it is superimposed on non-Sanskritic cultural forms through



accretion rather than simple replacement (Marriott, 1955). Singer has formulated the dichotomization of tradition ('Little' and 'Great'), but many sociologists criticized these approaches of social change. Dube analysed of cultural change with the help of 'Little' and 'Great' traditions framework. He classified sixfold of traditions, classical tradition, the emergent national tradition, the regional tradition, the western tradition and local sub-cultural traditions of social group. Y. Singh (1974) criticized all these classification of social change; firstly it does not formulate explicitly the definitive criteria of traditions that may be logically consistent, exhaustive and exclusive. For instance, the classical tradition is not a singularity but consists of many traditions. Secondly, all these approach too does not go beyond a nominalistic or schematic formulation of categories to understand change. Finally, this alternative is mainly helpful in analyzing cultural and not structural change in the Indian society.

Another attempt to realize the classification of the substantive areas for the analysis of change in India seeks to formulate three ramifications of social realities; the elite culture and structure, the folk cultural forms and social structure and the tribal culture and society. At these three levels it is suggested that a comprehensive analysis of social change should be undertaken (Unnithan, Deva and Singh, 1965). This approach is intended to be a modification over Singer's categories which particularly overlook the tribal, social and cultural organization in India. But from a theoretical point of view this trichotomous classification does not offer a theoretical viable alternative. This emphasis is more culture than on social structure.

### **Structural Approach**

Structural approach also focuses on the study of social change does not only imply a variation a variation in the dependent variables through which change are being identified but establishing relationship with independent casual variables and enhance the power of the social change theory. "Firstly, the units of observation in a structural study are not ideas, sentiments and values but the order of roles and

statuses which form the basis of social relationship and are schematized into group categories. A major principle which governs the form of ordering of social structure is asymmetry of power in relation to command over resource or values. Structural changes may primarily be located by identifying the emerging principles that lay down new rules about this asymmetry and consequent differentiation and transformation in the institutionalized forms of social relationship and their ordering society. Thus structural approach seeks to explain and not merely describe social change” (Singh, 1974).

Second major characteristic of the structural change is the observation of magnitude and incidence of role differentiation of social structure resulting from social pressure such as increase in population, diversification and growth of industries, rise of new cities or urban centers and rise in the economic and technological bases of society, which necessitate creation of more complex organization and new role and status types. This process the fused structures performing multiple roles, such as ‘the traditional family (which was not only a unit for biological reproduction but also earning of livelihood, recreation as well as education of children etc.), become differentiated as other specialized groups come into being to take care of many of functions about how these processes come to fruition are many of studies change in this field of its traditional fusion through new technological impacts that revolutionize the mode of production (Smelser, 1959 and 1968; Hagen, 1962; Marion J. Levey Jr. 1949).

Thus, structural change differ from the cultural one which particularistic of customs, values and ideational phenomena, their interaction and change. This analysis is focused on the network of social relationships, which through culturally distinct share common and comparable attributes at a higher level of abstraction called social system. Thus, caste, Kingship, class, occupational groups, factory and administrative structures which comprise distinctive field of social interaction constitute structural realities. All these are emerge from human needs and existential

conditions of man and are comparable intra-culturally as well as cross-culturally. These substratums of structural realities are numberless particularities of values, custom and cultures (Y. Singh, 1986).

In most Indian studies of social change a systematic structural differentiation model has not been used, but it is implicit in their analysis framework. This type of social change studies focusing upon the processes of structural differentiation have covered many areas ; the family organization, caste and community structure, factory system, leadership and elite categories in respect of their changing role and status principles, functions, variations in forms and its implications to the social system as a whole. These studies conducted of social mobility of occupations, groups or categories of the conceptual trends of social change. Mobility studies have mainly drawn their data from the studies on caste, class and occupation; it also covered leadership and elite structure of social change. Thus, the structural differentiation studies is found on family, community (specially through study factional grouping and regrouping), political parties and industrial and factory social structure. Lambert studies social change through the approach of structural differentiation and his findings analyses the process of modernization traditional structure must give a new forms. The traditional structures like caste and family have undergone only adaptive change under the impact of factory system (Lambert, 1963).

The most of the studies were conducted in India on the changing family structure. These studies reveals that under the impact of industrialization and urbanization the structure of joint family would undergo changes and would be transformed into the nuclear family (Radha Kamal Mukharjee and Singh, 1961). The focus in change studies has shifted now towards analyzing the adoptive capacity in joint or semi-joint family structures in India in relation to forces of industrialization and modernization.

Factional segmentation in the structure of caste, community and political parties is yet another phenomenon of change related to the process of differentiation. The factional segmentation process is related to the distribution of relative power, a phenomenon germane to the theory of social structure. Nadal (1957) studies factional segmentation and wrote that “social structure coincides with power and authority structure”. The process social change factional sub-division articulates the tensions arising out of vertical and horizontal cleavages in the social stratification especially under the impact of the measures of social and economic reforms. This process really begins. Functions and affects the structural form of community life has been studied by many sociologists and social anthropologists (Bailey, 1963; Barth, 1960; McCormack. 1959; Mayer, 1965; Singh 1971).

Social mobility is the process of social change. The problem of social mobility is directly linked with the system of social stratification. Social mobility is a process that directly reflects the direction of structural changes in a society. The tradition-modernity dichotomy in the studies of social mobility has often led to a confusion of perspective. It assuming that mobility was absent in the social system of traditional India, which was said to have a closed system of social stratification. There are many reasons for this misconception; firstly, this view is based upon classical literature and its ideology which overemphasizes the elements of continuity. Secondly, for western scholars, the most striking feature in the Indian system has been contrast it offered to their own society. Moreover, the historical literature on social mobility in the past not being well developed sociologists have been handicapped in making objective generalizations (Singh, 1974). Srinivas (1968) corrects this perspective saying that “while traditional, that is pre British, Indian society, was stationary in character, it did not preclude the mobility, upward as well as downward, of individual castes in the local hierarchy”. In this direction most of the studies has been conducted by both historians and sociologists (Barber and Stein, 1968; Cohan, 1962; Panikkar, 1955; Shah, 1964; Damle, 1968). Social

mobility is the process of social and it changes the family structure, community structure and leadership also. This is directly reflects the direction which the structure change the society. In traditional social system of India where mobility was absent, but at the present society mobility is open. This process helped to change the caste system in India (Barber, 1968; Srinivas, 1968).

Social mobility as a process has become more active in recent times. It has resulted from sets of endogenous and exogenous factors that have loosened the summation of status principles which the traditional caste stratification represented. The congruence of ritual status, economic status and power status as in the traditional caste stratification is withering away under the impact of social legislation, education, democratization, industrialization and urbanization. These processes have created many alternative resources for supplementing one's social status and have broken the exclusiveness of traditional principle of social status determination as a consequence of increased social mobility (Singh, 1974). Many studies in India analysed this process have shown the divergent functioning of caste, power and economic factors in the determination of social status. Mobility thus causes status incongruence or inconsistency (Bailey, 1957; 1960; 1963; Leach, 1960; Beteille, 1965; Barber, 1968).

The terms 'caste' and 'class' are used as conceptual dichotomies for the analysis of change. Srinivas (1968) "confirms the new role of castes in India by concluding that the contemporary process in the structure of castes is that of fusion in contrast to past trends which were in the direction of continued fission". Marriott reviewing a number of studies on social mobility and finds relevant distinction on social mobility at three levels in the ranking system related to Indian mobility pattern. These are (i) rural from metropolitan types of ranking system, (ii) individual or groups from corporate units in ranking and (iii) a series of successively wider zones of reference for the units in any local system, the several zones being characterized by distinctive values (Marriott, 1968). According to him zones are the

village, the linguistic region and the whole civilization.

According to Y. Singh (1974), most analysis of structural differentiation and social mobility in India is that the processes of change defy being comprehended through neatly formulated continua or conceptual dichotomies. Whether it is family, policy, caste or occupational mobility, there is one constant factor observed in their process towards change, that of structural adaptation. The failure of conceptual continua and dichotomies in comprehending social change reflects the need for formulating a *dialectical* rather than *dichotomous* approach for the study of change.

The studies in structural differentiation of family, caste and community have been theoretically misdirected because the western derived continuum concepts were used to analyse social change (Singh, 1974). What matter most in formulating conceptual categories for the study of change? Is that native “initial condition” or historicity of social process must not be overlooked and the researcher should try to observed the dialectical relationship between the system interactions and social change. How uniquely the historicity of the Indian social reality has impinged upon the nature of social change has been objectively analysed by number of sociologists (Eisenstadt, 1970 and 1965; Beteile 1969; Singh, 1970; Bendix, 1964; Ishwaran, 1970).

Most of these studies bring out that social change processes even through structurally similar, being generated by universal forces, such as population growth, diversification of occupational structures, industrialization and growth of technology and science, assume historically different shapes and propositions in each society due to its pre-existing systems of social institution and ideologies. An important historical element in the traditional Indian social structure was that of inter-substructural autonomy, such as, the autonomy between polity and stratification, stratification and culture, culture and polity etc. ( Eisenstadt, 1970 and Singh, 1970).

This structural autonomy between social sub-systems helped in acceptance of many social and cultural innovations at one level of the system without affecting the

other systems. The nature of this process was segmental. The change of great significance could thus take place without generating resistance from other social segments (Karve, 1961). The contemporary process of social changes, have now ceased to be segmental; they have become organic. This is so as the structural autonomy of the social sub-systems is now slowly breaking down with the erosion of the traditional structural insularity. This takes place following various institutional changes in society which affect all other systems and activate most of its segments for participation in a wider national scene.

Structural approach of social change analyzed that every society have some structure (like family structure, cultural structure etc). When the structures of a society are changed, at the same time, social and cultural structure also is changed. Traditional form of social structure now changed through the process of Modernization, Industrialization and Westernization

### **Dialectical-Historical Approach**

The use of Dialectical-Historical model of study social change in India has not been common as discussed above approaches. This type of studies probably lies in the colonial linkages of the Indian social sciences and social scientists and this was historically conditioned. Some important studies of social change have been made using a dialectical-historical framework.

D.P. Mukharjee studies social change in Indian society through dialectical-historical method. The main focus of his study is on the emergence of new class structure, especially that of the middle class under the impact of the British colonial rule; the structural forces behind this class differentiation which led to growth of the nationalist awaking in India were governed by Indian tradition. According to him tradition of India offers the resilient yet adoptive social and cultural force which must be kept in the framework of sociological analysis, even change generating capacity of economic force (modes of production and its relationship) and institution

are accepted (Singh, 1974). He writes; “the value of Indian tradition lies in the ability of their conserving forces to put a brake on hasty passage. Adjustments is the end-product of dialectical connection between.....It is not the peace of the grave. Only alienation from nature, man and work will stop in the arduous course of such high and strenuous endeavour. (D.P. Mukherji, 1958: 78)

### **Cognitive-Historical Approach**

Another systematic approach to study of social change has been postulated by Louis Dumont. According to him concepts of Indian society not in terms in systems if relationship but as systems of ideational or value patterns or primitive structures. Sociology itself is considered a vocation, attempting place each simple fact of social life in the complex texture of society’s collective representations.

Luish Dumont study social change in Indian Social system through cognitive Historical approach. Dumont conceives of Indian social system not as a system of social relationship but as a system of ideational and value configurations or patterns. Social change study according to Dumont should be focused on analyzing “reaction of Indian mind to the revelation of western culture” (Dumont 1964-66). According to Dumont this reaction would lie in the cognitive transformation from the principle of hierarchy to equality. Essentially, change in the adoptive or transformative process within the traditional Indian cognitive system. Thus cultural change is the precursor for individuality and of the social change (Dumont, 1964-65).

Dumont’s study of social change mainly seeks to compare the diversities of the ideo-structures in different traditions or civilizations. Distinguishing between synchronic and diachronic studies, Dumont is critical of studies of social monopoly at two point of time which are taken for proper studies of change. At best such studies can be called double synchronic. For a diachronic study ‘time’ would have to be built into the paradigm of the study and the comparison in historical contexts may be essential.



Sociologists have studied social change theoretically; Emile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons and Wilbert Moore discussed social change through functional analysis. Dharndrof (1987) studies social change in conflict perspective, Luckman (1984) also discussed social change in the dimension of social order, Ogburn (1915) studied culture through his theory of cultural lag, E.B. Tylor (1871:1) discussed culture as a systematic manner. Social change is a systematic study of variation in social life, it also a process which describe the structure and function of a particular social system. On the other hand, Cultural change implies the pursuit of perfection in all walks of life. It includes believe, rituals, custom, tradition, food habit, dress pattern etc. For Davis (1949), “ social change is only a part of broader category of change called ‘cultural change’ .....cultural change refers to all change occurring in any branch of culture including art, science, technology, philosophy etc., as well as change in the forms and rules of social organization”. So, it may be said that social change and cultural change are inextricably linked.

From the above it can be seen that different processes of social and cultural change in India. But, the theoretical and conceptual scheme of social change in India has so far remained limited to formulation of ideal types and continua. Consequently, most analysis of change are deficient in theoretical power and explanatory sophistication. (Singh, 1974).

### **Review of Literature**

**Dube S C (1990)**, Conducted a study on tradition and development with special reference to different communities. This study discussed about the social structure and change in Indian present communities, changing norms in Hindu joint family, tradition view of change and development. Thus, the study revealed that the mass media, education, communication helped to developed the Indian society as well as to change the tradition and modernity which take place in the present communities.

**Srinivas, M.N (1992)**, had studied about the social change in modern India. He discussed about the process of Sanskritization, Westernization, Secularization , caste mobility and change Indian society change their social structure and he also emphasize the increasing dominance of politicization in Indian social and cultural life. The relationship of dominant caste to other caste is perhaps beginning to change as also the role of dominance caste in local religion and state polities. Finally and most important of all are the change which occurring in the caste system such as to herald a systemic change.

**Shankar, R and Lalita, A (1995)**, study on relationship between education and cultural transformation in a rural setting in Triuchirapali district of Tamilnadu. The aim of the study is to analyses the socio-cultural change in terms of religious practices, marital age, beliefs and interaction with other caste people. The changes have been measured two generation. This study reveals that education acts as a factor of transformation between the two generation people in their cultural aspects like marital age and interaction with other caste people; but no changes occurred in practices of religious customs and in their superstitious beliefs.

**Goswami, Priyam (1999)**, studied on impact of industrialization and colonial penetration in the Brahmaputra valley of Assam during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This study mainly focused on tea, coal and oil industry. The main objective of the study was to focus the role of changing aspect of economy and economic exploitation in the colonial rule. The study reveals that dualistic economy of the colonial system pockets of prosperity were created amidst a stagnant economy. The study also reveals that due to the impact of industrialization, communication network was developed in Assam.

**Kappuswami, B (2000)**, had discussed about the process of social change and also the definition and theories of social change. He mainly discussed about the modern education, impact of modern education and mass media are helped to social change in India. His studies mainly dealt with the traditional and modern concept of

social value in the context of and the impact of education, economic, political and industrial development on social change.

**Sarma, S.R (2000)**, studies the process of social change among tribe with special reference to the Gond tribe of Madhy Pradesh. Beside, attempts have been made to underline the problems and issues of tribal society in a contextual perspective of change among the tribe. In this study deals with different approaches and attitudes towards tribal development and also deals with process of social change among tribes to arrive at a general understanding of the social change among the tribes through a micro-level research study. This study focus on social transformation the effects of land alienation on various facts of socio-economic and cultural life style, the social conditions of exploitation and oppression of tribes consequences for the further of their traditional tribal cultural and practices various force of change etc.

**Sharma, Abhishek (2001)**, has discussed that change in society is the need of time. Social change inevitably involves tension, maladjustment and often regressions particularly in a traditional society which reacts with emotional resistance to any departure from ingrained habits of thoughts and action. A society's degree of responsiveness to the changing needs of all of its members significantly affects its capacity to realize most societal values and to reduce alienation in the process.

**Singh Yogendra (2002)**, has discussed the issues related to cultural identity and Globalization. This work mainly concern with the change in cultural styles through the exposure to the global cultural patterns. It also examines the impact of electronic media, migration and increase peace of inter-cultural interactions upon local, regional and national levels of culture. It deals with how these processes have led to the rise of popular culture, changes in the form and style of leisure activities, given rise to new normative standards for defining community relationships, political leadership and generally how it reflects upon India's ability in the future to

maintain social cultural resilience to face up to the new challenges of modernization and globalization.

**Joshi (2002)**, conducted a study on cultural, history and tradition and today its change in Rajasthan. This study analyzed the changing pattern of life and the process of social change. He revealed that study about the socio-cultural life it is necessary to understand traditional cultural and communication system. He also revealed habit, custom; tradition among Rajthani had been change through the process of local diversity and development.

**Gogoi, P (1976)**, conducted on a study on Tai-Ahom religion and custom in Assam. The study mainly focused the changing pattern of religious life among the Ahoms and consequence of adoption Hinduism. The study reveals that Ahom had followed their religious beliefs, various customs and rituals before the adoption of Hinduism. But after the adoption of Hinduism they gradually lost their own religious beliefs and practices. They influence Hinduism and followed Hindu religious beliefs and practices.

**Barua, Indira (1978)**, had conducted a study on Ahom village in upper Assam in terms of certain aspects of social relation. This study was undertaken to examine the character of Ahom social life in a village community and she emphasis on the existing social relations among the Ahom community and to assess the trend of change in the socio-cultural life of the Ahoms. The study reveals that change had taking place in all aspects of social life like social, religious, economic and political life of the villagers. But at the same time, the idea to revive or practicing the traditional socio-religious system is also conspicuous.

**Baruah, S.L (1993)**, in his work gives a critical and comprehensive account of the last phase of the Ahom sovereign rule in Assam beginning with the first popular challenge to the Ahom Monarchy in 1769 till its extinction and introduction of the British rule in 1826. The study gives an introductory but clear ideas about Ahom administration and socio-economic life of Assam under the Ahom and

disused in detail the popular rebellions against the Ahom government, the court intrigues and the external aggressions of the period, all of which worked to bring about the disintegration and downfall of the Ahom kingdom.

**Gohain B.K (1994)**, in his study systematically deals with subject of the continuity and change in the hills of Assam. This study had analysed the social and cultural change which had been taking place in their society.

**Sharma, D.P (1995)**, studied about the nature and extent of change in a village of Assam. The village Niz Hajo in Kamrup district laying on the borderline of urbanism and ruralism had been taken for investigation in view of its uniqueness in respect of its socio religious life. In the process of change in the village old patterns are slowly disappearing but new patterns have not emerged to replace the old totally the overall pattern is mixture of traditionalism and modernity.

**Mipun Jatin (2000)**, has studied about the Mishing tribe of Assam and his study analyses the process and impact of contact between the features of primitive organizations (micro level) of Mishing tribe with regional Assamese culture, distinct language, policy and productive system. Moreover, the study reflects the influence of the regional Assamese culture on their housing pattern, food habit, dress, language and tools and implements are also considered for the discussion of acculturation among the Mishings in Assam. The aim of including all these aspects is to see the total process of culture change among the Mishings. As they came in contact with Hinduism through regional culture, the other dominant group tried to apply the notions of purity and pollution (the caste system). They picked up the great tradition of Hinduism. His study wants to fill up the gap of inadequacy by probing into the process of acculturation, communication development among the Mishing tribe of Assam.

**Phukan, Girin (2003)**, had studied about the continuity and change among the Khamyangs of Assam and the objective of his studies is based on assimilation of their traditional culture into local culture. After his study he revealed that the

Khamyangs of Assam a group of Tai people had change their traditional culture and assimilate their culture. When a process of Hinduism was started among the Khamyangs they accepted the Hindu religion. They are exogamous community but now Modernity has pretreated in their marriage system. He also revealed that the process of assimilation with other segments of Assamese people in case of language, dress, food and living pattern has been completed up to some extent.

**Saha, N (1968)**, had conducted a study on Garo village near the border districts of Goalpara and Garo hills in Assam. The main objective of his study was changing pattern of occupation and income in a Garo village. The study find out that the pattern of occupation and income among the villagers goes to show that the Garos are neither averse to innovation not slow to accept the opportunity of augmenting their income when favourable situation provide the necessary physical and economic opportunities.

**Sarma, Ashok (2004)**, had studied of the socio-cultural life the Mising tribe of Assam, the second largest among the plain tribes of Assam. He studied their oral narratives, it deals with the factors that influence the material culture of the tribe and delve, broadly, into their folk art, craft, architecture, costumes and ornaments and food. It examines the way their traditional life pattern and legends, myths and tales are interwoven in aspects of their artistic and cultural life, painting and sculpture, specific preoccupations as that of doll-making and the tradition of swastika emblems.

**Gogoi, N.K (2007)**, has studied Dynamic of cultural change of the Ahom. His study try to focus the processes of change which the Ahoms had to undergo to became what they are today. He tries to examine change in Ahom society in two distinct socio-cultural situation-1.the Ahom situation through history and 2.the contemporary Ahom situation. His study revealed that acculturation had been the 'key player' in the overall cultural change among the Ahoms

**Aloysius, G (2008)**, had studied of social change in India largely variations within the pre-dominant structural functionalist paradigm. He attempted to capture the change in society within the polar categories of tradition and modernity, while lacking theoretical dimension these studies are mainly a historical tend to avoid the rather troublesome area of the change of power with respect to social structure . This study tried to describe the cultural change within the Marxist tradition these change were seen rather mechanically as transition from feudalism to capitalism by easily Marxist and as peculiar combinations of several mode of production by later generation

**Singh V.P and Borah B (2008)**, conducted a study on Family and kingship among the Thengal Kacharies of Assam. The main objective of their study was to analyse dynamic of social structure in terms of family, marriage and kingship. The study reveals that structure of Thangal Kocharies is changes and it changes the family and marriage structure. The study also reveals that due to the influence of modern forces the joint family system is decreased and nuclear family system is on an increased.

**Phukan, Girin (2010)**, has studies about Influence of Aryan culture on the Tai Ahoms of Assam. He describe that before the Ahome came to the Brahmaputra valley the process of Aryanization was started. So, Ahom is also influence the Aryan culture and they adopted Hinduism, a religion of Aryan origin. Therefore the change of religion and for that matter, gradual change of language from Tai Ahom to Assamese produced far reaching effect on the Ahom society in particular and Assamese society in general.

**Buragohain, P. P, (2012)**, had conducted a study on socio-economic status on Tai-Ahom in Assam. This study focused that the economy of Assam during the Ahom period was a self sufficient village economy rest on Paik system. The social, religious and economic policy followed by the Ahom kings created the base for the present day Assam. His study mainly deals with the economy of Assam during the

Ahom period and about the present socio-economic status of the Tai-Ahom community.

Therefore, different scholars and social scientist study social and cultural change in different point of views. Sociologists S.C. Dube mentioned that ‘the social structure of India is subject to considerable changes under the impact of western culture and civilization’. He also argued that modern system of transport and communication, modern technology, industrialization and western type of education change the social structure of Indian societies.

Most of the studies in North-Eastern part of India focus on tribal communities as it have been a fascination area of research for anthropologist and other social scientist. Sociology has been a late starter in the region and is still in its formation stage. Therefore, there is a lack of sociological studies of non-tribe communities in Assam. Ahom constitute one of the major social groups of Upper Assam. They established their kingdom in a large part of Brahmaputra Valley within a period of two hundred years by winning and existing ethnic groups in the Valley. In last seven centuries they also passed through a process of social and cultural transformation. The present study was undertaken to understand the socio-cultural change in the Ahom society in Mogroi village of Jorhat district in Assam. The study is intended to address the following questions:

- 1) What type of socio-cultural changes had taken place in Ahom society between 13<sup>th</sup> century and first of 19<sup>th</sup> century when it was annexed to British?
- 2) What type of socio-cultural changes had taken place in Ahom society during the British colonial period?
- 3) What kind of socio-cultural changes have been taken place among the Ahom in Post-independence period?
- 4) What are the patterns of social and cultural life of Ahom at Present?



In order to address the above questions the present study is aimed to analyse the characteristic features of socio-cultural change in the Ahom society of Brahmaputra Valley in general in historical perspective Ahom village of Jorhat District in particular.

### **Objectives of the study**

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- 1) To understand the type of socio-cultural change in Ahom society in Pre-British Period
- 2) To understand the type of socio-cultural change in Ahom society during the British Period
- 3) To understand the process of socio-cultural change in Ahom society in Post-British Period
- 4) To understand the patterns of socio-cultural life among the Ahom in a village setting.

### **Methodology**

The study follows descriptive and analytical research design. It was based on both primary as well as secondary data. The data for the understanding of present socio-cultural life of the Ahoms was based on empirical study of Mogroi village of Jorhat district in Assam. However, in order to understand the process of socio-cultural change in the Ahom society in Pre-British, British and Post British Period historical records and studies were used. The primary data was collected through observation and interview methods. Observation is done through participate and non-participate observation method and interview was done through administering structured interview scheduled. Secondary data was collected from books, journals, published and unpublished article, magazine, newspaper, director of economic and

statistics office of Assam, internet, research work in the subjects were take into account.

### **Techniques of data collection**

The study was focused on both historical perspective and empirical studies. Therefore to understand the process of socio-cultural change in the Ahom society in Assam, the secondary sources data was collected from the earlier studies like *Buranjee*, a chronicles written by Tai Ahoms, S.L. Baruah “A Comprehensive History of Assam”, S.K. Bhuyan “Deodhai Assam Buranji”, I. Baruah “Social Relation in Ahom Village”, N.K. Basu “ Assam in the Age of Ahom”, M.L. Basu “ Social History of Assam”, H.K. Barpujari (ed.) “A comprehensive History of Assam” Vol. III, IV, V, P. Gogoi “Tai-Ahom Religion and Custom”, N.K. Gogoi “Continuity and Change among the Ahom”, Edward Gait “A History of Assam” were mainly used for present study. The researcher also visited Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) Guwahati, The Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati; Krishnakanta Handeque Library of Guahati University, Lakhminath Bezbaruah Library, Dibrugarh University for collected related materials.

The primary data was collected from 130 Ahom household from Mogroi village selected by purposive Random sampling method. The data was collected from head of the household and taken them as units of the study with the help of a structured interview scheduled covering the socio-economic profile of the households of the respondents, religious beliefs and culture, mass media exposure of the households.

### **Data collection and Analysis**

For collection of secondary data the researcher visited library from September 2009 to December 2011. The primary data were collected during the

month of March 2011 to Spetmber 2011 from the Mogroi Village of Jorhat district in Assam. After the collection of data, the data were subjected to coding and verification. Later, these data were computerized for tabulation. Data were analysed using different tabulation procedures.

### **Variables of the study**

The variable of the study are as follows:

#### **Social background**

The social background of the respondents was study in terms of their age groups, sex, clan, occupation, education, language known, and marital status of the respondents and their family type, type of household, native place of the respondents, pattern of household consumption and land ownership, cultivated land, uncultivated land, household land, grown crops, agricultural instruments, fertilizer use, seeds use, habit of town going, transportation, health.

#### **Religion and Culture**

For understanding change in religious belief and culture, variable of the study was included sect. of religion, religious activity, cremation of dead body , performe traditional Ahom rituals, Dharma guru, pattern of worship god and goddess, perform socio-religious festivals in a year, made *Haaaj*, habit of Naamghar going, perform traditional religious ritual, type of marriage system and member of Srimanta Sankar Sangha, type of marriage, music, type of music listen, preferred dance, festivals observed.

#### **Mass media**

For understanding the of using mass media, variable of the study was include radio (programs listen, frequency of radio listening, ownership), television (programs watched, time spend on watching television, ownership, channels watched, place of watching), cinema (frequency of cinema going, types of film preferred, language of the film), VCD player, DVD player, newspaper (number of

newspaper read, language of newspaper read, time spent on newspaper reading, sections of the newspaper read, subscription of newspaper) magazine(type of the magazine, language of the magazine), digital literacy, using mobile phone, number of members having access to computer and internet in a household, number of visit to internet café in a week/month, participate in village activity.

### **Scope of the study**

Ahom is one of the major ethnic groups in Assam. They had transformed their cultural traits with the local people of Assam. No studies have been conducted in to understand the change of socio-cultural life in the Ahom society form 13<sup>th</sup> century to present since after independence. It is important that in which process change the socio-cultural life of the Ahom society. Therefore the present study is to find out socio-cultural change in Ahom society from Pre-British Period to Post Independence Period. The study also finds out the present socio-cultural life of the Ahoms in a village setting. The study is explore the process of socio-cultural change in Ahom society and changing scenario among Ahom which have been taking place due to the impact of Modernization, Westernization, Industrialization, process of inclusion and exclusion and through the process of assimilation. So, it will help to understand the changing pattern of Ahom society from 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards to after independence.