

**Understanding Tribal Identity through Historical Awareness: A study on Deori Women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam**

**Guptajit Pathak**

Doctoral Scholar, Department of Women Studies  
Faculty of Social Science  
Magadh University  
Bodhgaya, Bihar-824234, India

**Abstract:**

*Tribal identity is inherited in the course of stories, folklores, folktales and myth, developing early in the societal surroundings and outside the cognizant consciousness of the individual. Within the tribal community one aims to uphold standards set by group with differing cultural backdrop, each of the tribal communities has fostered its own historical, political and social ethos.*

*Assam is the landscape of indigenous tribes. Among them the Deori tribe is one of the stressing frame fabrics of the rich Assamese Culture and heritage. The overall contribution of Deori Women in the Society are of significant value.*

*The Research Paper is an attempt to focus the historical awareness of Deori Women on the North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.*

**Key Words:** Understanding, Tribal, Identity, Historical, Awareness, Deori, Women, North Bank, Brahmaputra Valley, Assam

**Introduction:**

A nation should sometimes follow its planned objectives by conducting valuable actions in all types of developments. The tribe is the most historic form of social organization. In approaching tribal welfare one must recognize what a tribe signifies and how to best utilize this knowledge. Assam is the land of different tribes from where we get imaginative uniqueness. Assam is in realistic sense, a gathering point of a lot of communities. Folklores, folktales, stories, languages, faiths, cultures, customs and traditions of region has always been the focus of cultural multiplicity owing to manifold ethnic and non-ethnic communities living herein. The historical importance of the Deori women has not been viewed in the right perspectives.

**Statement of the Research Problem:**

The historical awareness is of great value to any nation. To identify of one's backdrop on historical perspective is a vital research. Since there is lack of research on the historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Bhahmaputra Valley in Assam, hence, it is a exceptional and logical topic.

**Rationale of the Study:**

The historical awareness of the Deori Women is of immense value for tribal identity.

**Overview of Related Literature:**

In this part of the research work, the historical knowledge and awareness of the Deori Women of the North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam are reviewed to attain a deeper understanding. At the moment some of the studies are presented here that relevant with the perception of tribal identity and historical awareness.

In order to justify the statement of the problem following literature review has been done.

- (i) Horam (1990), in his work, **North East India- An outline**, emphasizes about the people of North East India from a societal angel. He highlights about the changes taking place in the society and relates that the old is yielding its standard to the latest.

- (ii) Karotemprel, S. (1998), **The Tribes of Northeast India** is a compilation of papers represented by a variety of researchers glorified about the tribal culture. In his beginning message, the editor highlights that tribal culture is a gathering of linked ideologies, whether uttered in ideas, concepts, folklores, folktales, myths, symbols, artifacts, value systems, articulated and behavioral patterns which have to be singled out and studied.
- (iii) Kunjakkan (2002), **Feminism in India Realities**, examined the standard of women in Indian Society. The writer focussed that feminism was antagonistic to Indian truths, in view of the fact that women arguing of feminism were professed as confusing.
- (iv) Adler, P.S. (1975), **The Transitional Experience: An alternative view of culture shock**, Journal of Humanistic Psychology highlights about the awareness of a nation and how behavior and awareness is a part of human study.
- (v) Bandura, A. (1977), **Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change, Psychological Review** focuses the awareness, behavior and historical consciousness which is a part of human behavior and developmental studies.
- (vi) Hemkosh (1990), **Assamese Dictionary** submits to the Deoris as one of the tribes who live on the plain areas of Assam. Alternatively, **Chandrakanta Abhidhan (1993)**, says that they were originally hilly people, now living in Assam plains as a priestly class of the Chutiyas.
- (vii) Form the contemporary papers, some papers and articles of **Guptajit Pathak** (researcher) on socio-cultural and economic tactic of the Deori Women; it is found that, the Deori Women have massive excellence among the Indian Tribal Women for its socio-economic and cultural distinctiveness.
- (viii) Some researches have been conducted on socio cultural aspects of the Deori tribe.
- (ix) Nevertheless, no such study has been conducted so far regarding the Historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.
- (x) As women's identity and workforce participation rate is extremely stumpy, consequently, it is reasonably essential to carry out research on the Historical Awareness of Deori women as educational status.

### Objectives of the Study:

The chief objectives of the proposed study are mainly:

1. To depict the historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Bhahmaputra Valley in Assam.
2. To highlight the knowledge of Deori Women regarding the year 1933.
3. To represent the information of Deori Women relating the year 2005.

### Hypothesis:

The following hypotheses are tested to provide insight into the problems as outlines by objectives as stated above.

1. There is no acquaintance on the historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Bhahmaputra Valley in Assam.
2. There is no knowledge of Deori Women concerning the year 1933.
3. There is no perceptive of the Deori Women linking the year 2005.

### Research Methodology:

Any research to reach a standard value there is a need to use suitable research methodology. For the research paper descriptive study has been followed which has quantitative approach. A Purposive and Stratified Random Sampling Technique was adopted for the selection of sample so that required information

can be collected from the Deori women regarding the historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.

**Table 1: Details of Methods and Data Source of the Objectives**

Sl No.	Objectives	Data	Method
1	The historical awareness of the Deori Women of North Bank of Brahmaputra valley in Assam	Primary	Percentage, Bar diagram
2	Knowledge of Deori women of the year 1933	Primary	Percentage, Bar diagram
3	Information of Deori women of the year 2005	Primary	Percentage, Bar diagram

**Research Design:**

- (i) **Type of the Study:** Descriptive study has been pursued.
- (ii) **Locale of the Study:** The study was conducted in rural areas of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.
- (iii) **Sample:** Since the Investigator visited 200 Deori household but opportunely 149 samples was able to collect for the study.
- (iv) **Selection of the Respondents:** In the present study, villages called 1. Namdeori Village of Jorhat in Jorhat district as biggest 2. Kakilamari Village of Tengapani in Sivsagar district as middle and 3. Rajabari Village of Bam Rajabari, Dimou in Sivasagar district in Assam as smallest in the North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam as per the serious discussion and guidance of the Deori Community since there is no adequate census report for its specific dimension.
- (v) **Tools and Techniques for Data collection:** The following tool will be used for the study.  
Questionnaire
- (vi) **Procedure for Data Collection:** Investigator collected the data personally by visiting the households of the sample Deori Women.
- (vii) **Method of Data Analysis:** The data are analyzed by using quantitative method.

**Results and Discussion:**

The study for the objectives covers the understanding of the knowledge and practices regarding the historical awareness of the Deori women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam. The results of the present study over and above relevant discussions have been presented under following sub headings.

**Table-2**

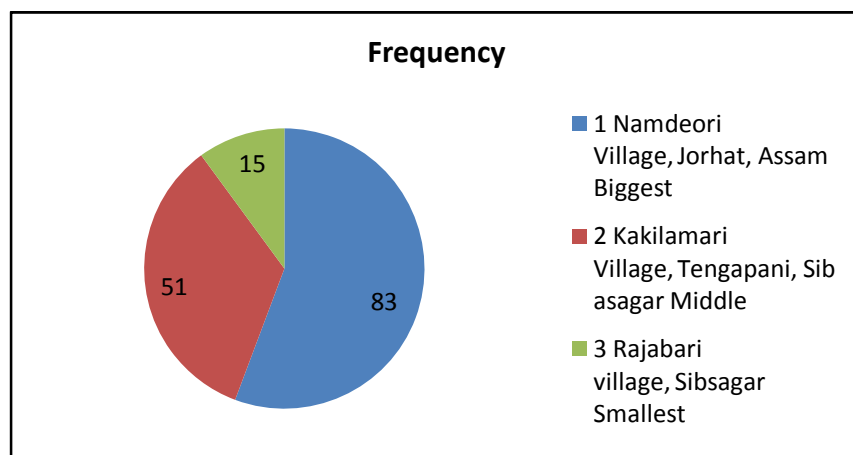
**Respondent(s) in Selected Villages [Village of Respondent(s)] :**

Sl No	Villages of Respondent	Size (area wize)	Frequency	Percentage
1	Namdeori Village, Jorhat	Biggest	83	55.71
2	Kakilamari Village, Tengapani, Sibasagar	Middle	51	34.23
3	Rajabari Village, Sibsagar	Smallest	15	10.06
Total			149	100

*Source: Primary Data (Field survey)*



**Figure-1**



**Table -1:** depicted that the Historical awareness of Deori Women on North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam where 149 samples are collected from the 3(three) Deori rural villages of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam.

Hence, 149 samples are used for the study after calculating Cochran's sample size determination formula. It is highlighted that B-N1, M- N2, S- N3. Hence, N1+ N2+ N3.

**Table – 3**  
**General Characteristics of Respondents**

Sl. No.	Characteristics of the Study		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean $\pm$ S.D.
1	Age of the Respondent	Less than 20	5	3.4	39.98 $\pm$ 13.606
		20-30	40	26.8	
		30-40	50	33.6	
		40-50	27	18.1	
		50-60	11	7.4	
		60-70	13	8.7	
		More than 70	3	2.0	
2	Marital Status	Unmarried	16	10.7	-
		Married	113	75.8	
		Widow	20	13.4	
3	Educational Qualification	Illiterate	30	20.1	-
		Half	8	5.4	
		Primary	8	5.4	
		Middle	17	11.4	
		High	37	24.8	
		Higher Secondary	32	21.5	
		Degree	16	10.7	
		Vocational	1	7	
4	Occupation	Agriculture	116	77.9	-
		Service	23	15.4	
		Business	5	3.4	
		Social Welfare	5	3.4	
Total			149	100	

*Source: Primary Data (Field survey)*

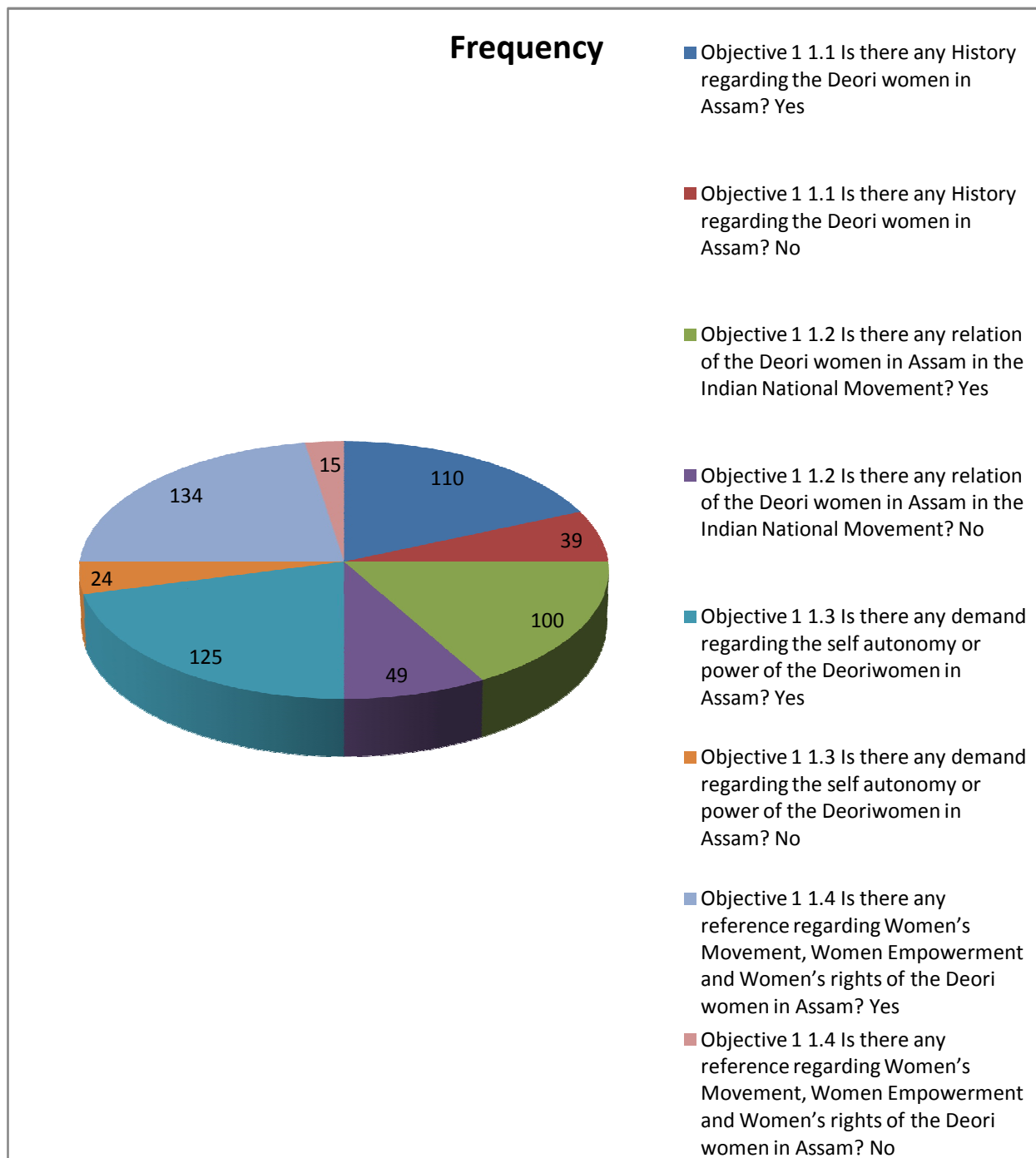
**Table 2:** displays age of the respondents, marital status, educational qualifications and occupations respectively.

**Table-4**  
**Historical Awareness of Deori Women on North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam**

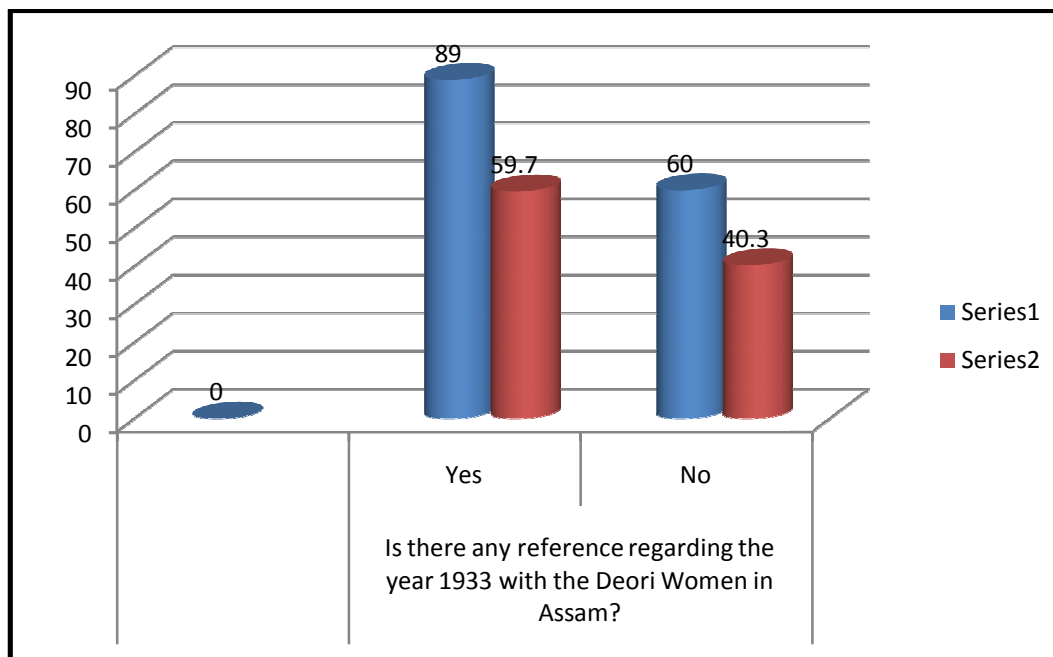
Sl. No.	Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean $\pm$ S.D.
Objective 1	1.1 Is there any History regarding the Deori women in Assam?	Yes	110	73.8	39.98+13.606
		No	39	26.2	
	1.2 Is there any relation of the Deori women of Assam in the Indian National Movement?	Yes	100	67.1	
		No	49	32.9	
	1.3 Is there any demand regarding the self autonomy or power of the Deori women in Assam?	Yes	125	83.9	
		No	24	16.1	
	1.4 Is there any reference regarding Women's Movement, Women Empowerment and Women's Rights of the Deori women in Assam?	Yes	134	89.9	
		No	15	10.1	
Objective 2	Is there any knowledge regarding the year 1933 with the Deori women in Assam?	Yes	89	59.7	
		No	60	40.3	
Objective 3	Is there any information regarding the year 2005 with the Deori women in Assam?	Yes	131	87.9	
		No	18	12.1	
Total			149	100	

*Source: Primary Data(Field survey)*

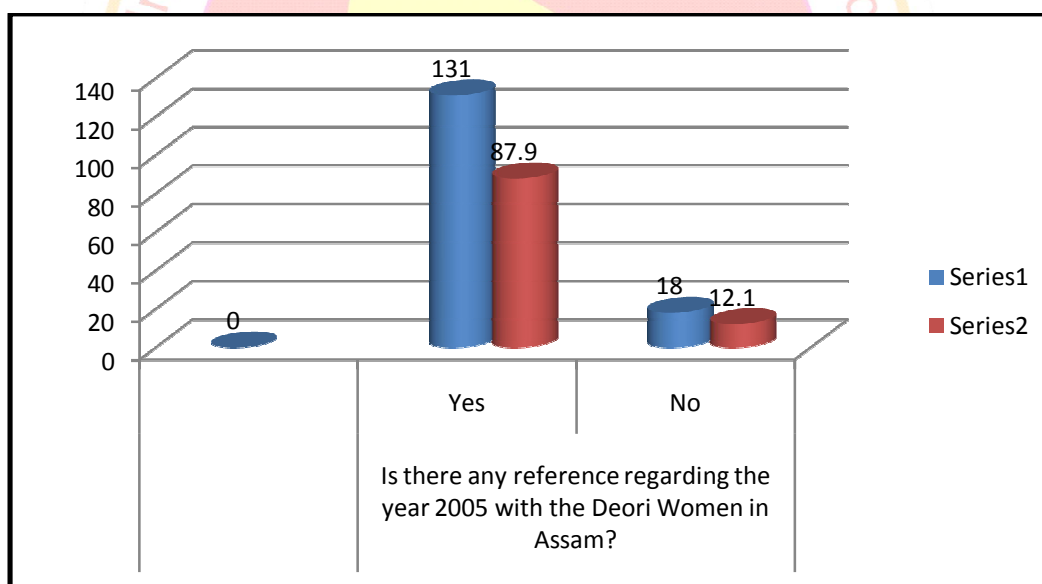
**Figure-2 (Objective 1)**



**Figure-3 (Objective 2)**



**Figure-4 (Objective 3)**



**Table 3:** highlighted the historical awareness of the Deori women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley with its thoughts on the present picture. The historical awareness is found through the questionnaires and interviews depicted that the Deori women are linked to the desired environment or not.

In the general characteristics of the respondents the knowledge and practice level of the Deori women in the selected areas were collected and evaluated.

To find out the current objectives as the historical awareness regarding the Deori women is the main concern. This implies that how well a Deori woman is aware on the various issues which are connected to

historical importance and what is the knowledge level she is having, is being compared to the practice level that exit with the Deori women. The 3(three) objectives depicted as percentage (%) are:

1.
  - (1.1) Regarding the first objective, history of the Deori women in Assam, out of 149 samples 73.8% of the respondents were aware and 26.2% of the respondents were not aware.
  - (1.2) On the subject of relation of the Deori women in Assam in the National Movement, out of 149 samples 67.1% of the respondents were conscious and 32.9% were not.
  - (1.3) On the topic of the demand regarding the self autonomy or power of the Deori women in Assam, out of 149 samples 83.9% of the respondents were attentive and 16.1% were not.
  - (1.4) On the issue of the reference regarding Deori Women's Movement, Women Empowerment and Women's Rights, out of 149 samples 89.9% of the respondents were attentive and 10.1% were not.
2. Concerning the second objective on the reference of the year 1933 with the Deori women in Assam of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley, out of 149 samples 59.7% of the respondents were aware and 40.3% were not.
3. Relating to the third objective on the indication of the year 2005 with the Deori women in Assam of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley, out of 149 samples 87.9% of the respondents were aware and 12.1% were not.

#### **Findings:**

The importance findings of the research paper are

- (i) As per the Deori women of North Bank of Brahmaputra valley there is history regarding the Deori women in Assam.
- (ii) The Deori women of the concerned areas have deeper knowledge on National Movement.
- (iii) The Deori women of the areas have demand regarding the self autonomy or power.
- (iv) The Deori women of the areas have reference regarding the Women's Movement, Women's Empowerment and Women's Rights.
- (v) The Deori women of the areas have greater knowledge on the year 1933 in which Plain Tribal Act was made.
- (vi) The Deori women of the areas have better knowledge on the year 2005 in which Deori Autonomous Council (DAC) was made.
- (vii) As per the Deori women of North Bank of Brahmaputra valley there is history regarding the Deori women in Assam.
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- (xi) The Deori women of the areas have greater knowledge on the year 1933 in which Plain Tribal Act was made.
- (xii) The Deori women of the areas have better knowledge on the year 2005 in which Deori Autonomous Council (DAC) was made.

#### **Conclusions:**

This study has revealed a significance regarding the historical awareness of the Deori tribe, since study is based on the Deori women of North Bank of Brahmaputra Valley in Assam for the reason that the historical identical knowledge about a nation is immensely vital. Such an uncommon and consciousness research programme for finding historical characteristics of a community is of great importance. A change in



awareness or knowledge can lead the real representation, identity and resistance in communication of an identity.

**Recommendations:**

- The strength of awareness of historical identity is a good sign; therefore, need to be more rigorous and widespread.
- The massive potency of awareness on historical significance for greater knowledge is highly essential. Facilities related to knowledge on historical identity need to be highlighted by the guidance of the particular community.
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- Taboos exist in the uneducated classes regarding such type of knowledge can run responsiveness operations for greater knowledge to help break the taboos.
- Both the genders should be outstandingly and uniformly addressed concerning the importance of historical awareness. Concentrating on just one of them would be unfinished task.
- Deori tribes and Deori women on their background on historical knowledge should be taken care.
- Awareness of historical understanding would no doubt lead to positive impact and thinking of any community. For that reason improvement in them would help in achieving better perceptiveness for other communities.

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