CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION
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7.1 Summary

Women's Studies as an academic discipline appeared for the first time in the United States in the second half of the 1960s as the educational wing of feminism. Women's Studies, aims to develop new ways of thinking about research and constructing knowledge which would be sensitive to women's circumstances and perspectives. Inter-disciplinarity, reflexivity and non-conformity demarcates Women's Studies from other traditional disciplines.

In the mid 70's, Women's Studies first emerged as an idea and a concept without any clear history and framework. During its formative years Women's Studies always sought to link theory with action.

The theories and concepts generated by Women's Studies help to better explain women's lives and the existing power relationships in all Social and political situations. Despite the growth in research on Women's Studies which made some impact on the policy makers, leading to the incorporation of women's section in the sixth five year plan, the impact on and interaction with the educational system as such were far from adequate.

Over the years many universities and colleges have started Women's Studies centres and programmes. Now UGC supports 67 Women's Studies Centres in Indian
universities. Several universities and colleges have taken up independent initiatives towards establishment of Women’s Studies Centres to promote studies on gender specific issues.

The UGC programmes for promoting Women’s Studies envisage financial assistance to universities and colleges for setting up centres and cells for training and extension work in the area of gender equity, economic self reliance of women, girls education, human rights, violence etc. These activities are expected to contribute not only to social awareness and change but also to academic development. Starting with 7 centres during seventh five year plan, UGC has now set up 67 centres during the end of 10th five year plan. The centres are established in such universities which come under the purview of the UGC Act, 1956.

UGC Guideline suggests that the major activities of the centres will be to fulfill and cover the aims and objectives of the scheme on Women's Studies and implement action plan of activities and programs finalized for the centre/department in tune with the guidelines covered under the scheme for teaching and training, research, continuing education, extension; documentation, publication and dissemination; collaboration, coordination and networking; seminars and workshops; advocacy; monitoring and review etc. Indian scholars have produced some of the most exciting and innovative research in Women's Studies. A good numbers of Women's Studies courses offered in the Indian university system are located in the ground realities of Indian and other Third World countries. The centres should give more emphasis towards networking among different Women’s
Studies organizations for research and information dissemination, which would increase potential for coordinated growth.

The introduction of Women's Studies in the higher education system was a major achievement for the women's movement in India. Women's Studies Centres were envisaged as playing an interventionist role by initiating the gender perspective in many domains in the generation of knowledge; in the field of policy and practice.

**Meeting the Objectives**

The study was initiated with the following four objectives-

i. To study the current status of documentation of the Women’s Studies’ Centres with reference to North East India.

ii. To conduct a systematic study on the information resources available in different formats on Women’s Studies.

iii. To know the various aspects of literature growth in Women’s Studies by way of conducting bibliometric study on a select Indian periodical “Indian Journal of Gender Studies” covering different areas.

iv. To study the extent of coverage of Women’s Studies Literature appeared in different formats and to identify the contributions covered from India in two important citation indexes namely SSCI and A&HCI.

To meet the first objective a survey was conducted at the Women’s Studies Centres of the Universities of North East India. The study reveals that, though documentation is a core area of Women’s Studies Centres as identified by UGC,
these activities are not developing satisfactorily in the Women's Studies Centres of North East India. Under documentation services Newspaper Clipping and Reprographic services only are provided by the Women's Studies Centres of Gauhati, Dibrugarh and Tezpur University. Bibliography Compilation work has been taken up by Women's Studies Centres of Gauhati and Dibrugarh University only. Now in the absence of documentation staff these services are not continuously practiced in these centres.

The survey regarding collection, staff pattern, library facilities etc. show that the centres do not have sufficient documents and in the absence of documentation staff, the centres are unable to develop their documentation activities. A survey of the users of Women's Studies Centres results that the majority numbers (54.17%) of users feel that the documents are partially adequate for them.

The Women's Studies Centres are well engaged in different academic activities and also research projects are regular activities of these centres. But in the absence of proper documentation there is chance of getting lost of these valuable research outputs of the centres. The non-permanent nature of the staff can again create the possibility of misplacing and loss of important literary output of these centres. The detail of the survey is given in the Chapter-6.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed account of different information resources available in Women's Studies both in print and in electronic form. With the growth of Women's Studies, a good number of feminist publishers are also coming up who are totally devoted towards Women's Studies publishing. Various online portals and
databases are also available to support study and research in the field. Along with institutionalized centres there are a good number of organizations who are contributing towards literary development of the area by documenting and publishing the output of their various activities.

In the Chapter-5, a bibliometric analysis is performed on a journal titled *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*. The journal is very carefully selected to study the pattern of development of the subject. The data pertaining to *The Indian Journal of Gender Studies* regarding 167 articles made from volume 10 of 2003 to volume 19 of 2012 reveals predominant nature of sole authorship in the journal with degree of collaboration 0.299.

The geographic coverage of the journal shows a ratio of 63.87% and 36.13% for Indian and foreign contributions. Analysis of total 4138 citations in the years 2003-2012 shows maximum 37.64% of average citations per article in the year 2006 and minimum 14.19% of average citations in the year 2008. A notable exception is seen in bibliographical form of cited documents where maximum 49.493% of citations are from books followed by journals with 28.323% and others cover 13.823% of citations, which include reports, occasional papers, dissertations, proceedings etc.

To fulfill the Fourth Objective and with the aim of studying the growth of Women's Studies literature and to know the present trend of development a study was conducted of two major databases namely Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) and Arts and Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI). A total of 151949 papers on
women were found published during 2003-2012. The study shows that in the year 2009 contribution from Indian authors is least which is 0.097% and the contribution is maximum in the year 2012 with 1.128%. A total of 151949 publications in SSCI and A&HCI reflect various forms of literary output on women like articles, book reviews, conference proceedings, editorial materials etc., Out of which 119225 (78.464%) articles, 4935 (3.248%) proceeding papers, 3168 (2.085%) editorial materials, 17401 (11.452%) book reviews and 7220 (4.751%) other materials. The study shows that the growth of Women's Studies literature is very positive, which is reflected through the increasing number of publications and also increasing number of research in the area as reflected in the Table 6.4.

7.2 Recommendations

Women's Studies Centres are established in the university system as projects and the centres have to wait for the financial grants from UGC after the completion of each Five Year Plan. The centres are expected to enrich Women's Studies literature by producing literature for study and research as well as to work towards social change by consultancy, awareness, advocacy and extension activities. But human and physical resources available to Women's Studies Centres are inadequate to undertake multiple tasks. There is a lot to do in the part of UGC, state government as well as the authority of the university and Women's Studies Centres for the permanency, growth and development of these centres. Through this study recommendations are forwarded to UGC, university authority, and Women's Studies
Recommendations are put forwarded as follows:

A. To University Grants Commission (UGC)

A.1 UGC must give importance towards financial stability of the centres. Irregularity of funds discourages employees, and they become bound to change their job, due to which the WSC’s frequently face the problem of staff change. Studies showed that many of the WSCs had to close down during the period when UGC was reconsidering whether these centres should be supported or not.

A.2 The researcher has experienced personally that due to frequent change in staff positions the flow or continuity of readers service is badly hampered and also the stock of the library is misused leading to loss of library collection and also due to frequently changing staff the centers had to lose expertise in the field, which ultimately hampers the growth of WSCs.

B. To University Authority

B.1 The emerging area of Women’s Studies Centres are not fully taken care of like other academic departments of the university. Due to lack of proper awareness among the university community regarding the concept of Women’s Studies these centres are considered as women welfare departments and their contributions towards mainstream study, research and development are neglected. Apart from the perennial shortage of funds and
bureaucratic tangles the existence of the WSCs also depend upon the proper support of the University Authority.

**B.2** Regarding permanency of staff, UGC has clearly mentioned in their guidelines that the centres must try for state government concurrence for the permanent posts in the centres. Therefore the centre and the university authority must take proper initiative in this regard.

**B.3** Here the responsibility lies with the university authority to appoint interested and dedicated leader to the WSCs. Here it needs special consideration as the leader has a serious responsibility of establishing a new concept, new idea in the form of Women's Studies, not only in the university system, but also in the society as a whole.

**C. To Women's Studies Centres**

**C.1** Emphasis should be given to develop the staff strength in the libraries; in the absence of which, the same person has to organize and manage the library and also arrange for documentation services. In most of the centres it is seen that Project Assistants and Office Assistants are appointed at the first phase and Documentation Officers are given least emphasis. Due to which most of the project reports or other types of literary outputs produce by a centre during its earlier days are not available or lost in the absence of proper organization and maintenance.

**C.2** The higher authorities of Women's Studies Centres must give proper freedom and support to documentation section.
D. To the Researchers

The Researcher in the field must approach the Women's Studies Centres with proper requirement for information, so that the barrier between the user and library staff can be bridged. The user should try to acquire the skillmanship for the purpose.

E. To the Library Personnel

The library personnel working in the WSC's should resort to extension services to market their product so that ultimately use can be done, as well as the awareness can be developed in the field.

7.3 Conclusion

Despite the significant increase in Women's Studies Centres, networks, research publications, journals and so on, there has only been a grudging acknowledgement of the contribution of Women's Studies scholarship to the social sciences.

The Centres are very much positive regarding their future role in society. But being a part of the higher education system they seem to be not much attached with the grass root level women. The projects and studies conducted on marginalized section no doubt help the planners and policy makers, but no direct impact on women at grass root level, which is more or less met by NGO's and such other women organizations. So the centres must try to develop proper liaison and links with other women organizations for coordinated growth of the field of Women's
Studies as a whole. Also the mission of Women organizations outside university system can be followed with regard to their documentation activities and activities towards developing literary output in the field of Women’s Studies.

The UGC guideline suggests that the curriculum should include a field practice component so that the graduates of the degree in Women’s Studies have opportunities for employment in the vast field emerging today on programmes for women in the governmental and non-governmental sectors as also in the corporate and media sector. Lessons can be learnt from the institutions for social work education on how to manage such field-based skills training.

Scope for further Study

The topic for thesis is a pioneering work in this region. Every efforts and endeavours are employed to make the study as an exhaustive one. However one should not presume that this is the final say in this regard, rather it will help the future researcher if this aspect is taken up to open their eyes for the purpose. Anything left out may be suitably taken up by the future researchers. Hope it will be used as fertile soil for the growth of seed and seedlings for future.

To build a data base of primary and secondary sources, archival records, oral histories and other material in vernacular languages on Women’s Studies; Documentation of contributions of women to literature of a particular language; Documentation of women’s participation and leadership in different fields in a particular region or studies on similar other areas can be a fruitful contribution for the development in the field of Women’s Studies.