CHAPTER V
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Suggestion and Conclusions:

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Manuscripts are precious part of our cultural heritage. Great ancient scholars dedicated their lives for creating written records of knowledge. India’s most valued and revered gift to humanity is its profound and timeless heritage. This heritage encompasses almost every aspect of human enquiry exploration and existence covering all branches of knowledge. Today this heritage is fragmented in texts in libraries and with individuals. This precious gift is slowly decaying and vanishing due to the improper handling dealing with preservation conservation and restoration. Indeed preservation of this heritage presents a great challenge before us. However the Information Technology is offering solution not only for preservation but also for enhancement and for its wide scale access.

In this research work a preliminary study has been carried out and some hypotheses has been formulated. The hypothesis that has been formulated during the study has been tested and draws the following conclusion:

➢ The private custodian preserves the Manuscripts as a scared entity.
➢ Most of the Manuscripts are found in Meitei script.
➢ The use of the Manuscripts is found less within the scholar’s research perhaps because of the lack of proper wider publicity/Dissemination/Access.
➢ The usefulness of the thought content of the Manuscripts is still relevant for research work.
➢ The Archives and Museums lack to preserve the valuable Manuscripts.
➢ The Manuscripts are written in archaic Meitei scripts but many of them are transcript in Bengali Script also.
The observation of the present study has called for improving (i) the services provided to the scholars; (ii) the awareness campaign to safe the invaluable heritage; (iii) the accessibility for the present and to succeeding generation; (iv) the descriptive cataloguing by subject/author/period/size/context wise; (v) the conservation and preservation of existing manuscript wealth; (vi) the ready access to these manuscripts through digitization and publication; (vii) scholarship and research based on material available in the manuscripts.

The Manipur State Archives, Imphal along with the National Mission for Manuscripts took up the cause to maintain all these valuable entities and provide services to the scholars efficiently and effectively. But still a separate establishment is required to satisfy the information needs of the researcher scholars. Accordingly four proposals are made at the end.

☑ Formulate a legislative order so that the entire custodian’s handover all the Manuscripts to the centrally located place under Govt. context for public access.

☑ Establishment of a separate Manuscripts Library for the state of Manipur.

☑ Digitization of these Manuscripts to save the cultural heritage for the future generation.

☑ Also make it available through computer-based network for larger usage.

It is also further purposed to have a plan for an integrated National Manuscripts Library system organizing the existing Manuscripts collection and facilities into a structured system. Apart from encourage manuscript logy conduct training of manpower at various levels for Manuscripts preservation, processing and servicing, with the application of modern technology. It will facilitate the better communication of Content. It will also provide information about the Manuscripts collection accurately completely, quickly and to present
it in a manner more convenient to the users at a reasonable cost with a view to achieving maximum utilization of rich cultural heritage of Manipur.

To keep pace with the rapid development taking place in the field of Information Technology and to provide user oriented information service the plan for computerization of the holding and networking with a view to make it a furistic library gearing up to meet the ever growing need of the research for 21st century is need of the hour. The abundance of information of average and below average quality generates paradoxically the demand for new, unusual, exotic and uneasily information. This explains the growing interest in old Manuscripts. However Manuscripts are not available easily due to non-availability of a holding list. So digitizations as well as creation of a database are the solution for preservation and access of Manuscripts. It is observed that at present scanning are the suitable alternatives for storing Manuscripts. This maneuver will serve as a sort of guideline for the preservation of such type of Manuscripts. Indeed this is a challenging and promising task but one has to undertake such kind of activity which will not only help Scholars, library professionals but the entire humanity as a whole.

The custodians of such valuable materials are naturally hesitant to part with their custody. Our proposals therefore are to have a mobile unit of equipment moving to the private/personnel custodian and digitized them on spot and integrate them into a database. A Systematic and rapid programme for the preservation of ancient Manuscripts and the widest possible dissemination of the contents can be done by the above methodology. It will open them to the widest scholastic scrutiny, analysis and study.

The Manuscripts are immensely valuable and helpful for the historical development of the state. To facilitate efficient storage and quick retrieval of information contained in the Manuscripts and to produce a computerizes print out of the list of Manuscripts available in Manipur it is desirable to developed a bibliographic database of the Manuscripts of Manipur by using CDS/ISIS for
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The treasures of Manuscripts are still lying scattered in the nooks and corners so the National Mission for Manuscripts was launched in by the department of culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Government of India with the Indira Gandhi National centre for the Arts (IGNCA) as the National nodal agency, to save this most valuable of our cultural inheritance. They have selected 4 agencies for digitizing Manuscripts in 5 states of India as a pilot project in the 10th Five-year plan.

The research does not stand alone it joins the growing body of a research that looks at small groups of information seeker as they navigate the information’s. As with any piece of research this study was no more exception in that it generated more question than it answered some suggestions and thought on future research are outlined. The humble request is to appeal to you as a representative of the scholarly world to facilitate the compilation of the Manipuri Manuscripts in whatever manner possible. A Manipuri Manuscripts should be compiled in a digital format including all the aforementioned texts.

Networking of Manuscripts will become an essential as the old Manuscripts are deteriorating day by day due to various reasons. The importance of inputting these Manipur Manuscripts texts into digital format cannot be over emphasized for it was from these valuable materials the cultural heritage is known. It is imperative that these originals should be preserved in digital format so that they are accessible to the many varieties of researchers.