CHAPTER VII

IN CONCLUSION
A. FEW SUGGESTIONS

1. Qualitative improvement of the teacher

There are large number of married women teachers in the primary school of Assam with different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds. They join teaching not only with a pecuniary motive. Socio-Psycho-situational motives are also important factors which draw these married women in rural Assam into the fold of working women. Once they are in, they get used to their out-of-home job and the economic independence and social status offered by the working status. They prefer to stay in the school inspite of the various problems and difficulties they have to encounter in their working conditions. They prefer to continue as a working wife than to be a housewife confined within the four walls of the family. These primary school teachers are born poor and brought up in poor home conditions. They live a married life not affluent. Their educational level is also low, they have not seen much of the life outside their own, they are in a closed society, without much social mobility. In the training centres, which are all located in the interior rural areas, the primary school teacher in a sense has not the privilege to come into contact with urban life, modern outlook on life and better way of living. The training programme as it exists at present does not seem to have all the elements which can prepare a teacher with all her qualities, at least to give necessary guidance on the line. Society needs teachers, large
number of teachers to meet the growing demands for expanding education. And of teachers more women teachers for expansion of girls education. Society needs not only quantity, but also needs quality. For this qualitative improvement of the teacher the responsibility of the training programme comes in.

2. Dual role of the teacher

The women teachers are content with their job. Though not quite sure of the social status associated with the primary school job before they get into it, they find social satisfaction for being in the job. For them a primary school job is a better source of income and a better source of academic interest. They do not go for the paid job out-of-home only to while away time or to get away from household chores. The teachers from lower middle class families do not have much leisure hours to while away. They do not shirk their household responsibilities. They are conscious of their role as a housewife. They earn for the family, they want an independent living but not at the cost of household disharmony. In fact, the primary school teacher want to shoulder their dual role with equal responsibility. And they are confident about their own competence.

The in-laws of the teachers quite naturally want that the daughters-in-law while utilising their education in a respectable manner, earn for the family. With female
literacy as low as 19.27 percent in the state, 50.99 percent in the urban areas and 16.51 percent in rural areas, the few educated daughters-in-law in a limited number of families must necessarily have an academic impact on the outlook of the family. These primary school teachers may not be considered educated in the sense as used in the advanced countries but in the remote rural areas which have not experienced much education, these non-Matriculate teachers are considered as the stock of all knowledge by the illiterate, ill-informed people.

3. Emancipation of the widow

The primary school job provides a source of independent living to the educated widows. It is also a source of respectable engagement for them. Because of the source of earning the working widows are able to live alone with their children, away from the in-laws which would have been a kind of servitude to them. In fact working widows are not staying with the in-laws. The childless widows stay with their parents whenever convenient or otherwise they stay alone. In any case, almost all the widows teach in urban schools.

4. The urban teachers

Urban women are not to be found in the primary school in large numbers. A primary school job may not be a respectable vocation for the urban elite. Or, instead of going for a paid job at an early age, they try to continue their studies at
the higher level. It may also be probable that an urban middle class family can afford to forgo a primary school job.

5. Job satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the prime requisite for professional competence. The women primary school teachers are satisfied with their job irrespective of the variables which constitute the entire group. They are conscious of their role and status as a working wife. They do not shirk their responsibility of a housewife or of a teacher. The women teachers have low status - economically, academically or socially. It is also true that the social status of the teacher is, to some extent, dependant on their economic as well as academic status. Those very few who are from socially advantaged section of society they, too, do not enjoy high social status as compared to the women of the same social level, because of their low economic and academic level. For the low-income and the low-qualified women the primary school job is a better source of academic as well as social satisfaction. And these two elements attached to a primary school job, are probably the main cause for attracting more married women to this particular job in preference to other jobs open to them in the job market.

6. Requisite for job satisfaction

To keep alive the job satisfaction of married women teachers, they may be given certain facilities not nece-
ssarily in terms of money income, which will enable them to sustain their professional competence. Such facilities are enumerated below, not in order of importance of course.

**FACILITIES TO BE MADE AVAILABLE TO MARRIED WOMEN TEACHERS**

1. Professional point of view

(1) Incentive for higher academic qualifications

More incentives to teachers may be given to go for higher academic qualifications. Arrangement for coaching classes to prepare non-Matric teachers for the school final examination may be made. Study-leave to teachers who want to prepare for an examination may be granted. The teachers' organisation may arrange coaching classes for willing teachers who want to improve their qualifications. As regards study-leave, a liberal view may be taken by the department. Of course, a pass certificate may not add significantly to the professional competence of teachers but such preparations for a final examination will create a study-leave in teachers which is awfully lacking in them.

(2) Vigorous training programme

A vigorous training programme may be arranged for women teachers which may convert a new person into a competent teacher. A vigorous teacher training for teachers with low academic qualifications is very much essential at the
primary level of education. The present teacher training programme may be modified and enriched with this aim in view, with more emphasis on subject-knowledge.

(3) Short-term training

Specialised short-term training courses may be organised from time to time to refresh the teachers and to extend new ideas and knowledge developed in the field of primary education to the class-room. Training programmes on music and dance, physical education and hand work may be organised to orient teachers towards the new concepts and thoughts. Special aptitudes and abilities of women teachers may be effectively utilised by giving them training accordingly. State Institute of Education, Assam may be entrusted with the responsibility to take up such refresher, orientation and specialised programmes.

(4) Adjustment of time-table during agriculture season

It is generally found that primary school teachers, both men and women, are irregular in attendance during agriculture seasons. In fact, for most men a primary school teachership has been generally a secondary vocation, the main vocation being cultivation. As teaching is not the main source of subsistence to teachers, they cannot be dissuaded from taking part in their agricultural activities in their own cultivable land. During these periods the time-table of the school may be
adjusted to the need of teachers. In the months of August and September classes may be held in the afternoon and in the later part of December and in the early part of January in the morning hours. Rural children are also engaged in their family agricultural activities, some directly and some indirectly. Young girls are engaged in baby-sitting, cooking meals, elder ones in the field. Young boys are engaged in grazing cattle and the elder ones in the field. Such an adjustment will check irregular attendance of teachers as well as pupils during the particular seasons.

(5) Physical facilities in school

Minimum physical facilities may be provided in the school. The responsibility to provide the facilities does not rest with the departmental authorities alone, the general public may also take initiative. The facilities needed in a primary school are enumerated below in order of preference:

- Drinking water
- An attractive school building
- Toilets/urinals
- Furniture for the teacher
- A common room for the teacher

(6) Instructional materials

Instructional materials for the teachers may be provided. Not only the departmental authorities may take step
but other agencies may also be involved to provide these materials to the teacher. The teacher training institutions of the state may prepare certain instructional materials, to be used by teachers in schools, as a part of their practical works or give the teacher some concrete ideas to prepare certain teaching aids by themselves. The teachers' professional organisation may take responsibility to fulfil the felt need of the teacher with expertise guidance. State Institute of Education of the state may offer this expertise guidance. The most essential instructional materials needed in the school at present are:

- Text books for teachers
- Teaching aids
- Articles for co-curricular activities

(7) Provision for part-time job

Provision for part-time job in the school for the nourishing mother may be made available. During the prenatal as well as the post-natal periods a woman teacher needs rest for her own health and for the baby. During these periods part-time job may be arranged for the nourishing mother. A reserve of trained teachers may be kept ready for such part-time works. Good health of the working wife is beneficial not only for the baby but for the community in general. Sound health of the wife is an important source of peaceful home-making and increases professional competence of the married teacher. This
part-time job facility may be provided to the teacher in addition to her stipulated maternity leave.

(8) Creche and pre-primary classes

Creche may be provided in urban areas to help the working mothers. Women welfare organisations may take up the responsibility in this matter. Pre-primary classes may be attached to the primary school to cater to the needs of working mothers.

(9) Role of children organisation

The existing children organisations of the state may be oriented and organised effectively so as to enable them to take the responsibility of children of pre-school age of the working mothers.

(10) Community involvement

Community involvement in the problems of working mothers may be strengthened by means of various mass media such as, discussions, conference, the radio, the cinema and the stage. Community must realise that onesided change in social outlook is not feasible. If the community wants economic independence of the woman, if it wants additional income through wife's earnings, it must change the outlook on men's and women's role and status. If it wants expansion of girls' education as an inevitable condition for democratic life, it cannot ignore the changed status of
the wife. In a social system imbalanced and diagnostically opposite attitudes cannot persist. A total change is inevitable. But the change resistant traditional outlook needs a push and the change sets in, in certain sphere quite markedly and quickly and in certain sphere quite slowly, unnoticeably.

(11) Visits and excursions for teachers

Leave and grants may be sanctioned to the woman teacher for excursions and visits to reputed educational institution and sight seeing which will widen her outlook on life and on her own profession. Being accustomed to the closed society the woman teacher herself is not very much free from traditional outlook on life, on the role and status of a housewife, not free from superstitions unaware of the life outside her own subdivision. She is born and brought up in a subdivision and married in the same subdivision and posted in the same locality she stays. The woman teacher is tradition bound. She takes life as it is, the working conditions as they are, she has no sense of deprivation. She has no effective realisation that her working condition can be improved, she can enjoy a better life, the life inside the house and the life out-of-home.

(12) Prospect for promotion

In matters of promotion the better qualified woman teacher may be given higher preference.
primary school a woman head teacher may invariably be appointed. Because the entry of the woman teacher into a primary school is late, not many senior women teachers are available for promotion, if promotion is considered only on seniority basis. The women headteachers of the primary school have proved their worth and ability. Several senior headmistresses of the state received National Award as successful teachers.

(13) Orientation of the headteacher

The headteachers may undergo an orientation course after they are promoted to the post, on school administration, human relationship in educational administration, interaction pattern between man and woman as colleagues, reaction of married and unmarried teachers towards the school situation and be made to realise the problems and difficulties of the married woman teacher in particular.

(14) Orientation of the supervisor

As a field worker the supervisor may be oriented towards the special problems of the married woman teacher in a primary school. He may take initiative to educate the community on its responsibility towards the working wife. The supervisor is the person who can offer incentive to the woman teacher to improve her qualifications, to give encouragement to the woman to come for a primary school teachership. More encouragement, more scope may be provided by the supervisor.
to the woman teacher for better and more effective discharge of her duties. The supervisor is to take stock of the facilities lamentably not in existence in the primary school and to prepare plans to fulfil these wants in a phased manner.

2. Economic point of view

(1) Salary and fringe benefits

The salary scales are not the only incentives to the woman teacher. Other fringe benefits may also be available to a married woman teacher. The fringe benefits may be:

- Residential facilities in the place of work
- Selection grades for successful teachers
- Facilities for improvement of qualifications
- Liberal leave rules
- Better physical and educational facilities
- Opportunities for visits and excursions
- Better scope for promotion
- Better guidance and more encouragement
- Better educational atmosphere
- Facilities for additional income
- Retirement benefits

Residential facilities

For the widow teachers in the primary schools
who stay in the urban area in rented houses residential facilities may be provided. Not only the widows, but many married women teachers stay in rented houses in urban areas. Those who cannot arrange residential facilities have to walk down to and from the school every day. For the rural teachers working in urban schools residential facilities may be provided which will certainly improve their professional competence.

Again for exchange of ideas between rural and urban areas more women teachers from urban areas may be posted in rural schools. For these teachers residential facilities, with the amenities they are generally used to, may be provided. Residential facilities if provided will attract the urban teacher to go to the rural school. Appointment of the urban teacher in the rural school will go a long way in changing the traditional outlook on the housewife. The working status of a woman will receive a new outlook so far as the rural society is concerned.

Selection grades

The headteacher is entitled to a selection grade of pay. Of the women teachers there are very few headteachers who enjoy a selection grade of pay. Efficient and enthusiastic women assistant teachers are there in the school. These teachers may be spotted out and given recognition of their better performance by granting a selection grade of pay.
Additional income

Sources of additional income may be provided to the married women teacher. She does not go out for private tuition which is a major source of additional income to many men teachers. Men teachers also go for part-time jobs, such as account keeping, typing, ritual activities etc. But for the woman teacher such types of additional income are not available. Paper setter, examiner in the school final examination are permanent sources of additional income for a primary school teacher. More women may be included as paper setters, examiners in the primary school examination. A man teacher is generally appointed as an enumerator in census operations, survey works and such other occasional activities. In such type of activities a woman teacher cannot be engaged conveniently. They may be conveniently appointed in activities which do not require much physical hazards, such as copyist, tabulator which will earn them additional income occasionally. Their cultural activities may not be disturbed. Rather the daily time-table may be adjusted to suit their convenience, without, of course, hampering the total teaching activity in the school.

Liberal leave rules

For the married women liberal leave rules may be provided so that there is less economic hardship on them. The working mothers at least may get sufficient help and
assistance from the departmental authorities in easy discharge of her role as a teacher.

Retirement benefit

Retirement benefits such as pension and gratuity may be made available to the woman teacher.

Premature retirement facilities

Premature retirement facilities may be made available to the woman teacher with all benefitiaries of a full-time retirement in exceptional cases. It is not suggested that the married woman who claims equal status and equal rights may get special favours which may hamper the developmental programmes of the nation as a whole.

Loans and advances

Loans and advances may be given to the low-paid teachers to meet her occasional heavy expenditure, such as treatment of her husband, children and her own and perhaps of her parents in-law and parents. Construction of a dwelling house, purchase of land, education and marriage ceremony of the children are other major expenditure which the teacher has to bear occasionally.

Deputation allowance

Deputation allowance given to a teacher
on deputation to undergo training may be increased than what it is at present. The woman teacher finds it difficult to meet her both ends with the existing deputation allowance. And for this reason many teachers are scared of the training course. This is stated by the teachers under training in the training institutes.

Posting close to the residence

The married woman teacher may be posted in the school close to her residence if residential facilities cannot be provided in the place of work. There are some teachers who may not like to leave their own house. Communication facilities being not suitable, posting close to the place of residence will be helpful to teachers from distant places who have to walk daily long distance to reach their place of work.

Free education to the children

The children of a woman primary school teacher may be given free education up to high school level and for the meritorious ones facilities for higher education may be given on liberal terms. Teachers' children receive financial assistance for their studies, there are schemes like these provided by the state government. But the present provisions are not sufficient to meet the requirements of needy teachers.
Employment opportunity for teachers' children

The children of the primary school teacher may be given better employment opportunity according to their qualifications and suitability.

Better family welfare service

The primary school teacher is in need of family welfare services. The teachers have smaller families than their parents no doubt, but the family may be planned in a more convenient way. The number of children, the gap between two children, her own health, health of their children are some of the basic needs of a married woman teacher. The existing school health services may be reorganised so as to cover these welfare services. Mere provision of these services does not meet the needs of a teacher. Medical services may be made free to the working wife and at the same time within the easy reach of the teachers.

The primary school teacher may be given education by the women welfare organisation on labour saving device in doing household work, economy in the use of time and labour, economy in financial matters, health habits. Such education will be of great practical assistance to a working wife.
3. Social point of view

(1) Recognition by society

A married woman teacher may be given due recognition and sometimes higher recognition than given to the man teacher, for her services to society. Society may realise that a woman teacher, particularly a married woman is a better teacher, specially at the primary level. (Cf. Chapter III). More departmental encouragement may be given to a qualified married woman teacher to continue in service efficiently.

(2) Encouragement to the teacher

More scope and more encouragement may be given to the married woman to take part in the non-teaching activities of the school. In this regards society's responsibility is greater than that of the department of education. Social inhibition on the participation of working wife in the non-teaching activities of the school may be withdrawn. For this change of social attitude on the working wife's participation on the non-teaching activities of the school, society may be educated by the social welfare organisations.

(3) Role of professional organisations

The professional organisation of the primary school teachers of the state may be made to realise the
special problems and difficulties of a married woman teacher. The organisations may be encouraged, be given guidance to study these problems and to find out suitable measures to ameliorate the problems and difficulties of the working wife and more particularly the working wife in a primary school.

(4) Encouragement to urban teachers to serve in rural schools

The present practice of appointing urban teachers only in the urban school may be modified. The urban teacher may be encouraged to go to the rural school by giving suitable incentives. More allowances, residential facilities, promotion prospects are some of the incentives which may attract the urban teacher to go to the rural school.

(5) Encouragement to the widow to go to rural schools

Efficient widow teachers may be posted in rural schools. An efficient and successful widow teacher will be able to set an ideal in the rural area and will be able to break the resistance of the rural society on the working status of a widow.

(6) Role of education department

The education department of the state realises that a woman makes a good teacher. The department also realises that the woman teacher more particularly the married woman
teacher has special problems and difficulties as a working wife. It may take steps to minimise the problems and difficulties of the teacher. Only then, the department will be able to reap the benefit of the good teaching of a woman teacher. Due protection and help may be given to a married woman teacher in times of need.

(7) Educating the community

The married woman teacher in a primary school benefits the community in double way. The community enjoys the additional income earned by the working wife and the better teaching given by her to the children of the community. Again the entry of a woman teacher releases the man teacher from the school and in this way the man is freed from the teaching to go for other jobs more suitable for him according to his aptitude and ability. The community must realise the services rendered by the working wife who is out-of-home not only to increase her family finance and not only to fulfil her academic interest. But she serves the community in many ways. The community must accept the working status of a woman along with the status of a housewife with due ambivalence. The social welfare organisations, private or public, may take the responsibility to educate the community on this particular respect intensively.

It is true that the community takes the initiative to put up a school in the locality and fulfils the minimum requirements of a primary school which are necessary to
receive assistance from the department. The minimum requirements are a plot of land, a permanent nature of building, sufficient enrolment and prospects for future growth of the school. When all these requirements are fulfilled the state takes over the school. There are very few schools which are set-up on the direct initiative of the departmental authorities. Community's initiative may be rightly harnessed to a desirable goal. A community which takes up the responsibility to educate the children will certainly realise the problems and difficulties of the married women teachers who are coming out to teach these children.

(8) Leadership training of teachers

The woman teacher is herself the leader of woman emancipation, specially in the rural areas. Leadership training for the woman teacher in the primary school may be made available extensively. She is the only educated woman in most villages. The services of the woman teacher may be utilised for the purpose of women welfare services. The woman may be freed from the inferiority complex from which she suffers as a result of the social inhibitions on a primary school teacher. It may be brought home to her that she is the leader of the woman in a rural community and she is the person who can liberalise her own sisters from servitude, from the domination of traditions, inhibitions and superstitions. She may also realise that the new responsibility
she has undertaken in addition to her traditional role is her own choice and this choice is going to be permanent in her way of life. She is emerging out as a new woman with new ideas, new outlook and new responsibility. She must realise and which is more important than any thing else that she does not enjoy the status only, the status of a working wife, but her role is also equally important - the role of a working wife. She must not be conscious about her privileges only, she must realise her responsibilities as well.

(9) Orientation to working wife

The working wife may be given extensive orientation on the new way of life to make home making easier and on the labour saving devices. The primary school teacher follows the age old ways of doing household works in unnecessarily elaborate ways without any plan. Such ways of doing household duties consume much of her time and energies. The husband is to be oriented towards the new ways of life. If he is ready to accept the paid-job for his wife he must equally be ready to accept the consequent changes emerging in his family life. The Committee on the Status of Women in India (1975) reported, "If household work and the rearing of children are recognised as socially and economically productive, then sharing such responsibilities need not disgrace a man, and they need not become obstacles to a woman's right to play
the multiple roles required by a modern society." Mere statues and laws would not bring about the change as desired, as necessary, but sustained efforts in a planned way may be made by various agencies private and public, connected with the social welfare services in the state. These welfare services of the state may be organised in effective ways so that they will be able to effect a social change, not abruptly but gradually.

B. FEW REMARKS

In this section a few general remarks on the investigation done on the working conditions of the married woman teacher in the primary school in the district of Sibsagar will be presented.

1. Collection of data

As stated in Chapter I for the purpose of the present study, the collection of data had been done mainly through the questionnaire method. Inspite of the investigator's awareness of the demerits of a questionnaire method, it was considered more dependable and feasible a method for a study of this nature which covered a wide area. Non-response is one of the main drawbacks of a questionnaire method. The present investigator also encountered such a problem, for which the questionnaire had to be sent to some of the teachers for the second time. The

responses from the headteachers were satisfactory. But the supervisors had to be approached personally for return of the opinionnaire mailed to them. The supervisors of the primary school are very busy persons. They are busy mainly with non-academic out-of-schedule activities. As such not much time is left to them for academic activities. As has been stated by themselves they can spare very little time even for supervision of the school, on account of their involvement in non-academic activities. The present investigator had to contact each supervisor personally to get back the opinionnaire.

Of the retired teachers one did not respond to the request for the interview. She put off the interview for several times. She happened to be a widow of a well-known politician of the state. She herself had active participation in party politics after her retirement from the school. The reason for her not willing to give the interview was not known to the investigator. The probable reason might be that she happened to be a teacher of the investigator. This case was finally dropped.

2. The interview

The interview of the cases posed certain problems though not unsurmountable. These primary school teachers were so much conscious of their low academic status that they could not take the purpose of a research study in its true academic perspective. They had been thinking in terms of official
rules and regulations, promotion and prospect while giving replies to the questions put to them. It took much time to make them realise the purpose of a research study and that the investigator was only a research worker in so far as the present study was concerned. The official status of the investigator being known to the primary school teachers because of their close association with the State Institute of Education, the investigator found it difficult to conceal her identity completely. It was also a hard problem for the investigator to present herself before the school teachers as a research worker who wanted to study the personal problem and difficulties of the teachers which had nothing to do with their prospect of a career. Many teachers tried to conceal truth from the investigator at the beginning. But many of them realised the importance of a research study, at least those who had some idea of research activities, and very willing and gladly they co-operated with the investigator. There were still few cases remained who tried to be very much calculative in giving their responses and reactions. In such cases the investigator had to collect certain information from their colleagues, from the headteachers, from the neighbours and even from the supervisors.

3. Case-study

As stated in Chapter IV case-studies had been done to substantiate the findings calculated out of the data
collected with the help of the questionnaire method. It was apprehended that some bias responses might have crept in. To check the apprehended discrepancy the case-study had been done. But no such discrepancies had been noticed. In fact, one person may lie, two persons may lie, but the whole group of five hundred women may not lie collectively or conceal truth from the present investigator.

4. Classification and interpretation of data

In classification of and interpretation of data much difficulties were not faced. The data collected with the help of the questionnaires were classified separately in respect of each questionnaire. The main questionnaire had four main parts and the responses were classified separately in each part. The questionnaire number II and the opinionnaire had been classified likewise. The non-response cases in certain questions posed some difficulties. These cases could not be taken either as positive response or as negative response. So these were taken as non-response cases and no weightage was given to such cases.

All through out the study simple percentate calculation had been used and comparison between the variables had also been made in percentage only. Other complicated statistical calculations to show correlation and variation had not been used, lest such calculations may complicate the simple result of the present study unnecessarily.
C. FEW PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER STUDIES ON THE WORKING WOMEN IN ASSAM

The present investigator cannot claim that hers is the all comprehensive and all inclusive study on the working conditions of the married woman teacher in the primary school in Assam. She can only claim that hers is the first study on the working conditions of a married woman in Assam. As every body will realise the speculative threats to the social and economic structure of the state because of the emerging status and role of a woman, many research studies are impending. The investigator herself being a working woman realises the speculative threats associated with the working status of a woman, more particularly a married woman. In fact, these speculative threats encouraged the present investigator to take up the study. But as the investigator had been able to touch only the fringe of the problem, there remains a broad field for further studies on this particular topic. Enumerated below are some of the suggested topics for further studies on this line.

(1) A comparative study of the working conditions of the married woman teacher and the unmarried woman teacher.
(2) A comparative study of the married woman in the primary school and the married woman teacher at higher levels.
(3) A detailed study of the working widows in different vocations.
(4) A comparative study of the married woman teacher and the married woman in other vocations.

(5) Family life of the married working woman in rural areas.

(6) Family life of the married working woman in urban areas.

(7) The role and status of a working woman and social change in rural Assam.

(8) Wastage in the educated married woman in Assam.

(9) The role of the family welfare organisations and the working wife in Assam.

(10) Working conditions of the married woman teacher of Majuli and comparison of the same with Jorhat subdivision.

(11) Family life of the working wife with unemployed husband.

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