Sources of Information on Women's Studies: Analysis, Evaluation and Trend

Thesis submitted to Jadavpur University for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Synopsis /Proposal submitted to Jadavpur University for pursuing research for the award of Doctor of Philosophy by Sarbani Goswami under the supervision of Professor Chaitali Dutta

Title :Sources of Information on Women's Studies : Analysis, Evaluation and trend

Information sources can be described as something from which information originates andderived.Information sources are diverse in nature. It can be of various types, of various nature and category, variety of range and format. Any document (print and non print), papers, oral narratives, records in different format (assorted or non assorted) that provides/ contains information (new/old) are the sources of information and contributes to the development of knowledge.

Document in any form can be a source of information. Information on women grew out of the activity or campaign conducted by women to make their position visible. Primarily it was the women who were the key actors in documenting their situation through various initiatives undertaken on their own.

The historyof women's struggle is a collective creation. Women have come to revolutionary consciousness by means of ideas, actions and organizations. The society is obscured in brotherhood and the liberation of mankind. The language which makes women invisible to history is not coincidence but part of women's real situation in a society and in a movement which women do not control. The subordination of women is so deeply internalised that it has taken women's liberation to reveal it. Actually women's participation in the day to day life , the

pain she sustained, intense rejection she confronted has provided her with the consciousness to create the narrative of sustenance.

The last two centuries havewitnessed several activities and movements in Europe, America, Africa, Asia to establish women's rights as human rights.
Though the women's movement in Soviet Russia was very much a part of the Bolshevik Movement but the women in the movement did contribute to the establishment of equal rights for women.

The women's story is also embedded in the creation of UN charter. The four women signatories present at Chareter Conference at San Franciscunamely Minerva Bernadino (Dominican Republic); Bertha Lutz (Brazil); Wu Yi-Fang(China); Virginia Glindersleeve (United States) made sure that the word women is inserted in the text of UN Charter and ensured that the principle of equality of sexes was part of the founding ideas of the UN Charter. The ' Founding Mothers' as HilkaPietilla refers to them laid the groundwork for the struggle for gender equality that has since gained momentum. 1.

In India the women's story is inscribed in her labourwithin the family, in their writings, in the participation in nationalist movement , in agrarian struggles, in the struggle against violence, to establish just legal system, the endeavor for fundamental freedom for all in terms of equal rights among men and women and paving the path for empowerment .

The last three decades have observed a marked increase in the visibility of women centered information in India.

For many years in recent history, the environment in India has not been hospitable for information pertaining to women. Information on women or by women were controlled by men and women's writing has often been dismissed as too emotional and not serious enough.

With the setting up of the Status Committee inside the United Nations, the deliberations of Women National Leaders, The making of the Indian Constitution andUN s recognition of the women's movement by the declaration of women's decade (1975-1985) and subsequent declaration of the International year for Women1975 and year of the girl child helped the women activists in India to come together with a common cause in mind.

The activists realized that they knew little about the histories of these issues, their fund of knowledge was minimal. There was thus a clear need for research, creation of knowledge and information. This realization was reinforced by the publication of the seminal text entitled *Towards Equality: Report ofthe Committee on the Status of Women in India in* 1974.

The concept of Women's Studies grew out of the movement and the consciousness that women perceived through her struggle for existence.
Sources of information on women is entrenched in various layers of women's lives. The existence of such sources have been realised by the women activists in the west long before the declaration of the decade and the process of recording was undertaken.Its time that such sources are retrieved and stored in India.

In view of the above the following Scope and Objective is given below :

The basic objective of the proposed research is as follows :

To direct the sources of information and emergence of information on women/by women as evolved during 1945 to 2000.

To direct the reasons or consequences that helped in the evolution of information women or by women of the same period as mentioned above.

To direct and analyse the patterns of changes in the said information sources both in format and contents through the periods mentioned above.

The proposed research would like to undertake a comprehensive and analytical study of the evolution and development of the sources of information on women during the periodbetween 1945 to 2000 in West Bengal.

The specific objective of the research is as follows :

- To locate the information evolved or developed during a particular period.
- To provide an analysis of its evolution
- To record the dimensions of changes in women centered information
- To prepare a trend analysis of the sources of information generated during the period as mentioned above as well as its contribution to the development and improvement of women's movement or women's studies movement.

In India as well as in West Bengal, there is an interesting diversity pertaining to the sources of information on women.Sources of research, information, documentation and action vary widely, ranging from individuals located in mainstream research and development institutions and University departments to Women's studies centres.

The range also includes units in colleges that are necessarily part of the UGC scheme, as well as centres that have been funded by the ICSSR and finally those that have mushroomed in the NGO sector as participants in social and political movements, including the women's movement.

The period between the mid 1940's till 1990's, India witnessed a veritable explosion of writing and research on women due to various political and economic reasons. No subject field was spared in the process, be it development, history, literature, the law, violence, health, caste, communalism or sexuality, and even this is not an exhaustive list.

The other reason for focusing on 1940's is the initiative of some women to find a niche or a space of one's own inside United Nations. Women inscribed their identity as holders of rights in the founding documents of the UN Charter in 1945 and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.

A separate body for advancing women's rights in the UN was created in 1946 and came to be known as the Commission on the Status of Women which later on encouraged its member countries to set up a committee on the status of women. India was the first to set up such a committee in the subcontinent in 1971 with Dr.PhulrenuGuha as the Chairperson.

The four global conferences namely Mexico, Copenhagen, Nairobi and Beijing also fundamentally altered the situation of women in country after country and was able to create a space where women started interacting with each other all over the globe.

It is essential that a proper analysis of information through categorization and trend analysis be made to provide a structured database on information on women pertaining to the remarkable leadership both at international, national and local levels, the intellectual contributions of women and social movements that shaped thinking about women's position in society.

The research will be carried out from the standpoint of West Bengal and the changes or dimensions in changes (both in content and format) that occurred with the growing concept of women's rights, equality and social justice.

In India as well as in West Bengal several researches have been attempted on sources of information on women. More or less all of these researches are based on both literary and discursive writings by women of the nineteenth century Bengal or India. Evidently these researches concentrated on a particular area of study. The researches conducted so far did not showcase the dimension and patterns of changes in information sources that grew out of the mounting activities on women and surfaced at all levels.

Various researches have been conducted on the following areas on different disciplines and fields. I am yet to come across research on information sources of women and specifically the period around which the research will be pursued.

The proposed research would concentrate andfocus on the developments and evolution of information that are available in India not only by women but also information that relates to women. The period between 1940 to 2000 is important because of the following incidents.

- The Nationalist movement

- Partition of India

- Creation of an independent India

- Making of the Indian Constitution

- The establishment of United Nations

- Creation of a separate commission on Women within the UN system and the subsequent debates and discourses that followed

- Setting up of Status Committee of Women in India and subsequent developments

- The International women's Decade

- Women's movement and various reforms

- Women's Studies Centres its contributions etc.

Review of Literature:

For the purpose of developing my conception on pursuing the proposed research I have studied various books and journals available specifically in the School of Women's Studies Library and also at the Women's Studies Research Centre Library, Calcutta University.Since it is not possible to provide all the titles , I am providing the following titles which have helped me in developing my view regarding Sources of Information on Women's Studies.

B

Bandyopadhyay, Brajendranath.(1357). *Bangasahityanari*.Kolkata :BisvabharatiGranthalaya,(Bangla)

Bagol,Jogeshchandra. (1357).*Banglar streeshiksha, 1800-1856*. Kolkata:BisvabharatiGranthalaya.

Bagol, Jogeshchandra. (1967) *Streeshiksharkatha*. Kolkata: SudarshanBasak.

Berger, John. (1972). *Ways of seeing*.Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Beauvoir, Simone de. (1988). *The second sex*. London: Picador.

Bhattacharya, Sutapa .(2007) .*Bangalimeyerbhabnamulakgodya :unishshatak* . Kolkata:SahityaSanshad,(Bangla)

Borthwick, Meredith (1984).*The changing role of women in Bengal,1849-1905*.Princeton : Princeton University Press.

C

Chakraborty, Usha.(1963).*Condition of Bengali women around the 2nd half of the19^{th} Century*.Kolkata :Bardhan Press.

Chaudhury, Sanghamitra. (2002)*Adhunik Bangla SahityaMahilaRachitaRachanarKromobikash* (1850-1900). Kolkata : Bona.

D

Deb, Chitra .(1392) .*Thakur barirandormahal*.Kolkata :Ananda Publishers.

Datta, Kusum. (2007). *Women's studies and women's movement in India since the1970s: an overview.* Kolkata.The Asiatic Society.

Foucault, Michel.   (1990). *The History of sexuality.* vol. I: An Introduction, (trans.), Robert Hurley. New York: Vintage Books.

G

Gandhi, N.and N.Shah.(1991).*The issues at stake : theory and practice in thecontemporary women's movement in India*. New Delhi : Kali for Women.

Geetha V. (2002).*Gender*. India:Stree.

GOI.(1986). *National Policy of Education*. New Delhi : GOI.

GOI .(1974).*Towards Equality: report of the Committee on the Status Women inIndia*. New Delhi : Government of India, Department of Social Welfare.

GOI.(1984).*Shramshakti Report of the National Commission on Self –Employed Womenand Women in the Informal Sector*.New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development.

Gupta, Jogendranath (1375). *Banger Mahilakabi*.Kolkata :VisvsbharatiGranthalaya. (Bangla)

J

Jain ,Devaki . (2005).*Women development and the UN : A sixty- year quest forequality and justice*. Hyderabad: Orient Longman.

Jain, Devaki and Rajput, Pam ed. (2003).*Narratives from women's studies family: recreating knowledge*. New Delhi : Sage publications.

K

Karlekar, Malavika. (1991).*Voices from within :early personal narratives of Bengali Women*. New Delhi : OUP.

M

MazumdarVina. (1993)*The Non aligned movement and the internationalwomen's decade : a summary of decisions*. New Delhi : CWDS.

Murshid, Ghulam. 1983). *The Reluctant Debutante : Response of Bengali womento modernization,1849-1905*. Rajsahi:RajshahiSahitySamsad, Rajsahi University.

Murshid, Ghulam (1993) *RassundarithekeRokeya : nariprogotirekshobachor*. Dhaka: Bangla Akademi.

Oakley, Ann. (1997). A brief history of gender. In *Who's afraid of feminism,ed.,* Ann Oakley and Juliet Mitchell. New York:The New Press.

R

Ray, Bharati,ed. (1994). *Sekalernarishikkha : BamabodhiniPatrika (1270-1329)*. Kolkata: Women's Studies Research Centre, Calcutta University.

S

Sen, Gitaand Grown, Caren. (1987).*Development crises, and alternative visions : third world women's perspectives*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Sen ,Kshitimohon (1357).*PrachinBharaternari*.Kolikata :VisvabharatiGranthalay.

T

Tharu, S and K, Lalitha. (1993).*Women writing in India : 600BC to the presentday*. New Delhi : OUP.

Uberoi, Patricia.(2006). *Freedom and destiny: gender, family and popular culturein India*. New Delhi : OUP.

Apart from theabove I have seen various journal articles specifically which deals with women in India in Indian context. I have consulted Economic and Political Weekly, Journal of Gender Studies, Asian Journal of Women's Studies, U N Chronicle, Feminist review etc.

Methodology :-

The following methodology will be followed in the research :

Literature Search

Intreview Method

Evaluation of the documents (miscellaneous forms)

Analysis
  By categorization
  By content analysis

Chapter Headings

Introduction

Background :-

Will contain a trend analysis on the information generated both by and for women in the post independence period. Effort will be made to provide a brief trend analysis of the evolution of women's question and the growth and development of women centered information of the period.**This chapter will also contain an extensive literature review surveyed for the purpose of developing the thesis.**

Chapter I: Development of Information on women in post independence period, 1947- 1960.

Women's Movement (will be sub divided according to subjects)
Women's Writings Do
Autonomous Women's Groups and Non GovernmentOrganisation
　　　　　　　Do
Narratives (if any)　　　　Do

Government Sources　　　Do
International agenciesDo
Assembly proceedings　　Do

Chapter II : Development of Information on women in post independence period, 1961-70

Women's Movement (will be sub divided according to subjects)
Women's Writings　　　Do
Autonomous Women's Groups and Non GovernmentOrganisation
　　　　　　　　　Do
Narratives (if any)　　　Do

Government Sources　　　Do
International agencies　　Do

Assembly proceedings   Do

Chapter III : Development of Information on women in post independence period,
 1971-1980
Women's Movement (will be sub divided according to subjects)
Women's Writings   Do
Autonomous Women's Groups and Non GovernmentOrganisation
                    Do
Narratives (if any)   Do

Government Sources   Do
International agencies   Do
Assembly proceedings   Do

Chapter IV : Development of Information on women in post independence period,
 1981-1990
Women's Movement (will be sub divided according to subjects)
Women's Writings   Do
Autonomous Women's Groups and Non GovernmentOrganisation
                    Do
Narratives (if any)   Do

Government Sources   Do
International agencies   Do
Assembly proceedings   Do
Women's Studies Centres   Do

Chapter V: Development of Information on women in post independence period, 1991-2000
Women's Movement (will be sub divided according to subjects)
Women's Writings   Do

Autonomous Women's Groups and Non GovernmentOrganisation
                              Do
Narratives (if any)   Do

Government Sources   Do
International agencies   Do
Assembly proceedings   Do
Women's Studies Centres   Do

Conclusion of the thesis

References:

DeasaiNeera and MaithreyiKrishnaraj .(1987).*Women and society in India*. Mumbai: Ajanta Publishers .

Forbes , Geraldine.(1996).*Women in Modern India*.Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.

Gandhi, N.and N.Shah. (1991).*The issues at stake :theory and practice in thecontemporary women's movement in India*. New Delhi : Kali for Women.

GOI : (1974) *Towards Equality: report of the committee on the status of women in India*.New Delhi : Government of India. Department of Social Welfare.

GOI .(1984).*Shramshakti Report of the National Commission on Self –Employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector*.New Delhi: Government of India, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Department of Women and Child Development.

Jain ,Devaki and Rajput, Pam, ed. (2003).*Narratives from the women's studiesfamily*. New Delhi : Sage Publications.

Sarkar, Lotika , Sharma, Kumud and Kasturi, Leela. ed. (2002).*Between tradition,counter tradition and heresy:contributions in honourof VinaMazumdar* .New Delhi:Rainbow.

UNESCO, Office of the Regional Advisor for Social Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, women's Studies and social sciences in Asia, Report.---2004, Women's and Gender Studies in the Asia-Pacific region, UNESCO, Bangkok.

Supervisor : Professor Chaitali Dutta

Signature of the Supervisor : Professor Chaitali Dutta :

Date :

Signature of the Candidate :
Date :