

CHAPTER-VII

Summary and conclusion

In contradistinction to past-primitive society, present-contemporary society greatly relies upon multiplicity of factors to invite change and development. While process of social stratification and hierarchy is structurally imbued with imbalances, state and society across globe find it difficult to escape or ignore change and development. Sociology of everyday life is therefore besets with diversified and cumbersome institutions and values which directly and indirectly affect gender and development. Because gender and human development are regarded major issues to steer comprehensive vis-à-vis concise development process. In the present research work an attempt has been made to understand how human development affected by gender inequality in Hailakandi District of Assam, which is situated at the southernmost part of Assam. For the purpose of an empirical investigation of how inequality discriminates women than men and how gender and human development are incompatible in Hailakandi District, sample (both male and female) of six hundred representative nature has been drawn from the total universe of the study that is 659296 (six lakh fifty nine thousand two hundred ninety six), the total population of the district, as per 2011 census of India. The study is a modest attempt to understand the socio-economic base of the total population, and their capacity and awareness about the basic amenities of life. As human development occupies a centre stage in global development debate and the movements all over the world for gender equality emerge as major challenge in India and abroad, this study is also an attempt to understand the women issues of Hailakandi District because despite of several measures a very large section of women of this district still live under absolute poverty and remain as the poorest of the poor. They are worse affected by the process of economic growth,

transformation and development. In all indicators of Human Development Index such as standard of living, education, work-force, health, participation in decision-making process etc., women of the Hailakandi district are worse affected and their plight is clearly visible. Keeping this in view the present study of Gender and Human Development of Hailakandi District of Assam addresses gender as central issue to development outcome, transforming unequal Gender relation to promote shared power, control of resources, decision-making and support for women empowerment. In this connection the study focussed poverty and economic inequality, inequality in education and health, discrimination in decision-making process (both in public and private spheres) of women in Hailakandi district due to prevailing socio-cultural and political attitude of patriarchy. The entire finding of the study has been presented on the basis of its objectives and research questions. For the convenient study, chapter- wise presentation of the content and findings has been made.

Introductory chapter that is **chapter-I** of the study presents an outline of background of the study on “Gender and Human Development” and an outline of the research plan which includes the statement of the problem that signify the importance and relevance of the study. A conceptual framework of this study has been given to understand the key concepts like Gender Equity, Gender and Human Development, Women Empowerment, Poverty and Women, Human Development Index etc. that has been attached to them for the purpose of the present study. For a clear understanding of the key concepts and terms used in the research the operational definitions, a theoretical framework of the study have also been provided in this chapter. The chapter has been concluded with a chapter plan and the profile of the sample area.

Chapter-II of the study is on the framework of study. It explains the background of the research problem from which study stems up. It contains the objectives of the study, basic

research questions, methodology of the study, hypotheses explaining the size of the sample, procedure of its selection and the techniques of data collection. For the purpose of the study the data have been collected both from primary and secondary sources. Whenever necessary, personal interviews have been taken and the researcher participated in the group discussions, community meetings and training programmes to collect the data for making the study empirical. After data collection, they were tabulated and analysed properly to make the study more scientific. The attempt has been made to review relevant literature. As many as fifty relevant literatures have been reviewed. The study has critically analysed all related literature in the field like Human Development, Gender Equality, Woman Empowerment Gender and Society etc. and found some gaps in different writings of celebrated authors on Gender and Human Development. For the progress of the study also some of the celebrated works of renowned authors have been taken as index and very often their views have been referred for the advancement of the study.

Chapter-III of the study explains a brief account of profile of Hailakandi district as title of work is on Gender and Human Development in Hailakandi District of Assam and scope of the study has been confined to the District of Hailakandi, this chapter of the study explains in brief the History, Geographical Location, Area, Climate, Density of Population, decadal Growth of Population, Religion basis of Population, Economic Activities in the District, Basic Amenities of Life etc. with a physical Map of the District. For providing justice to the title of the study, a brief explanation has been given on Gender Challenge and problems of Women in the District and how Gender is related to Human Development of the District.

So far as the human development index is concerned, Hailakandi is one of the worse performing districts of Assam in terms of basic human capabilities in three fundamental

dimensions like long and healthy life, knowledge and decent standard of living, as indicated by the HDI value of 0.363 (11th Rank) which is lower than the state average of 0.407. The district occupies 9th place in terms of income while 14th place in terms of both education and health in district wise ranking. The human poverty index in 1999 indicates that 27 % of total population in the district are living in poverty. In terms of gender related development index Hailakandi ranks 6th in district wise ranking, with GDI value of 0.609, which is above the state average of 0.537. However, the HDI – GDI rank disparities indicate that women in this district suffers from deprivation of development potential leading to lower achievement than men (Assam Human Development Report, 2003). So far as the composite index of backwardness of the districts of Assam is concerned, the district having no. 1 rank is regarded as most backward and higher the rank of districts in composite index, the district has been regarded as least backward. For the year 2009 – 2010 Hailakandi district composite index was 14.6 having 17th rank, which differ from the year 2010-11 as the district ranks 15th having 13.5 composite index clearly indicating further backwardness and again the district could gain the previous position of 17th in the year 2011-12 having 14.6 as composite index. It indicates that among all the Barak Valley districts like Cachar and Karimganj, Hailakandi is the most backward, for which it needs the attention of the policy makers and planners of the state. The main cause of the backwardness of the district could be found in the marginalisation of women of the district as they are not only subordinated or discriminated at home but also outside the home that is in the society, by the administrative machineries of the district and above all by the state governmental agencies and the fact is clearly established by the gender development index.

Chapter-IV explains growing ‘feminisation and poverty in Hailakandi’ as a large proportion of women in district of Hailakandi continue to live in poverty. This happens

due to added responsibilities, apart from family and household function. On women, to earn a living and skewed patriarchal system that denies access to ancestral wealth. While women work nearly 67% of working hours they earn only 10% of income and own less than 1% of land. Poverty often leads to economic exploitation and sexual abuse of women. Their labour has not been classified as an economic activity. Gender differences in the work place continued to be widely prevalent. The most dangerous aspect of this feminisation of poverty is inequality in access to and participation in economic activities as compared to men.

So far as census report 2011 is concerned, total number of household in Hailakandi is 143350. The children in the age group from 0-6 years are 111,278 in total out of which 56,936 are boys and 54,342 are girls. The male literates are 226,836 and female literate are 180,530. So far as illiteracy is concerned, 111,054 are male illiterate and 140876 are female literates. Total female workers are 43,448 in number, where as total male workers are 170,792 in number. Out of 165,193 total main workers of Hailakandi district 141,385 are male and only 23,808 are female. The total main workers cultivator is 56,144 out of which 53,679 are male and only 2,465 are female. Out of total 17,718 main workers agricultural labourer in the district 16,035 are male and only 1,683 are female. There are 3,264 main workers engaged in household Industries, out of which both male and female have almost equal contribution having little difference that is 1765 are male and 1499 are female. All total a total number of 88,067 main workers are engaged in other activities of the district with 69,906 are male and 18,161 are female. Out of 49,407 total marginal workers of the district 29,407 are male and 19,640 are female workers. Total numbers of marginal workers female 13,530 marginal workers are employed in agriculture as labourers in the district out of which 9,971 are male and 3,559 are female. A total of 4,049 marginal workers engaged in House hold Industries in which only 721 are male

and 3,328 are female. A clear indication of women engagement more in household activities is clearly visible as their number is 3,328 that is five times more than the male in district. A total of 21,939 marginal workers of the district are engaged in other activities out of which 11,882 are male and 10,057 are female. A total of 40,223 marginal workers engaged in different activities from 3-6 months in the district out of which 24,697 are male and 15,526 are female workers. A total 7,635 marginal workers engaged in cultivation from 3-6 months out of which 5,643 are male 1,992 are female a total of 11,592 marginal workers engaged as agricultural labourers from 3-6 months in the district out of which 8,570 are male and 3,022 are female. A total 3,156 marginal workers engaged in Household activities from 3-6 months out of which 555 only are male and 2,601 that is five times more than the male are female workers. A total of 17,840 marginal workers engaged in other activities form 3-6 months out of which 9,929 are male and 7,911 are female workers. A total of 8,824 marginal workers from 0-3 months in the district out of which 4,710 are male and 4,114 are female workers. A total of 893 marginal workers of Hailakandi are engaged in Household Industries from 0-3 months out of which 166 only are male and 727 that is six times more than the male are female workers. Out of 445,056 total non-workers in Hailakandi district 167,098 are male non-workers and 277,958 are female non-workers. This is the clear indication of the fact that women are marginalised section in the society. In district wise Percentage Distribution of Persons by Activity Status backwardness of Women, Inequality, Poverty and Unemployment are clearly visible as in Hailakandi district out of 29.1% total main workers only 7.8% are female workers but 48.9% are male workers. Here the percentage of female main workers in the district is lower than the state average of 12.6% main female workers. As a result of which the total percentage of main workers of the district is also lower than the state average of 31.2%. Thus the backwardness of women in the

district of Hailakandi can be linked to it the overall development of the district. Again out of total persons of marginal workers the female percentage of marginal workers stands at 4.2% whereas it is 0.7% in case of male marginal workers. This indicates that women are mostly regarded as marginal workers, for which their labour has not been counted as labour or income.

The Human Poverty Index in case of all the districts of Assam in which Hailakandi district stands at 17th position having higher HPI Value than 16th other districts of Assam with 27.00 HPI Value. It indicates the fact that the more people in the district are suffering from Human Poverty. This is indeed a great challenge for the people of the district and state government. The major task has been identified to reduce Gender disparities and inequalities with priority basis and to bring basic services within the reach of each and every citizen of the district.

From table no. 4.18 it is clearly visible that in the year 2009-10 out of total MSDP (IAY) beneficiaries of the district all total 2894 beneficiaries are male i.e. 84% of the total percents and 547 are female i.e. 16% of the total beneficiaries of the district in different blocks. This is a clear indication of the fact that the women of the district are deprived of by the governmental machineries in distribution of different schemes for the removal of poverty in the district under poverty alleviation programmes. From field survey conducted it is clear that most of the respondent's response was very negative in respect of economic activities of women in the district. In maximum families of the district women labour has not been counted as family's income. As far as the question of addition of resources by women to family's income is concerned, very few admitted that they have contribution to family income. Excepting Hailakandi block most of the women in different blocks admitted that they are not getting their due wage at par with male workers. So far as the financial benefit, empowerment, training in different skills,

knowledge about the machinery of local bodies etc. are concerned, they get help to some extent from SHGs but not up to the mark as they expected.

The study explains in **Chapter-V** the ‘inequality and women in Hailakandi’ as it prevails among women as compared to men in district due to less access to education and literacy. This lack of education denies women their right to productive employment and also their legal right. Due to lack of education inequality also prevails in access to health of women as compared to men. Through this chapter it has been tried to solve some of the basic related questions with which the whole society confronts are Does women’s education lead to a positive impact on gender development? Will improvement in female literacy ensure greater gender equality? While it can be stated with a certain degree of certainty that improving the education of women will lead to gender development, it is difficult to affirm that improvements reflected through the variable of female literacy alone will be sufficient to bring about women equality. Use of this or other education related indicators reflects attainment/achievement levels and highlights the gap or extent of parity between men and women. Existing levels of discrimination and biases are an outcome of socio-cultural factors and patriarchal structures which are not easily overcome by introduction of literacy alone. Nevertheless, the benefits of education cannot be trivialised as these would have a long term impact upon the empowerment of women. From the beginning of the planned era, education along with health and social welfare were accepted as crucial services for women’s development. Allocations through the Five Year Plans and special programmes for women’s education together with efforts to reduce gender inequalities in school enrolment and drop outs have been undertaken by the state could not deliver gender equality at the district level.

The study shows the child population in the age group 0-06 years literates and literacy rate in Hailakandi district on the basis of block wise and town / city wise. So far as

Algapur Development Block is concerned, as per 2011 census report the male population was 61689 and female population was 57910 out of total population of the block 119599. From the age group of 0-06 years the male children literates were 10110 and female child literates were 9657 only out of total 19767 populations. Out of total literate in the block i.e. 75632, male literate was 42251 i.e. 68.49 % of the total literacy population. However, the female literacy rate was 57.64 % i.e. 33381 out of total literates 75632 i.e. much less than the male literacy rate.

In Hailakandi Development Block the total population of the children from the age group 0-06 years was 23229. Out of which 11983 male and 11246 are female. So far as total literates of population is concerned, it is 80230 out of which 45358 i.e. 66.27 % are male and 34872 i.e. 54.60 % are female. However, out of total children population 23229 belong to the age group from 0-06 years 11983 are male and 11246 are female children literates. Hence, the male children literates' population is much ahead of male children literacy population.

In Lala Development Block study found that out of total population 191172, male population is 97613 and female population is 93559. Total child literate population in the age group 0-06 years in Lala block is 32824 out of which 12729 belongs to male and 16095 belongs to female child literate population. So far as literacy rate is concerned, total literates in the block was 114200 out of which male literates was 63993 i.e. 65.55 % and female literates was 50207 i.e. 53.66 %. Thus the female literacy from the age group 0-06 years is much below to the male child literacy rate in the block.

The total population of Katlicherra Development Block was 73266 out of which 37523 are male and 35743 are female. Total child literate population from the age group 0-06 years in the block is 12454 out of which 6361 are male and 6093 are female. Total literate

is 47085 out of which 25948 i.e. 69.15 % belongs to male and 21137 i.e. 59.13 % are female literates. Like all other block Katlicherra female children literacy rate is much below to the male children literacy rate.

The total population rate of South Hailakandi is 94811 out of which 48482 are male and 46329 are female. The children literate populations from the age group 0-06 years are 18343 in total out of which 9378 are male and 8965 are female. So far as literacy rate is concerned, of the same age group the total literacy in the block is 44996 out of which 19943 i.e. 41.13 % are male and female literates are 25053 i.e. 54.07 %. It may be mentioned clear that due to the impact of Sachar Committee Report on this block the number of female literacy rate has been increased in 2011 census.

So far as Hailakandi Municipal area is concerned, the total population is 33637 out of which 16843 are male and 16794 are female. The child literate population from the age group of 0-06 years is 18343 in a total out of which 9378 are male and 8965 are female belongs to age group 0-06 years. Out of total literate population of 27925 in municipal are 14348 i.e. 85.18 % are male and 13577 i.e. 80.84 % are female literates.

The total population of Lala Town committee area is 11771 out of which 5827 are male and 5944 are female. The children literacy population from the age group of 0-06 years is 1183 in total out of which 609 are male and 574 are female. The male literate population in Lala town is 5029 i.e. 86.30 % out of 9984 total population.

In HPC Township total population is 2732 out of which 1473 are male and 1259 are female. The children literacy population from the age group 0-06 years is 169 out of which 89 are male and 80 are female children. From the literacy 2495 of HPC town 1370 i.e. 93 % are male and 1125 i.e. 89.35 % are female literates. Thus it can be said that the

female children as well as the women are much backward so far as different blocks and city or towns of Hailakandi district is concerned.

In table no. 5.5 on block wise high/higher secondary school student enrolment and teachers appointment are concerned, while the total number of female student has been increased to 51.46 % in the district in comparison with the male students who constitute 48.54% of the total enrolment, the number of female teacher is only 22.67% lower than the male teachers with 77.33%. Those in Hailakandi district girl students do not get any inspiration and encouragement in attaining higher education due to shortage of female teachers in different high/higher secondary schools. So far as pass out of the HSLC examination is concerned, although number of pass students has been increasing year after year and enrolment has been increasing it should not be taken as index to judge the standard of education as dropout rate and completion of education should also be taken as criteria to measure the educational development index. Further, number of rape cases kidnapping and other crime records under IPC in district is not at all encouraging for women development as women are always victim of the crime situation.

The sanitation facilities and safe drinking water facilities with which the women are daily confronting is not at all in a good position in the district. District wise sex ratio in Assam shows that 951 female per 1000 male in Hailakandi district. Child literacy rate 0-06 years of the female is lower than the male. On achievement in family welfare programme it is seen that the target in five blocks of the district never been achieved, the same is also true in case of immunisation programme. From the field survey it is found that for financial reasons the parents could not send their girl child to the schools for education and the same also is true in case of the health facilities of the district. The doctors seldom visit the hospitals and due to deplorable financial condition the parents are not able to afford

money for better treatment for which most of the guardians prefer the treatment of son instead of their daughters.

This **Chapter-VI** explains the access of women in Hailakandi to power and decision making in public domain as well as in their private life is responsible for status of women's empowerment in the district. While women enjoyed right to vote for many years, they occupy only a small fraction of seats in state legislature and parliament. Although situation gradually change with 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments that provide reservation of 33% of seat on panchayat and municipality, but this has yet to be translated at national and state level.

Gender basis composition of Hailakandi Municipal Board with highest educational Qualification shows that female members of Municipal Board constituted in 2013 gone in favour of women as out of 16 members of body 1 member has UG degree with LLB qualification as highest educational qualification. On the other hand, no other male member of the present body has UG degree and 2 of the male members are belong to Below Matriculation category .Thus, as a result of 50% reservation of women in Urban Bodies they are now in an advantaged position and could able to occupy the seat of Chairperson and Vice –Chairperson having opportunity to bring any decision in favour of them.

Gender basis composition of recent Hailakandi Zilla Parishad shows that out of 10 members four belongs to female folk and six belongs to male category. Out of four female members of Zilla Parishad one is matriculate, another higher secondary and two others have UG and PG as the highest qualification. On the other hand, among the male members three persons have UG, one has HS and another has matriculation degree as

highest qualification. Hence the female members are ahead of male members so far literacy is concerned as none of the male member possesses the PG qualification.

The gender basis of composition of total number of representatives with highest qualification elected to the local bodies (both GP and AP) shows that in Algapur block female below matriculation are 34% (53), 10% (16) matriculate, 6% (9) HS, 1%(2) UG, 0.64% (1) have the highest qualification out of 154 total elected members to GP and AP. Here it may be mentioned that the female members are in a subordinated position because in respect of male elected members, the table shows that only 22% below Matric,12% Matric,11% HS, 3% UG having highest qualification of the male members were elected to the GP and AP . From Hailakandi block 40% (63) below Matriculate female, 5% (8) Matriculate, 3% (5) HS having highest qualification out of total 159 members of GP and AP of the block were female members. The same trend also can be seen in this block and again the women members are subordinated in respect of education because only 24% (38) below Matriculation, 14% (22) Matriculate, 12% (19) HS, 2%(3) UG and 0.62% (1) having highest qualification out of 159 elected members belong to male category. The same thing also observed in case of Lala, Katlicherra and South Hailakandi blocks as the percentage of below matriculation number is more in case of female members in all the blocks having no PG qualification . Thus it clearly indicates the fact that the women members are in a disadvantaged position in public sphere so far as decision making in PRIs of Hailakandi district is concerned.

The question regarding participation of woman in decision making process, non-participation and opinion relating to proxy women was responded by the respondents in a peculiar manner. The response from all the five blocks of Hailakandi district relating to participation in decision making process in public sphere is just 33% i.e. 36 in Algapur, 50 in Hailakandi, 61 in Lala, 22 in Katlicherra and 29 in South Hailakandi are of the view

that due to reservation of 33% in local bodies for woman, they could able to participate in decision making process. However, the respondents of Algapur block agreed that 83% (30 samples) are proxy women in different local self governing bodies, 40% (20 samples) in Hailakandi block, 77% (47 samples) in Lala, 55% (12 samples) in Katlicherra and 76% (22 samples) in South Hailakandi are also proxy women in political activities.

So far as the response of the respondents about awareness of women in private spheres is concerned, the question relating to whether grievances of women are redressed through social and legal institutions? From different blocks 33% said in a positive manner but rest 67% said negatively because they thought only those women who participate in PRIs are influencing the social and legal institutions in their favour only and they are mainly influenced by the patriarchal structure of the society.

The question relating to women subordination within the family and the society 50% (55 samples) from Algapur, 50% (76 samples) for Hailakandi, 50% (93 samples) from Lala, 50% (34 samples) from Katlicherra and 50% (44) from South Hailakandi admitted that women in the district are still subordinated position within the family and in society because of the influence of customs, traditions and primordial loyalties of the society. Hence there is a clear indication of patriarchal structure of the society in which women are still disadvantaged group.

The respondents responded the question relating: Are women participate equally along with male members in family's financial and other decision making matters? Here 83% (30 samples) from Algapur said no and also 40% (20 samples) from Hailakandi, 77% (47 samples) from Lala, 55% (12 samples) from Katlicherra and 76% (22 samples) from South Hailakandi answered negatively.

Thus, the women subordination in Hailakandi is clear visible from this chapter and this is due to patriarchal nature of the society, demographic composition of the district, conservative tradition and mindset, male domination in public and private spheres, ignorance and lack of awareness of women folk, less initiative for women upliftment by women organizations and above all the concern of the state as well as central governments, for which women are still in a subordinated position and gender equality is the need of the hour.

It can be said that the participation of women in Panchayati Raj Institution particularly in Hailakandi district is low and for their activities they are dependent on others. Most of the time, they are not in a position to take a decision on their own and are not able to take positive decisions. The findings of this study show that the progress of women in panchayati raj institutions is slow and it will take more time to attain women's goals. Because women are irregular in the Panchayat activities due to missing their daily wage and worry about their babies and family. It is also a fact that the women who have come in under caste reservation have come out with their social and economic disadvantages – mostly illiterate, with little productive assets, largely dependent on wage labour and in a rural society that has fixed places for various castes and gender. In the course of conducting the study it is realized that some measures are required to be taken to promote women's participation in active politics. So it may be suggested that elected women in each district may develop a network among them and hold meetings and discussions on a routine basis about necessary measures to promote their participation and neutralize male domination in local self bodies. The present study presents a low level of education in this case study which is not a good sign for a healthy democracy. Thus, it is important to make extra educational training programmes related to politics for enhancing knowledge of elected women members on government policies and

programmes, bureaucratic structures and the issues of local concern. For this, government made provision for mandatory attendance of Awareness Programme/Orientation Programme by members of PRIs and Extensive Training Centre, Boalipar, Hailakandi has been providing the same. But it is a matter of great regret that despite of the noble efforts of some of the SHGs there is tendency of proxy women's attendance in various above said programmes. Sensitization of male members in PRIs is equally important so that they listen to women patiently, converse politely, acknowledge their suggestions in the meetings and implement them wherever feasible. It would lead to psychological empowerment of women.

From the above chapter wise analysis of Gender and Human Development: A study of Hailakandi district of Assam, the following major findings can be derived.

Major Findings

- The study reveals that 'nature of gender subordination in Hailakandi district' is due to traditional socio-cultural structure and social institution existing with primordial loyalties. Not only societal structure and institutions discriminate women but also state institutions function with ideology of patriarchy, for which gender inequality prevails in the district.
- In Hailakandi, women are in a disadvantageous position both in absolute sense and relative to men in the area of access to employment, economic activity, health and decision-making process. Most of the women do not have final say about the use of their own earnings. Most of the women do not have household decision making power, particularly in large household purchases. Most of the women do not have freedom of movement.

- Traditional gender norms particularly those concerning wife beating are still prevailing in the society. The women of Hailakandi enjoy somewhat low status in absolute term and much lower relative to men. Household decision making capacity, workforce participation rate and control over resources are lower for the women of Hailakandi in comparison to other districts of Assam and of India. Less women of Hailakandi are exposed to physical violence than that of India. Hailakandi shows better performance in the area of education but not in the areas of health, economic activity, participation in decision making in public and private spheres etc.
- Education, employment and formation of SHGs vary positively with literacy and per capita DDP.
- At primary and middle level enrolment rate is same for almost all the districts. Sex ratio varies negatively with literacy and DDP. Sex ratio is low for Hailakandi as compared to Lower and Central Assam.
- The way in which national, state and local self governing bodies are usually formulated budgets ignore the responsibilities and capabilities of men and women. Budgets formed from a gender-neutral perspective ignore the different impacts on men and women because their roles, responsibilities and capacities are never the same in the district.
- Major issues relating to women and children in Hailakandi are persistently high infant, child and maternal mortality ratios. Other important concerns are the feminization of poverty and the exploitation of women in low paid, hazardous and insecure jobs in the unorganized sector.

- Lack of awareness about reproductive rights and health tie the women of Hailakandi, in particular to domestic chores and play a role` in replicating poverty and nullifying development initiatives.
- Less progress has been made in achieving equality in secondary and tertiary education, which has been noted earlier, is especially illuminated by an examination of the ratio of girls' to boys' completion rates.

Suggestions:

The study has advanced following suggestions to improve the status of women in Hailakandi district by minimising gender gaps in relation to the possible Human Development.

1. Changing the patriarchal attitudes and improving the status of women and empowering them are important steps toward the elimination of female infanticide
2. Women need preparation and training mentally and physically. This preparation can only happen if a supportive environment is provided to women, at all stages, by all sections of the society- the home, school, religion, government and work place.
3. Community mobilisation, to change societal attitudes toward women in general is necessary and different non-governmental organisations should come forward and make a force to bring about more enlightened social attitudes to women.
4. There is increasing need for local government reforms to be associated with improving service delivery through local governments. A major cross-cutting concern that merits more attention is the gender dimension of local development, in particular women's effective participation in local government, to help meet their specific needs and addressing gender inequalities. Major indicators of gender

equality are exercise of rights, social control, access to decision making and a public voice to defend rights. Progress towards gender equality is slow, and this is in part due to the failure to attach money to policy commitments. Not enough attention is given to the impact of allocated resources and this serves to perpetuate gender biases, although budgets offer the potential to transform gender inequalities.

5. Once women are in positions of political power in national parliaments, one of the most effective tools they can use is to monitor national budgets for their gender responsiveness..
6. Overall, the comparison of enrolment rates to completion rates reveals the inadequacy of enrolment rates is telling the full story. The study, therefore, recommend that nation and states to make a standard of gender equality in school completion, not merely in school enrolment. Moreover, wherever possible, information on school completion must be augmented by indicators to measure gender equality in outcomes of schooling and the quality of education.
7. Changing the patriarchal attitudes and improving the status of women and empowering them are important steps toward the elimination of female infanticide.
8. Women need preparation and training mentally and physically. This preparation can only happen if a supportive environment is provided to women, at all stages, by all sections of the society- the home, school, religion, government and work place.
9. Community mobilisation, to change societal attitudes toward women in general is necessary and different non-governmental organisations should come forward and make a force to bring about more enlightened social attitudes to women.

10. So far as Muslim women are concerned, the main challenge will be to strengthen Muslim women's human resources. Better education, up gradation of skill is imperative if Muslim women are to take advantage of the growth on the modern sector. There should be recognition of the development potential of Muslim women to imbibe self-confidence and self-reliance so necessary for the development of society.
11. At the country level, most initiatives to address violence have been legislative. Although the legislation varies, it typically includes a combination of protective or restraining orders and penalties for offenders. As with property rights, a formidable challenge are often the enforcement of existing laws. Procedural barriers and traditional attitudes of law enforcement and judicial officials undermine the effectiveness of existing anti-violence laws. Training programs for judicial and law enforcement personnel often go a long way to change such attitudes. Beyond training programmes, the establishment of female-staffed police stations has been effective in making them more accessible to women. For the women who have experienced violence, a range of medical, psychological, legal, educational, and other support services is necessary.
12. Women's share in administrative and managerial occupations is low in most of the districts of Assam, and Hailakandi district is no exception to it. Despite of several governmental measures women are still highly underrepresented .Women's labour in agricultural sector has not been counted as labour and even is not identified. In some of the areas they are not paid properly comparative to their male counterpart.
13. The path to gender equality is employment in Hailakandi, will most probably be through the elimination/ evolution of the socio-cultural and economic barriers which

create the gender segregation of jobs. The reduction of gender inequalities in the labour market would need a multi-pronged approach- namely, improving women access to higher education, encouraging women to train in what are presently known as “male occupations”, increased participation of women workers in trade unions, gender sensitisation of men and particularly the employers, as well as the expansion of child-care services and flexible working hours. Women need more and more equal treatment in every sphere.

14. The range of strategies that can be employed to get girls into school and enable them to complete a full course of primary and secondary education is well known. They address both supply and demand constraints. Supply side strategies include increasing the number and reach of primary and secondary schools, particularly in rural areas; reducing schooling costs (both direct costs and opportunity costs through subsidies, scholarships, income transfers, book provision, etc.); staffing schools with female teachers; instituting policies that promote girls’ attendance (such as permitting married adolescents to attend); and improving the safety of schools, the quality and gender-sensitivity of the curriculum (in both texts and through teacher training), and the design of facilities (e.g., the provision of latrines for girls). Demand-side strategies include mobilizing parent and community involvement in monitoring the quality of education, undertaking campaigns to increase the awareness of the value of girls’ education, and introducing broader economic policies that increase the returns to girls’ education.
15. Gender budget initiatives or gender responsive budgets are tools and processes designed to facilitate a gender analysis in the formulation of Government budgets and the allocation of resources. Gender budgets are not separate budgets for women, or for men. They are attempts to break down or disaggregate the government’s

mainstream budget according to its impact on women and men .These differences are generally structured in a way that leaves women at a disadvantage by creating inequality gaps.

16. The issues of poverty, education and health require a sensitive approach which cuts across all projects/programmes and schemes. Good policy requires understanding both its impact and how it might be better designed to achieve outcomes which meet the needs of women, men, and girls and boys as well as different groups of women, men and children.
17. There is a propensity to see women only as members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs), as vehicles for savings and credit. The self-help concept should cover mass-based organizations of women who are legitimately concerned about the lack of food, drudgery, housing, potable water and employment etc.
18. Women bear multiple burdens in the process of displacement as a result of large scale urbanisation and forced settlements they bear greater responsibility of rehabilitating all the members of their household in the process of involuntary resettlement. It is proposed that gender outcomes be clearly enunciated at the policy formulation stage to mitigate negative impacts. Appropriate gender tools should be developed for evaluating those outcomes.
19. Programmes cutting across all Ministries and Departments could clearly identify and disaggregate the group of intended stakeholders and beneficiaries in terms of gender to ensure gender justice.
20. To address the gender gap, it is important to launch a joint programme to ensure gender equitable local development and improved access to resources and services

for women. The programme should concentrate on gender responsive planning, budgeting, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

21. Economic agencies are, with liberalization, more concerned with regulation (or de-regulation) than with implementation. In this role, it is much more difficult to have a direct effect on gender relations. It is important that an annex be produced with the incoming budget papers setting out some gender sensitive indicators that could be used to monitor the budget. The result of facilitating policy dialogue to include gender and macro-economic issues will lead to an improvement of economic growth and human development performance in a way that also empower women.
22. Gender auditing of schemes and programmes and impact analysis inform policy makers about the need for course correction and more gender centric planning. Also the outcomes from gender auditing will push women's advocacy groups to ask for affirmative and corrective action by the Government. The ultimate aim is to give women a greater say at different levels and stages of developmental planning and in the formulation of policy and programmes.
23. Women's economic empowerment could provide the possibility of combination of increased productivity, less stress and better overall health. It is important to develop and implement strategies for women's participation in economic decision making through their engagement in budgetary processes. It is also important to engender economic governance processes by increasing their transparency and holding national actors accountable to their policy commitments to women.
24. Sectors where women's participation is significant will be identified for specific focus as, for example, in agriculture, food processing, fishing, plantations, forestry, horticulture, export intensive manufacturing, tourism and care services with a view

to introduce technology that are drudgery reducing and/or labour augmenting thereby creating conditions for employment generation, a decent work and higher productivity.

25. Efforts to improve the position of poor women have to focus on them as economic actors within a framework of her multiple roles, as well as the total socio-political environment. Increasing women's economic productivity effects their own status and survival in the immediate family and their valuation at the wider societal level. The mechanisms through which this takes place are not yet entirely clear. However, evidence suggests that improvements in their bargaining power within the households, direct, unmediated access to income drastically reduces women's dependency and strengthens their ability to realise their potential within the family.
26. The study suggests that illness perceptions and health seeking behaviours are set in a cultural context. The change towards an individualistic patient response occurs only with increases in education and income. Contrary to the understanding of the biomedical model, the patient behaviour in our context is largely familial, group and community-oriented. In the case of women, the health beliefs, practices, taboos, and stigmas are perpetuated and enforced through socialisation and cultural conditioning. General health programmes and policies dealing with the prevention and cure of disease tend to exclude gender and culture dimensions. Also, the social stigma attached to an illness is sometimes greater for a woman than a man. At such times, a woman is more likely to hide her illness leading her to a perilous stage. Those key factors should be borne in mind
27. Since women's education is on the development agenda of the country, more stress should be given on vocational training for the girls as compulsory subject in school

curriculum to attract the girls for their women-friendly optional courses in the school syllabus. At the secondary levels also, girls should be encouraged gender dictated courses like cooking, needlework or painting.

28. Merely increasing representation of women may not lead to greater promotion of women's interests over general interests. No doubt numbers should be large at crucial levels for effective exercise of power and hence women must be equipped through suitable means to shoulder the responsibilities.

Conclusion

The study has been concluded with notion that gender inequality is deeply rooted in entrenched beliefs and attitudes, societal institutions, and market forces. The only way that the social change required to bring about gender equality will occur is through the dedication of visible and credible champions at the international and national level. Gender inequality is not a problem that has no solution. It persists partly because of the lack of leadership to institute the policies that can trigger social change and to allocate the resources necessary to get the job done.

Human development is an all-inclusive process and cannot be completed if bulk of population excluded from such process. Removal of gender discrimination should be prioritised at time of taking decision at all level. Hence a well concerted effort of all stakeholders of society, NGOs, governments (both state and central) is essential to remove barriers of development and human development particularly. FLR has positive link with HDI. However FWPR and Sex Ratio have negative relationship with HD in Hailakandi district

Again, it can be said that though complete active participation of women is yet to be achieved in grass root level democracy but still it cannot be ignored that the rural women of this era are becoming now more active in their duties outside their home. Despite of performing their domestic duties they are also contributing to the development of their village as well the nation through participating in the panchayats. However, it is to be noted that in order to bring all the women force in the mainstream of development they should be more conscious of their rights as well the benefits that they can enjoy which are meant for them. They must be more politically conscious to ensure their complete participation in democracy. Thus, these huge human forces which are women have to be made more aware and of course education can play here a significant role. By organizing camps, programmes in television, radio, the government as well the NGOs can come forward to make the rural women enlighten about their rights, about the framework of panchayats and other institutions so that there comes cent percent active participation of rural women in democracy. This will no doubt make the dream of our country to have an inclusive growth all round. When the rural women will be good enough to understand their need in participation in democracy and confidence enough to take their own decision hope reservation may not be required to bring the women participation in democracy.

The human development paradigm addresses the limitations of women-focused approaches by placing people at the centre of the development process. It views development as a process of expanding the range of things that a person can be and do in order to improve human lives. People's choices can grow by enlarging their capabilities to lead long and healthy lives, to be knowledgeable, to have a decent standard of living and to participate actively in public life through democratic institutions. In order to achieve these goals and assure human development, the obstacles hindering people's

choices – such as limited economic and educational opportunities, absence of civil and political freedoms and gender based disparities in access to resources and rights – have to be eliminated. The tasks of achieving gender equality and human development are therefore complimentary and mutually reinforcing. Achieving gender equality is in itself an important goal of human development. The failure to remove the obstacles to expanding opportunities for all men and women represents a serious threat. “Putting people first” cannot afford to deal in averages and aggregate indicators: the rights and welfare, choices and opportunities, of every individual – woman, man, boy, girl – have to be improved. Human development cannot take place when the opportunities of half of humanity are restricted; therefore the task of achieving gender equality should be put at the heart of the human development.

This study of gender and human development acknowledge Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen’s Capability Approach (CA) which offers a comprehensive framework for conceptualizing human well-being and thereby, development. Sen views development as expansion of real freedom that people can enjoy for their economic well-being, social opportunities and political rights. From this strand the focus of development policies should precisely be the expansion of freedom or removal of major sources of inequality that people often face in their life – such as illiteracy, ill health, lack of access to resources, or lack of civil and political freedoms. The study examines one of the key concepts of the human development paradigm, that of being an agent of one’s own development through participating in policy-decision making processes. It particularly examines the tensions that arose when political participation occurs in conditions of socio-economic inequalities. The focus on the problematic of gender in the discourse and practices of development, especially with respect to poverty and poverty reduction policies. This has lent his theorising to an incorporation of urgent concerns of handicapped by patriarchy

and disability within framework of a neo-liberal paradigm. He advocates capability approach to glorify the theory of justice as freedom. The study has its leanings to Maithreyi Krishnaraj's "Towards Alternative Development Strategies: Problems and Possibilities for Women" (1996), a Third World feminist, points out that search for alternatives must integrate within development theory itself reality of women's lives and not seek merely to correct or add on programmes. Such integration requires us to modify macro in light of the micro so that women in third world have an access over education, health, employment, public and private resources.

The study has vast implications as it will not only contribute to the field of knowledge in social science but also will serve the purpose of a beacon light for the policy makers and planners of the district as well as of the state to eliminate gender inequality and discrimination in any form by which the society will be developed in a planned manner. Again the study may serve the purpose of reminder to the guardians of the society to change the traditional patriarchal mindset and to let the women freedom of choice so that socio-economic progress of the society can be realised without any biasness and discrimination. The feminist allegation of deprivation, discrimination and gender inequality in the district can be avoided through this study.

Suggestion for further research

However, due to lack of time and space the study could not cover all the aspects of Gender and Human Development in Hailakandi District of Assam. For this purpose it can be suggested that further micro-studies may be made in the related topics within the district. Those studies are –

1. Muslim Women and Human Development in Hailakandi District.

2. Gender, Communalism, Development and Peace in Hailakandi District
3. Gender, Rural Women and Human Development in Hailakandi.
4. Gender Urban Women and Human Development in Hailakandi.
5. Women of Tea Garden Areas and Human Development in Hailakandi.
6. Society, Politics, Economy and Human Development in Hailakandi District.
7. Agriculture and Human Development in Hailakandi District.
8. Policy formulation and Human Development in the State of Assam.
9. Inter-district Disparities and Human Development in Assam.
10. Economic Growth and Human Development in the State of Assam.