

CHAPTER – 5

5. Participatory Observations:

It was observed that the visitors area were very small and dirty and was not properly maintained and were mostly close to the drains and was not a congenial place for meeting. When friends and relatives come to visit the inmates, they face a lot of difficulty, as it becomes quite embarrassing for them to meet in such a place. This prompts them to meet their friends and relative somewhere outside their hostels, which at times may not be very good or safe for a girl. Thus, it was felt that if, the hostels had a good place for meeting visitors, they could save both time and money which they would otherwise may have to spend in a restaurant.

Moreover in most of the hostels there were no provision for complaints and when the students interacted with the inmates, in some cases the wardens followed. In a hostel named Binapani the inmates were not allowed to even enter the warden's room. In such cases it becomes different to even express the difficulties they are facing in staying in the hostel and are compelled to stay there, as the demand higher education is rising and the opportunities for accommodation are limited. They normally prefer to stay near the area of colleges as it saves them time and money for transport. The wardens talking advantage of the location, which is near to some prime educational institutes of Gauhati, can be seen as taking a step motherly attitude. The students come to these hostels to find a home away from home. But when the wardens and the hotels do not provide any provision for looking into their problems or even hearing to it, it becomes a little difficult for the students besides adjusting to the situation.

As far as maintenance of Hygiene is concerned, most of the hostels were clean but one of the hostels named Bijulee, was not at all in a good condition and was very cramped with beds. Normally in a room, we regard two beds to be the ideal situation, if it is not a very big room. This facilitates the student's sufficient air and ventilation, besides providing an ideal atmosphere for studying. But

when two or more beds are stuffed in one room, there comes restriction in mobility as well as a disturbed situation for carrying out studies. Cleanliness was also not given due attention.

It was also observed that since in most cases the wardens followed the students as they carried out the survey, the inmates also became hesitant while replying to the questions. Under such circumstances, it becomes difficult to get realistic interpretations or correct information. The attitude of the wardens, over all in the survey was not very accommodating and their behavior cannot be said to be very positive.

Some of the students in course of the survey, found that a hostel named Jiyori Girls' Hostel, in Barowari to be comparatively good and clean and can be rated as a good one, among all the hostels surveyed.

Restrictions were there in almost all the hostel regarding use of electricity. They had to pay extra charges for use and charging of laptops and mobile phones. Electric irons or kettles were not allowed to use or they had to pay extra for the use of these. In winter, anyone who required hot water for bathing purpose had to pay extra charges.

Over all, it can be said, that the students who reside in these hostels, stay in a compromised state. If they cannot voice their complaints or needs and accept whatever is given to them, it may affect their health, mental state as well as their studies. It was felt that if the hostels provided a good congenial atmosphere for studying and staying, any students would be able to propose for higher education besides doing well in their studies. This would strengthen the women community economically to prove them in the society. But it was seen that many students change hostels one after another, to find better living conditions. And if they do not find one, they mostly go back to their homes, either leaving their studies in an incomplete state, or not willing to pursue further education.