CHAPTER 1.

Introduction will throw light on the objectives of the study and various issues involved relating to educational system, teacher-student relationship and various aspects related to today's women.

INTRODUCTION

There has been a great deal of accomplishment in the field of education since Independence. The national policy on education was approved by parliament in 1986, seeks to establish for the first time in India's history a national system of education, which lays down an overall curricular framework and a core curriculum to establish comparability of competence at the end of various stages of education all over the country. Unfortunately, students are still faced with various problems today which constitute a veritable stumbling block in the development of their personalities and in the way of their advancement in
life. Students do not get adequate educational facilities and they have to satisfy themselves with poor standard of education. The conclusions students resent these obstacles in their path of their advancement and squarely lay the blame on the Government and the Society. Many students suffer from inadequate personal care and attention of their parents. The struggle for existence being acute, the parents remain busy and consequently fail too appreciate the needs and aspirations of their children. The result is that young students happen to nurture an unconscious anger against their parents, teachers and society. Things are further compounded by the polluted atmosphere of educational institutions and unethical conduct of the teachers hardly passes unnoticed by the students who unconsciously harbor a secret resentment against educational system.

In such an atmosphere the students feel lonely. They have none to guide them on right lines, there is none who can truly look to their problems and meet their aspirations.

Education seeks to preserve, transmit and advance knowledge. It is one of important instruments of change and progress. The observation
of Kothari Commission (1996) is true even today. The destiny of India is now being shaped in her class rooms. This we believe is no more rhetoric. In a world based on science and technology. It is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. On the quality and number of persons coming out of our colleges, will determine our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction.

In the present study, emphasis has been laid mainly on students. The very word "Student" produce in our mind an image of the youth on which eyes are usually fixed with hope since youth has within him emotion and enthusiasm as also capacity for revolutionary social change. Important social problems and progressive steps go hand in glove with students. One must notice the system, institutional pattern and their aspirations in which they receive their education. While proceeding to do so, a question crops up, do the factors which have distinguished the past, find a place in the present set up too.

Such an interrogation needs to be answered before an attempt is being made to deal with some of
the outstanding social problems and their aspirations concerning the present day students.

Change is inherent in nature. Similarly ideas, attitudes, aspirations, social institutions, economic pattern of society have also changed in this country. After fifty years of independence, educational pattern, political institutions, economic system, religious concepts, process of urbanization and industrialization, occupational aspirations have all exhibited a change and dynamism. It is however, not possible to study at once and the same time, all the facets of the problem.

Despite the attention paid to equal opportunity issues, their emotional intensity is seldom fully appreciated. If you have enjoyed equal opportunity but do not achieve or earn a high income, you are responsible for your failure to do so. If "society" or some other external factor has denied you equal opportunity, your self-esteem is not as vulnerable. Also, society is more willing to help the disadvantaged who are seen as not personally responsible for their plight. Thus there will always be conflicting views how to define equal opportunity and what must be done to establish it. Ethnic differences in income and achievement exacerbate umpire is not
confined to athletic contests. And just as low achievers will tend to underestimate the extent of equal opportunity, persons who are high achievers or have high incomes will tend to overestimate it.

An analogy may help to clarify the meaning of “equality of educational opportunity.” Suppose the intent is to provide equality of opportunity to win a one-mile race. Suppose also that I was born with only one leg. It might seem impossible to equalize my chances of winning the race, but it could be done. Government might amputate one leg of everyone else who entered the race, assuming anyone did enter after this means of equalizing opportunity was announced.

Needless to say, this is not what people have in mind in referring to equality of opportunity. They do not think of it as weakening the strongest competitors but as providing additional support for the weaker ones. As the hypothetical race illustrates, however, how equality is achieved is of utmost importance; is it achieved by restricting those deemed to have advantages, or by empowering those deemed to be disadvantaged? Another critical point is that two different meaning is fair and open competition for scarce rewards: scholarships, grades,
admission to higher levels of education, and so on. Another meaning is that every one has a mathematically equal chance to succeed. When I refer to equality of educational opportunity, I mean opportunities to succeed in fair and open competition. “Fair and open competition,” however, leaves many questions unanswered.

Most discussions of equality of educational opportunity assume that whatever the level of equality, raising it would be even better. If there is equality of opportunity for secondary education, we should expand it to cover a college education.

**Multicultural Instruction**

There are many good reasons for making sure students acquire knowledge about persons from cultures and subcultures other than own and are encouraged to respect these persons. Our nation is becoming increasingly diverse and polarized along racial, ethnic, economic, and cultural lines. This polarization and related ignorance are a drain upon our democratic system and a serious threat to peace, as we have seen in Bosnia and other parts of the
world. If we want all students to become responsible, contributing members of society, we must do what we can to make them feel respected and compelled to respect others.

Students acquire personal and social virtues through a supportive environment that includes relationships with parents, teachers, and other "respectfully engaging" and authoritative adults (as opposed to permissive or authoritarian; unstructured peer group interaction and play that minimizes adult intrusion; developmentally appropriate discipline and reinforcement that treats students with dignity and respect; exposure to virtuous models with whom children and adolescents can identify; didactics or developmentally appropriate direct teaching about moral standards and desirable virtues; active participation within just, democratic, and caring communities where virtuous behaviors and autonomous moral reasoning can be practiced in real and dramatized situations; and
meaningful real-world experiences within various communities outside the school.

One can extract or identify the predominant modes, which are active student participation, didactics through literature and interpersonal support. Their strategies include highlighting and exposing children to prosocial values, providing opportunities to help others, using cooperative learning, helping students to understand and respect others through literature and class experiences, and using developmental discipline, which combines creating a caring community with social skills instruction and an instructional approach to discipline.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE IN AN AGE OF SOCIAL UNREST

A major problem in any school is to balance orderliness and direction in the instructional program against the realities of human diversity and curriculum variety. Curriculum variety is required in order that schools keep abreast of the times, for example, mathematics in an age of hand computers, geography in an age when news deals not only with
the local community but also with events from all parts of the world. Although human diversity is a fact of life even in the most isolated cultures, it becomes immeasurably greater when classrooms contain students from varied social, racial, religious, and ethnic background.

Throughout this Seventh Edition of "Crucial Issues in Education", a central belief is dominant: While the primary task of the school may be to teach basic skills and matter, a second goal must be to help young people develop responsible and effective social behavior. This second goal is probably the most fundamental goal of all, because it is a necessary prerequisite to the first goal. In short, a sense of fraternity is needed if we are to enjoy either liberty or equality.

To choose the democratic ideal for society is wholly to reject the conception of education as an instrument of rule; it is to surrender the idea of shaping or molding the mind of the pupil.

The function of education in a democracy is rather to liberate the mind, strengthen its critical powers, inform it with knowledge and the capacity for independent, inquiry, engage its human
sympathies, and illuminate its moral and practical choices....

A start must be made now in fostering in our youth an awareness of value of these different ethnic heritages and of the role which they have played and continue to play in forming our country.

FORMAL VERSUS INFORMAL CLASSROOMS

[Formal education is here contrasted to informal education, or to what was once called progressive education, and in recent years is called open education.]

Open education is an approach to education that is open to change, to new ideas, to curriculum, to scheduling, to use of space, to honest expressions of feeling between teacher and pupil and between pupil and pupil, and open to children's participation in significant decision-making in the classroom.

Open education is characterized by a classroom environment in which there is a minimum of teaching to the class as a whole, in which provision is made for children to pursue individual interests and to be
actively involved with materials, and in which children are trusted to direct many aspects of their own learning....

The human being needs a framework of values, a philosophy of life, a religion or religion-surrogate to live by and understand by, in about the same sense that he needs sunlight, calcium or love.

If we are going to educate for character, we need to begin by defining the term. People from all walks of life generally agree that character implies quality and goodness, so character education is blessed with an identifying term that is unifying. When we say that people have character, we usually mean that they are predisposed to do what is right or decent and to feel and think accordingly. Because they understand right and wrong and choose what is right even if this is potentially harmful to themselves in some way, we describe them as moral. Because this inclination to know and do things that are good or right is habitual, we describe them as virtuous. Because they are capable of reasoning well and autonomously on matters of right and wrong,
particularly where issuer of fairness, justice, and sensitivity to others are concerned, we refer to them as ethical. When we say that people have character, therefore, we mean that they have moral character. This in turn implies that their personality is characterized by moral values and feelings (conscience), the ability to reason autonomously, fairly, and sensitively about moral issues (ethical reflection), and the habit of acting in a manner consistent with their moral reasoning and moral feelings (virtue).

A DEFINITION OF CHARACTER EDUCATION

The fact that character education is essentially a social movement with a rather nebulous philosophy and methodology does not mean it cannot be defined with enough specificity to give interested persons a useful starting point for program planning or that there is any question about the appropriateness of its reintroduction into the schools. Character education combines direct teaching and community
building strategies in various ways to promote personal and social integrity and the development of moral virtues, moral reasoning abilities, and other personal assets and qualities that make this possible. When character education programs are purposeful, proactive, and comprehensive, and when they can transform schools morally, socially, and motivationally, and create caring communities with student and adult members who are intrinsically motivated to do what they should for themselves and others.

SEPARATE SEXES, SEPARATE SCHOOLS

National Programs

Across the United States, many schools are experimenting with single-sex settings for both boys and girls. Some supporters believe that these environments are necessary because males and females learn differently. Other people believe that single-sex schools should exist to correct past educational wrongs.

HOW Schools Short Change Girls
Part of the interest in single-sex classrooms was prompted by the report "How Schools Shortchange Girls", which was published by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) in 1992. Using data from more than thirteen thousand studies, this report concluded that girls in coed classrooms were receiving an inferior education. According to the report, girls received less attention and praise from teachers. Girls also received less encouragement from teachers. Hidden cameras showed that teachers, both male and female, called on boys more often than they did girls. Other studies show that many females feel that they are harassed physically, sexually, and emotionally in the classroom. By contrast, some studies conducted in girls-only schools reported that the single sex environment can lead to higher achievement and self-esteem, and to higher graduation rates. Single-sex schools also encourage girls to pursue traditionally male-dominated careers.

Cornelius Riordan is a sociology professor and the author of *Girls and Boys in School: Together or Separate?* He claims that single-sex schools benefit both sexes. He says that these schools encourage more learning, provide more role models, and offer
more order and control than mixed-sex schools. Supporters of single sex education also point out that because there is only one gender, students are able to fill all leadership positions in the school. They can run the student government, school newspaper, yearbook, and after-school clubs. In coed schools, some positions may be seen as only for girls, or only for boys. Having only one sex in school can eliminate stereotyping.

**SUCCE$ or NOVELTY?**

Opponents say that part of the success in new single-sex school is there novelty. Researchers think this success is due to the Hawthorne Effect, which says that any group taking part in an experiment will always show improvement. The improvement is caused by the increased special attention. Once they become commonplace, critics say, single-sex classrooms will begin to experience the same problems as coed ones. According to Riordan, “The more that these schools remain rare and special, the more effective they will be.”
Another problem with the studies has been that other factors may contribute to student success. Single-sex classes tend to be smaller. Class size can affect teacher attention and interaction with students. The emphasis that single-sex school place on academics and discipline may also contribute to their success.

Another issue is that single-sex schools and classes may promote unhealthy gender stereotypes. A common view of boys, for example, is that they are better at science but more ill-behaved than girls. A stereotype of girls is that they are quieter and like poetry more than boys. One writer says that by separating sexes, “Boys learn that they are the problem. Girls learn that they are helpless victims.” Jacquelyn James, who researches gender issues, says that single-sex classes promote the belief that boys are bad and girls are weak. James asks, “why not teach the boys who are exhibiting rude behavior—and not all are—better manners? and why not teach the girls who feel silenced by all the big noise—and not all do—to speak up?. No one ever said social change is easy, but why can’t discrimination be remedied [fixed] in a mixed-sex setting?”
Despite the controversies surrounding single-sex education, more school districts are experimenting with the idea. After three decades of decreasing enrollments, single-sex academies are enjoying a renewed interest. But can they withstand the challenges facing them?

EQUALITY FOR WOMEN

Between the 1930s and 1960s most educators believed that girls and boys were receiving equal educations. But social movements in the 1960s and 1970s raised a number of issues that challenged that view. The women's movement questioned many practices that showed gender bias in the schools. This crusade was an effort to achieve equality for women in all areas of life. As women increasingly compared their plight to that of other minority groups, they demanded equal rights and benefits. During this time, the civil rights movement worked to guarantee all citizens - regardless of race, color, or religion - equal rights.

In 1972, the Education Amendments were passed by the Congress. Title IX of that legislation prohibits
school districts from discriminating against students on the basis of sex. This means that any school receiving government funding must provide equal courses, services, and facilities to both girls and boys. Exceptions to the law are contact sports, sex education, and choruses.

INCREASING PARTICIPATION BY GIRLS

Supporters of all-girls schools say that these schools promote leadership. Because boys are not present, girls are free to fill all positions in student body government, and sports teams. Girls’ leadership skills are developed without competition from boys. The all-female environment also gives girls the opportunity to be major sport players.

In higher education, there has been a steady increase in enrollment at women’s colleges in recent years. However, the total number of all-women’s colleges has dramatically decreased in the last thirty years. Supporters of women’s colleges say that they
are necessary to help combat the barriers women face in society and in the work place.

Many studies report that graduates of women's college have higher status and better-playing jobs than their coed counterpart parts. When compared with women who attend coed schools, they are twice as likely to receive doctoral degrees. After graduation, they tend to have more successful careers, hold higher positions, be happier, and earn more.

Part of the renewed popularity of women's college has been due to Hillary Rodham Clinton. A graduate of women's Wellesley College, the first lady has proudly mentioned her alma mater on many occasions. Soon after her husband became president of the United States, the college reported a record level of applications.

Many educators feel that separation is not the answer because of United States' historical legacy of racial segregation. Ellen Vargyas of the National Women's Law Center says, "The nation of ghettoizing these young boys as troublemakers opens the door for further stigmatization." Dr. Kenneth B. Clark decision banning school segregation, states that separating students on the basis of sex or race is "outrageous." Dr. Clark says, "for adults to impose
this nonsense on their children I academic child abuse.”

David Murray, a cultural anthropologist in Washington, D.C., says that while they may not be for everyone—all-girl and all-boy schools should be an option for every student through high school. The principal at one single-sex academy in California said, “This may not be for every one. But it is wonderful to have this option. But until more conclusive proof is offered about their effectiveness, single-sex schools will continue to be a choice for just a few of the nation’s students.

The sociological conditions of women in India leaves much to be desired. National Family Health Survey of India, highlights the plight of girls, who die at an alarmingly higher rate than boys, apparently because of a stubborn preference among many couples for boys. The risk of dying between ages one and five is 43 percent higher for girls than boys. Many couples prefer boys over girls and are more likely to take their sons than their daughters for medical treatment when they are ill,
the survey says. The survey concludes that women's status in India is still poor.

A United Nations' International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) report titled *the progress of Indian reports* claims that India had less than 93 women for every 100 men against the world average of 105. That accounts to nearly 1.4 million "missing girls" in the age group of 0-6 years based on the assumption that one would typically expect 96 girls for every 100 boys in this age group. Only where societies specifically and systematically discriminate against women are fewer of them found to survive it added. UNICEF says that in India, girl children tend to be taken to health centers less frequently than boys, receive less food than boys and are given less education than boys. In certain parts of India, such as in the Salem district of Tamil Nadu state and in parts of rural Bihar, female infanticide remains quite common. The problem is getting worse.

The main reason for the widespread female foeticide and the continuing prevalence of female infanticide in parts of India was the dowry system, which although long prohibited by law, continues to play a significant role in Indian society. Dowries and
wedding expenses regularly run to more than a million rupees ($35,000) in a country where the average civil servant earns about 100,000 rupees ($3,500) a year. Added to this the low status of women in rural India, where they perform the menial tasks of the family such as carrying water and firewood and seeing to feeding the animals, and it is clear where the roots of the discrimination spring.

The situation is even worse regarding educating these children. India, which is estimated to have some 432 million illiterate people, must give top priority to compulsory elementary education for social and economic growth to occur. 64 percent of Indian men are literate, but fewer than two out of five women can read and write. About 41 percent of Indian girls under the age of 14 do not attend school, said the report.

Why educate girls?

A UNICEF report concludes Because it's their human right. And because educated women are less likely to be oppressed or exploited and more likely to participate in political processes. In addition, they are likely to have smaller families, and healthier and better-educated children. We strongly believe in this philosophy.
CARE believes that female education impacts directly on the traditional balance of power within households, communities and societies. It recognizes that education has a vital role to play in achieving sustainable improvements in the socio-economic status and self-reliance of low-income families.

Although India's development profile has many positive aspects, broadly speaking, development has devalued Indian women. Since Independence there has been declining female paid employment and persistent male-female gaps in literacy and life expectancy. These trends are unintended consequences of development policies that ignored gender issues in formulation and implementation.

Women's education as a policy prescription should be carefully thought out. While education is a basic human right and female education should be actively promoted, focusing on women's schooling alone will only partially address societal problems. Adequate economic opportunities for women and comprehensive development programs must accompany schooling. Men should be educated to value and support independent women. The content
of education should promote social equality in every way.

Increasing public awareness of these issues, and lobbying that policies are planned and implemented in a gender-sensitive manner, would help counter the trend. To the extent feasible, tactics such as social disapproval could be practiced against families who are known to have restricted the education or denied the inheritance of their daughters, demanded or paid exorbitant dowries, or aborted a girl. These tactics may arguably be more effective than taking legal or police action.

**Governance and gender equity:**

Where do girls and women stand today? It has been widely accepted that there is a latent demand for education among the poor, especially women and girls. Almost all people working with poor rural and urban women say that women not only realise the value of education, they also want to send their daughters to school in order to give them the opportunity of a better life. They acknowledge the empowering role of education, especially in
negotiating an unjust world from a position of strength. Ability to read is seen as a necessity to calculate wages and rates, to know what one is signing, to access information, and above all, to walk with one’s head high. We have also seen that given the right environment, opportunity and facilities – women and girls participate with great enthusiasm. Ostensibly all the programmes listed in the section above are formally committed to bridging the gender gap. This focus is often lost during implementation. Programme strategies for mobilisation, teacher recruitment and training, and community involvement through village education committees are organised in a gender-neutral fashion. Lack of gender sensitivity among administrators and technical people becomes a stumbling block. As a result,

special cells, gender consultants, girls’ and women’s components get marginalized. While official checklists are complete, weaving gender issues into mainstream planning and administration remains a major challenge. While administrators at the top reiterate their commitment to bridge the gender gap in educational access and achievement, this is not the case down the line. Women who work as gender
consultants, trainers and resource persons are not only outcastes, but are often the butt of jokes in an essentially male dominated system. Is this an insurmountable barrier? Experience of special programmes, not just in the education sector, but in some other social sectors, shows that a systematic orientation and sensitisation programme at all levels is a good starting point. Appointing one gender consultant does not work.

Why do women teachers hesitate to attend residential training programmes? How does the dual burden of girls and women affect pace of learning? Who is asked to prepare tea and serve during meetings? Why are girls invisible in school mapping exercises? Unfortunately, it is not easy to address such issues in a large system. Administrators admit that main line systems are not amenable to change. Caste and regional prejudices persist even after fifty years of Independence. In recent times basic values of social justice and equal opportunity have been rapidly eroding. One social commentator wrote about the state as private property. Good governance, justice, honesty, equity – these words are rarely heard in political campaigns and speeches.
Therefore, some people argue, it is not surprising that women and girls continue to be marginalized.

Is the situation so grim? Can educational administrators really implement the government's own policy and ensure gender equality? Innovations and bold experiments – small and big – give us reasons to hope.

The *World Declaration on Education For All*, Jomtien 1990 was an important milestone in the march towards universal elementary education and girls' and women's access to basic education. Forty years after the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, this conference tugged our conscience by reminding the world that everyone has a right to education – *Basic education is more than an end in itself, it is the foundation for lifelong learning and human development*. This rights perspective on educational access and equality got a tremendous boost during the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo 1994. *Everyone has a right to education, which shall be directed to the full development of human resources, and human dignity and potential, with particular attention to women and the girl child. Education should be*
designed to strengthen respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including those related to population and development (Page 10, Agenda for Action, ICPD, 1994). The very fact that a population conference forced the international community to look into the inter-linkages between population, poverty, gender inequality and development, was a major departure from the past.

Women's and girls' education was placed centre stage in the struggle for human development and social justice in the Copenhagen declaration on social development in 1995. We affirm that, in both economic and social terms, the most productive policies and investments are those that empower people to maximize their capacities, resources and opportunities. The Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 1995, reaffirmed the commitments made by governments and called upon the international community to intensify efforts. Four important world conferences, one after another, bombarded our world with messages of equality, empowerment, human rights and universal access to the tools of knowledge – i.e. education. While cynics in all societies may brush aside the impact of such international agreements, it is widely acknowledged
that, as a result of intensive advocacy girls' and women's education has been accepted as a developmental priority. Availability of international development assistance for basic education and women's education (especially in India) has gone up significantly. More importantly, there has been a noticeable change in Government and donor perceptions of gender issues in education and the importance of reaching out to girls in order to achieve the goal of universal elementary education. Successive Human Development Reports brought out by the United Nations forced political leaders and administrators to acknowledge the inherent value of education in building capabilities of people to survive with dignity. Donors supporting education programmes in the developing world flagged the gender agenda. This environment coupled with the realisation of the importance of sustained advocacy resulted in a virtual explosion of data, case studies.

The media has also started paying some attention to glaring gender disparities in educational access and achievement. All these contributed in no small measure to creating an environment for introspection and change. The climate is right to pool all our energies and push hard to ensure that policy
level commitment of the Government is translated into action – i.e. bridging the gap between intention and action. We are at a very critical juncture in India. We are at a point when sustained pressure to ensure universal access to and retention in schools and enhancing the quality and content of education at all levels may actually bear fruit. Wherever accessible and good quality educational facilities are provided, girls come in large numbers.

. After an intensive girls enrolment campaign, workers in the Women’s Development Programme were astounded when teachers discouraged girls, especially from backward/poor communities from coming to school. The single teacher schools were only able to cope with about 30-40 children. The sad truth is that if all children, boys and girls, were to start attending school one fine morning, the existing system would not be able to cope with it. The Joint UN System programme for community based education has estimated a short fall of 1.50 million teachers if every child were to attend school, at a teacher-pupil ratio of 1:40. Government of India estimates a shortfall of 925,000 teachers3.
What does data say?

It is quite well known that India has made progress in education, but not enough and definitely not at a pace we would have like to see. Even after half a century after India attained independence, almost sixty percent of girls/women are not literate. Most of them have never been to school or any other education programme. Recent surveys (even those done after the launching of Total Literacy Campaigns) do not reveal any dramatic change. Census of India was collected in 1990-91, the Human Development Survey was done in 1993-94, and the National Sample Survey was also done in 1993-94. Small surveys and studies done in some pockets across the country do not show any radical difference. For example intensive school mapping done under the Lok Jumbish Project in Rajasthan reveal that real enrolment in Class I is likely to be 70 to 75 per cent of what is reported (in official data). People working with adult women report that if a person says he or she can sign his/her name; they are recorded as literate. Therefore, at least 10 to 15 per cent of literate people may actually be functionally illiterate.
Policies and implementation strategies:

Almost every conceivable strategy and approach has been covered in policy documents of the Government of India. All policy documents recognise that the first stumbling block is poverty, and that women from poor communities, especially in rural areas need special attention. The second stumbling block is social status, especially when considering children from disadvantaged communities (Scheduled Castes. Scheduled Tribes, some minority groups, nomadic tribe). While affirmative action in the form of reservation of jobs and places in institutions of higher learning have been provided, there is irrefutable evidence to show that the stumbling block is at the elementary level. Children do not have access to good quality schools that can enable them to break out of existing stereotypes. Therefore, despite well intentioned policies, children from disadvantage groups and communities are not able to access good quality education at the primary level. they may be of general population, do not capture pockets of success. Notwithstanding the inherent limitation there is substantial evidence to show that non-formal and adult education programmes cannot turn the tide. Unless every
single child has the opportunity to go to school, and unless the government can ensure universal elementary education - there can be no significant improvement in the literacy and education scenario of India. If and when this becomes a reality, then non-formal and adult education, especially for adolescents and young adults, can make a qualitative difference. Income and community specific data collected in the NSS survey and the HDI survey reveal sharp disparities. Poor rural girls and women from low income groups and from disadvantaged communities (Scheduled Class, Scheduled Tribe and some minority communities) constitute the bulk of the illiterate population. Current school attendance rates reveal that this situation is not likely to improve in the near future. So where do we stand? Half a century after Independence we are nowhere near achieving universal elementary education. Almost fifty percent of the girls and women of India do not have the opportunity to acquire education, and even if they do enroll, chances are that the poorest and the most disadvantaged among them will drop out. This reinforces the popular myth that education plays a very marginal role in the battle for survival.
Provide schools within walking distance, closer to the place of dwelling, if necessary satellite schools for remote hamlets,

Provide child care facilities/crèche within school premises,

Provide escort for girls, if school is away from the village or hamlet,

Introduce flexible school timings and region specific school calendar,

Provide alternative modes / forms of schooling, combine formal with non-formal, condensed courses for drop-outs, residential schools (Ashram Shalas) for special focus groups like nomadic tribes etc.,

Appoint more women teachers in rural areas and provide them with secure residential accommodation.

Expand pool of women teachers by lowering qualifications, providing intensive training (near the place of dwelling), providing regular educational support, organizing special condensed courses for drop-outs who can be trained to work as teachers, providing secure accommodation for out-station teachers, etc.

Make curriculum relevant to the lives of poor women who are engaged in battle for survival,
Recognize the problem of working children, provide special facilities with flexible calendar and timings,
Introduce facilities for “bridge programmes” to enable dropouts to re-enter the school system.
Provide incentives like uniforms, textbooks, exercise books, attendance scholarship, free bus passes etc.
Involve the community in managing the school through advocacy, mobilization and formation of village education committees with at least 50% women members,
Improve quality of education, motivate teachers to make learning a joyful exercise,
Decentralize educational planning and administration, bring it closer to people so that it reflects the special needs and aspirations of the community,
Create village level education committees to plan, support,
Address management issues that inhibit the implementation of government policy, like grievance redressal, administrators and teachers union’s resistance to flexible timings, school calendar, recruitment of women with lesser qualifications from
rural areas, recruitment of local youth in remote areas where teacher absenteeism is rampant, appointment of teachers to a specific school and so on, and

Mobilize public opinion for primary education and universal literacy in general and women’s education in particular. Advocate for greater political will and administrative commitment.

Make it a national mission with time-bound goals and targets through National Literacy Mission (NLM), District Primary Education Projects (DPEP) and National Elementary Education Mission (NEEM).

The National Policy on Education (1986, revised in 1992) is perhaps the most lucid document on women’s education. It was hailed as a major breakthrough in addressing gender issues in government policy. The chapter titled “Education for Women’s Equality” states: “Education will be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. In order to neutralize the accumulated distortions of the past; there will be a well-conceived edge in favour of women. The National Education System will play a positive, interventionist role in the empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned
curricula, textbooks, the training and orientation of teachers, decision-makers and administrators, and the active involvement of educational institutions. This will be an act of faith and social engineering...
The removal of women’s illiteracy and obstacles inhibiting their access to, and retention in, elementary education will receive overriding priority, through provision of special support services, setting of time targets, and effective monitoring...." This document was developed after nation-wide debate through a Government document titled – Challenge of Education. University teachers and students, school teachers, training institutions, NGOs, newspapers and a wide range of formal and informal groups/organizations were invited to comment on and debate India’s new policy. This process was initiated in 1985 and continued for a year. The National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA) sifted through, compiled and edited the recommendations made by a wide range of people across the country. This process was unprecedented in India and generated a great deal of enthusiasm for education in general. The National Policy on Education was accepted by the Parliament in 1986. Due to political compulsions arising out of
change of governments, this policy was debated again in 1992 and accepted with minor modifications. The section on Education for Women’s Equality was brought forward from being Chapter IV of the 1986 Programme of Action to Chapter I in the 1992 version. The following rider was inserted: “Education for Women’s Equality is too important to be left to the individual proclivities of persons in charge of implementation. It should be incumbent on all actors, agencies, and institutions in the field of education at all levels to be gender sensitive and ensure that women have their rightful share in all educational programmes and activities…” (Programme of Action, National Policy on Education, GOI, 1992)

**Gender Sensitivity in management**

gender sensitivity has been woven into the philosophy and structure of the organization. As different organizations have different interpretations about this phrase, it would be helpful to clearly state what gender sensitivity in management means:
Firstly, it means what circumstances should be created to appoint women in reasonable proportion.

Secondly, it implies that women should be able to work as equals and should not have to conform to stereotyped expectations. They should, moreover, have appropriate working conditions and facilities for safety and essential comfort.

Thirdly, women’s role in the family and responsibilities of motherhood should be recognized. They should be enabled to work at a time and pace suitable to them. The fact that, generally speaking, they have to bear a double burden should be acknowledged and scope provided to them get over fatigue.

Fourthly, circumstances that result in women’s isolation should be altered - at the individual as well as group level. An organization should attempt to create women’s collectives and networks for empowerment.

Fifthly, necessary steps should be taken to prevent sexual abuse and mental and other harassment. Exemplary penal measures should be taken if such happenings were to occur.
Sixthly, women must have a say in decision making. This should not be confined to decisions that affect women staff members and women and girls in educational and related situations, but all decisions, including decisions concerning policy and finance.

Seventhly, a gender sensitive system of educational management has to have the capability to extend gender sensitivity to the entire system of education and to monitor it.

Education is an important factor in a person's life. Especially for women it is a must. It is very much essential for women to be literate and to be able to read and write in order to be able to live life with dignity and self-esteem. No matter if we have stepped into the 21st century then also still a woman is treated with contempt and dis-respect. Even today she is considered a chattel something which is there for the enjoyment of men and hence it becomes very necessary for women to educate themselves in order to survive and fight all the obstacles that she has to face.

"Literacy is pivotal to human progress. All agree that the single most important key to development and to
poverty alleviation is education. Adult education, literacy and lifelong learning must be combined with the fundamental recognition that education of women and girls is central to development". World Bank President, James D. Wolfensohn, while speaking on the occasion of the World Literacy Day - September 8, 1999.

Did you know that India still has about 300 million illiterates out of a global illiterate population of around 1 billion. This means that around 1/3rd of the world's illiterates live in India! That is shameful. India is the second most populated country in the world. We have the infrastructure and the resources. We have given this world so many great scientist and great personalities then it is shameful for us to be rated so low as far as the literacy level of the world is concerned. Why is it so? Has any one ever wondered?

Education is important not only for ensuring that you make a great career, but also for inculcating accepted values and principles in your life so that you can lead your life as a person and you learn to respect and love fellow humans. Respect for elders
and love for your young ones, knowing about your country and your life, knowing about the mystical world of science is all possible only if education is a reality in your life. As a person you have to see that you help other also acquire this great power. Try to contribute.

Thus if you want to see your country progress and be the most successful country in the world you have to be educated and also try to educate people. Make the best use of the facilities given to you and pass on the legacy to the coming generation - that it is education and nothing but education that will pave the way for a better future for mankind. Make it a point to educate at least 12 illiterate persons in a year and thus contribute towards eradicating illiteracy from our country. Women who have free time should devote their time in educating illiterate persons and you can begin by teaching your maidservant to read and write. Tell her; enlighten her why it is so important to learn to read and write and advice her to send her children to school if still she hasn't. This is your chance......so don't waste it. Do something for your country. Help India eradicate illiteracy and strive towards success.
There are several clear indicators of the fact that Indian women continue to be discriminated against: the sex ratio is skewed against them; maternal mortality is the second-highest in the world; more than 40 per cent of women are illiterate; and crimes against women are on the rise. Yet, the women's movement which gathered strength after the 1970s, has led to progressive legislation and positive change, spurred on by the participation of women in local self-government.

It is a paradox of modern India that women wield power and hold positions at the topmost levels, yet large sections of women are among the most underprivileged. Some women from the upper classes head political parties and command large followings, yet women's representation in the Parliament and state legislatures has not been more than 10 per cent.

The roots of discrimination against women lie in the religious and cultural practices of India. The beginning of changes started with the reform movements in the nineteenth century, which
addressed practices like *sati*, child marriage, life of the widows, etc. The status of women in the contemporary context is reflected in the state of their health, education, employment and life in society.

The Indian women's movement started with addressing the problems that women faced, like violence, property rights, legal status, political participation, and the rights of minority women. Today, Indian women have won several victories against an oppressive way of life and are poised to raise pertinent questions that will make their lives more emancipating.

**WHERE DO THE ROOTS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN LIE?**

They can be traced back to ancient Hindu civilisation. Although some studies point to the equal status and rights that women enjoyed in the Vedic period (2500 B.C. to 1500 B.C.), patriarchy seems to have been the norm throughout history.

In the later Aryan period after 300 B.C., domination
by the Brahmans (the priestly class), the growth of the caste system and other factors led to social decline. Child marriage became the norm, wives were expected to worship their husbands, barren women were thrown out of their homes and widows were not permitted to remarry. Many of these vicious customs are still observed in parts of the country.

Other religions, like Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism or Islam, have questioned some of the practices in Hinduism, but, by and large, all religions have kept their women in varying stages of confinement and restrictions. The Bhakti cults tried to restore women's status and questioned some of the forms of oppression.

**THE BEGINNING OF CHANGES**

One of the fallouts of English education for the middle class during the colonial period was a change in attitude towards women. Through the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj, the Bengali middle class questioned the rigidity of brahminical Hinduism. Social reformers like Raja Rammohun Roy opposed sati or the practice of burning the widow on the husband's funeral pyre. The government abolished it
in 1829. Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar's crusade for widows led to the Widow Remarriage Act of 1856. Several decades of agitation led to the Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 that stipulated 14 as the minimum age of marriage for a girl. Education of girls through formal schooling was another major concern. The All India Women's Education Conference held in Pune in 1927 became a leading organisation in the movement for social change.

Women played a major role in the struggle for freedom from colonial rule. In 1917, the first women's delegation met the Secretary of State to demand women's political rights. The Indian National Congress supported the demand. In 1949 independent India gave them their due by enshrining in the Constitution the right of equality for women. Indian women have participated in large numbers in people's movements including those for land rights, environment, anti-price rise and anti-liquor agitations.
STATUS OF WOMEN IN INDIA

The clearest indicator of discrimination against Indian women is the skewed sex ratio. There were only 927 females per 1000 males in India (the world average is 990 women per 1000 men), according to the 1991 Census. Provisional figures for Census 2001 indicate that the trend has been slightly arrested, with the sex ratio at 933 females per 1000 males, with Kerala at 1058 females.

Yet cause for concern remains. The sex ratio of the 0-6 age group has declined sharply from 945 in 1991 to 927 in 2001. One reason for the adverse juvenile sex ratio is the increasing reluctance to have female children. Portable ultrasound machines and sex determination tests have made possible to detect and abort the female foetus. Social neglect of women and girls is the other contributing factor.

Health

Poverty, early marriage, malnutrition and lack of health care during pregnancy are the major reasons for both maternal and infant mortality. In rural India almost 60 per cent of girls are married before they are 18. Nearly 60 per cent of married girls bear children before they are 19. Almost one third of all
babies are born with low birth weight.

Maternal mortality in India is the second highest in the world, estimated to be between 385-487 per 100,000 live births. Close to 125,000 women die from pregnancy and pregnancy related causes each year. Antenatal services are poor with only 53.8 per cent receiving tetanus toxoid injections and 46.8 per cent having their blood pressure measured. 80 per cent of women are anaemic. As many as 58 per cent reduce their food intake during pregnancy instead of increasing it. Two-thirds of deliveries still take place at home, with only 43 per cent supervised by health professionals. Only 52 per cent of couples in the reproductive age groups use contraception.

For the country as a whole, nutritional standards are poor with cereal consumption per capita having fallen from 17 kgs per month in 1952 to 13 kgs per month in 1993-94. Calorie intake has also declined. Forty per cent of males and 41 per cent of females suffer chronic energy deficiency. A shocking 50 per cent of children under five are malnourished, and 70 per cent anaemic because of nutrition deficiencies. Anti-people policies alone can explain the paradox of
tonnes of grain rotting in FCI godowns while people go hungry.

Poverty and lack of awareness also hinder mothers from giving adequate care for their children. For instance, although diarrhoea is the second largest killer of babies, only 43 per cent of mothers know about ORS and only 26 per cent report ever having used it. Similarly, only one-third of children are fed complementary foods between the ages of six and nine months when breastfeeding should be supplemented. The second National Family Health Survey suggests that uneducated mothers tend to lose the most infants.

Social restrictions on women's mobility also contribute to lesser healthcare for women and children. For example, 90 per cent of married women in Uttar Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir and about 80 per cent in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Assam need permission to visit even friends and relatives.

Women's health tends to be viewed narrowly as reproductive health, whereas many factors need to
be considered. For instance, communicable diseases are more of a threat to women than pregnancy. Tuberculosis and not pregnancy is the leading cause of death of women in the reproductive age group, followed by burns and suicides.

The privatisation of the health sector has increased the burden of the poor. Studies suggest that illness is the second highest cause for rural indebtedness. Government spending on public health fell from 1.26 per cent of GDP in 1989-90 to 1.12 per cent of GDP in 1995-96. Only 50 per cent of villages have any government health facility.

**Water and Sanitation**

Only 62.3 per cent of Indian households have access to safe water — 81.4 per cent urban and 55.5 per cent rural households. This means that women spend a considerable amount of time carrying water from distant wells and other sources, adding to women's burden.

Access to sanitation facilities is a special problem for women and girls, given the social emphasis on privacy and seclusion. Having to go out exposes
them to harassment. Women and girls living in urban slums are particularly affected. Public toilets for females are few. Many schools do not have toilets for girls and women teachers. By 1995 only 15.2 per cent of rural people had access to toilets.

**Education**

In 1951, shortly after Independence, the Census recorded that only 25 per cent of men and 7 per cent of women were literate. By the 1991 Census, female literacy had risen to 39 per cent. Census 2001 provisional figures indicate that 54.16 per cent of women are now able to read and write. Still, 245 million Indian women cannot read or write, comprising the world's largest number of unlettered women.

National averages in literacy conceal wide disparities. For instance, while 95 per cent of women in Mizoram are literate, only 34 per cent of women in Bihar can read and write.

Since the majority of India's unlettered people are female, literacy and education programmes need to focus on girls and women. Yet progressive government programmes like the Mahila Samakhya,
that designed a scheme to conscientise and empower rural women and motivate them to educate themselves, have been distorted in recent years. The District Primary Education Programme focuses on enrolment but not on the retention of girls in schools. In the absence of an enabling and empowering environment, girls are unlikely to stay on in school, say critics of the large World Bank funded programme.

The average Indian female has only 1.2 years of schooling, while the Indian male spends 3.5 years in school. More than 50 per cent girls drop out by the time they are in middle school.

Women's organisations point out that sibling care is a major reason for girls dropping out of school and suggest that crèches be attached to schools so that girls are free to attend classes. Midday meals, free books and uniforms, and the provision of toilets are other facilities suggested to bring more girls into the school system, besides more same sex schools and more female teachers.

The women's movement has repeatedly called upon
the government to fulfil its pledge to invest 6 per cent of the country's GDP in education. But in fact expenditure on education fell from 3.4 per cent of GDP in 1989-90 to 2.8 per cent in 1995-96. Further, amounts actually made available and real spending falls far short of budgetary provisions.

**Employment**

Most of the work that women do, such as collecting fuel, fodder and water, or growing vegetables, or keeping poultry for domestic consumption, goes unrecorded in the Census counts. Many women and girls who work on family land are not recorded as workers. In 1991 women and girls comprised 22.5 per cent of the official workforce. Data from the National Sample Surveys records higher work participation by women than the Census.

Women constitute 90 per cent of the total marginal workers of the country. Rural women engaged in agriculture form 78 per cent of all women in regular work. They are a third of all workers on the land. The traditional gender division of labour ensures that these women get on average 30 per cent lower wages than men. The total employment of women in organised sector is only 4 per cent.
Although industrial production increased in the 1980s, jobs in factories and establishments -- or non-household jobs -- stagnated at eight per cent of the workforce. Increasingly, companies tend to rely on outsourcing, using cheap labour.

It is well known that women and children work in huge numbers in bidi-rolling, agarbatti-rolling, bangle making, weaving, brassware, leather, crafts and other industries. Yet, only 3 per cent of these women are recorded as labourers. They are forced to work for pitiable wages and are denied all social security benefits. A study by SEWA of 14 trades found that 85 per cent of women earned only 50 per cent of the official poverty level income.

**Social Status**

Crime against women has been rising with each year. Violence, both outside and within the household, is a grim reality of women’s lives. Between 1990 and 1996 crimes against women grew by 56 per cent. Cruelty to wives comprised 28 per cent of all crimes in 1996.
The extent of trafficking in women is unknown. However, one official study admits to 100,000 prostitutes in six metro cities. Of these, 15 per cent are girls below the age of 15. Cross-border trafficking is common.

According to the National Sample Survey Organisation figures, one out of ten households is headed by a woman. Women-headed households include widows, deserted and divorced wives and single women. They tend to be among the poorest households in the country. There are indications that the number of such households is rising and that the NSSO figure is an underestimate.

The status of tribal women is in some ways better than that of other women, for instance, female infanticide is lowest among the tribal people. Tribal women work shoulder to shoulder with men and have a higher status than many caste Hindu women do. Still, violence and oppression is a common occurrence. They are doubly oppressed as part of a community that is among India’s most deprived people. Their customary access to the forests has been restricted with the government appropriating
forests and forest produce through a series of damaging legislations. Large numbers of tribal people have been displaced from their homes by modern so-called 'development' projects including mines, giant industrial plants, dams and electricity projects as well as defence installations like missile ranges.

**LEGAL STATUS**

Women have equality of status under the country's Constitution. However, many anomalies remain under different laws.

During the 25 years of the women's movement the government has amended several laws that affect women, including laws related to dowry, rape, cruelty, maintenance, prostitution and obscenity. India has ratified international conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). It has set up family courts in some states and the judiciary has issued a series of progressive judgements in favour of women, including a recent judgement on sexual harassment at the workplace and on child custody.

However, Hindu law still does not give women equal
rights in ancestral property. For instance, they cannot be coparceners in ancestral property and have limited rights to inherit it. They cannot ask for division of the property. No law exists to prevent wives from being thrown out of the matrimonial home. Separated, deserted or divorced women face major hurdles in claiming maintenance for themselves and their children.

The government has been singularly reluctant to address the issues of minority women's rights. The constitutional stipulation to chart a Uniform Civil Code has been unsuccessful so far because, by and large, the effort has been to impose Hindu law in the name of a Uniform Code and to ignore even the positive aspects of Personal Laws of other communities.

**POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

Although Indian women played a major role in the freedom movement, it did not translate into continued participation in public life in the post-independence era. On the contrary, many women withdrew into their homes, secure in the belief that they had ushered in a democratic republic in which
the dreams and aspirations of the mass of people would be achieved.

Representation of women in the state legislatures and in Parliament is low. Women currently comprise 5.9 per cent of Lok Sabha members. In the 1999 elections a mere 6.5 per cent of candidates were female.

Women have persistently lobbied for the passing of the 81st Amendment Bill, drafted in 1996, that proposes the reservation of one-third of seats in the Lok Sabha. But political parties have repeatedly sabotaged attempts to have the Bill approved.

However, hope lies in India's huge experiment with grassroots democracy through the panchayats. Nearly a million women have entered the panchayats and local bodies, thanks to one-third reservation in these bodies through the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution. Women head one-third of the panchayats and are gradually learning to use their new prerogatives.
CURRENT CONCERNS OF INDIAN WOMEN

Both research and activism has focussed on the negative fallout of the process of globalisation and liberalisation on women. They have demanded that the investment in the social sector be increased. But a government bent on opening up the economy to foreign investment and free trade has paid no heed to these voices, although India has experienced industrial recession and a period of jobless growth in the past decade. Given the high levels of the population and a large population below age 20, the demand for employment is growing and joblessness and accompanying frustrations have contributed to violence, frequently expressed as ethnic, caste, class or communal conflicts. Women are the worst sufferers in such conflicts.

Besides raising these economic issues, sections of the women's movement are questioning the oppression of Dalit women. Muslim and Christian women are strongly demanding equal rights.

The war in Kargil has spurred activism for peace. Women were the first to lead a peace delegation to
Pakistan in the post-war period, breaking the ice and initiating people-to-people dialogues. Issues of conflict and peace are important, given the tremendous suffering of women in Jammu and Kashmir and in the North East region.

Cross-border trafficking of women and girls is a major problem that remains untackled. Lobbying by women's groups of the South Asian region forced the SAARC countries to include in their Male Declaration of 1997 a paragraph on trafficking and a commitment to sign a regional convention on trafficking. This commitment has yet to be fulfilled.

The Constitution had promised free education for all Indian children up to the age of 14. This promise was never fulfilled. The government is contemplating passing a law to grant children ages 6-14 the right to education. Child rights and women's activists argue that this right is already enshrined in the Constitution and the Right to Education Bill has been designed to absolve the government of its responsibility towards those under six years of age.

The National Commission for Women has made a series of recommendations for legal reform and other
measures that deserve consideration but have so far been ignored by the government. Last year the Indian government reported to a UN Committee on the status of implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination of Women and was congratulated for bringing women into panchayats, but critiqued on other counts including denial of rights to minority women.

Activists have drafted a Bill on Domestic Violence after national consultations with women's organisations and lobbied for its passage. An official version is likely to be introduced in Parliament shortly.

The government has declared 2001 as the Year of Women's Empowerment or Swashakti. A policy for the Empowerment of Women was drafted in 1996 but has been in cold storage since then. It has recently, in March 2001, been passed by the Cabinet but has still to be made public. Even the Parliamentary Committee on Women's Empowerment has been denied the document.

Present study has been undertaken with a view to study the opinion of female post graduates
students regarding the problems associated with educational system and its relationship with occupation and present day politics in educational institutions. Further attempts has been made to study institutional pattern and opinion of student regarding various socio-economic issues which affect student community.

Various researches has been done to highlight the problems of students but very few attempts have been made to study the overall perspective of students in relation to socio-economic issues which are the major problem in present day generation.

This study has been attempted for the first time in Bundelkhand University campus seeking the opinion of female students in relation to various problems which are present day part of the student domain.

The importance of the study lies in the fact that it will highlight various findings which shall prove useful to educational planners, administrators and researchers who wants to conduct study in this area.

Lot of studies are available but this study will be unique in the sense that it will throw light on various socio-economic, psychological, political issues
concerning the female students who constitute a meager percentage in university education.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To find out the socio-economic background of the students.
2. To seek the opinions and behaviour of present day Post graduate students in relation to various groups.
3. To study the problem of education and its relation with occupation and find out the aims with which students pursue their studies.
4. To study the factors of growing indiscipline and role of politics in the campus.
5. To study institutional patterns in which students receive education.