2.1 THE PROBLEM

Admittedly, true societal development can never be achieved by developing men alone, leaving the other sex underdeveloped or undeveloped. True development, rather necessitates fullest and harmonious development of both the sections of human resources so that they can play effectively multiple roles in the polity, the economy and the society.

In consonance with this, as also in deference to the universal declaration of Human Rights, every progressive society all over the world, aiming at improving women's status and liberating them from their time-old subjugated position in society has always emphasized education as the key instrument to effect the change.

After independence India too, had identified education as the major instrument for this change. She provided constitutional guarantee for gender equality, accepted the principle of equality of access to education for men and women and endeavored for increasing female literacy along with other measures. But despite great expansion, its progress appeared to be very slow. Reviewing women's educational development till the early 70's, the C.S.W.I. identified several problems which seem to remain unchanged even today. In order of priority the problems were:

*a) Illiteracy,

b) Widening gap in access to elementary education through problems of non-enrolment, wastage and dropout.

c) Imbalance in educational development.

d) Ideological imbalances among educational planners and administrators regarding the objectives of women's education.* (Women in India, 1985, p. 43).

During the decade 1971 to 1981, female literacy rate improved from 18.7 percent to 24.02 percent and it improved further to 39.42 percent in 1991. The decadal growth rates were higher in female literacy as against male literacy, but the rates slowed down from 98.08 in 1961 to 61.35 in 1981 (Table 2.01).
TABLE 2.01 PROGRESS OF LITERACY - ALL INDIA 1951-1981

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage literate male to total male population</th>
<th>Decadal growth rate</th>
<th>Percentage literate females to total female population</th>
<th>Decadal growth rate</th>
<th>Sex ratio of literates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>24.94</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>7.93</td>
<td>xx</td>
<td>301</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>34.43</td>
<td>68.36</td>
<td>12.95</td>
<td>98.08</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>39.43</td>
<td>43.78</td>
<td>18.71</td>
<td>72.29</td>
<td>441</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>46.89</td>
<td>43.99</td>
<td>24.82</td>
<td>61.35</td>
<td>494</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Excludes Assam  (Source - Women in India, 1985, p. 43)

The sex ratio of literates rose from 301 women for every 1000 men in 1951 to only 494 in 1981. This, together with the rapid increase in the size of the illiterate population seems to be alarming. The sex ratio among illiterates changed from 1055 women for every 1000 men in 1911 to 1033 in 1951, to 1250 in 1961 and from 1248 in 1971 to 1322 in 1981* (Women in India, 1985, p. 43).

Thus, even though awareness towards female literacy is noticeable, there is still a glaring disparity between female and male literacy.

On the basis of estimated data for the mid 70's, the C.S.W.I. had calculated that only two out of every three girls in the age group (6-11) were in school in the primary stage and only one out of every five were in the middle stage (age group 11-14). Thus, as much as one-third of the girls in the age group of 6-11 years was not enrolled, even though, over the past thirty years, enrollment of girls increased by over five times compared to the three fold increase in the case of boys. The faster growth rate in girl's enrollment seems to be because of the fact that an increase with reference to a small base appears impressive in percentage terms. Further there was interstate imbalance in enrollment. In Rajasthan for example, 70 percent of the girls of the age group of 6-11 years were outside school and 89 percent of the age group 11-14 years were not enrolled. To add more, even though there had been a general rise in the proportion of enrollment in all the three age groups, a sharp decline in enrollment percentage at the primary level for girls was found in the state of Uttar Pradesh, a major state in India.
Further, apart from what has been pointed out in Chapter 1.3, it appears from the report of the C.S.W.I. 1975, that

1) Of every 100 girls enrolled in classes I-V only 30 reached class V.

2) The dropout rate for girls was 62 percent at the lower primary stage as against 56 percent for boys. At the higher primary stage it was 34 percent as against 24 percent for boys.

3) The rate of wastage & stagnation was 63 percent for boys and 71.4 percent for girls in primary and middle schools.

To point out partinently, the Education Commission (1964-66) reported that the rate of wastage and dropout at the lower primary stage was 62 percent for girls, as against 56 percent for boys. A study of wastage and stagnation by Sharma and Sapra (1969) indicates that the rate of wastage and stagnation in primary and middle schools was 71.36 percent for girls and 62.3 percent for boys. Thus, the enrolment is not the only criterion to mark the progress of women's education. If only one-third or even less of the girls enrolled continue their studies upto the secondary level, it cannot speak well of social attitudes towards girl's education.

Added to the gender gap, as already reported in Sec. 1.3 there are rural-urban and regional imbalances. Further there are seen imbalances within the same state in women's literacy. For example, female literacy rates in different districts of Andhra Pradesh vary from 6.4 percent to 29.5 percent. In Uttar Pradesh, female literacy rates vary from 4.8 to 33.8 percent and in Madhya Pradesh, 4 to 31.4 percent. The regional imbalances seem to have not been narrowed down even today in as much as a summary of 1991 Census figures indicates. The report of C.S.W.I., 1975 indicates female literacy rates for Bihar, Rajasthan, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh are 23.10 percent, 20.84 percent, 29.37 percent, 28.39 percent and 26.02 percent respectively, while for Andhra Pradesh it is 33.71 percent (Census Diary, U.P, 1991).

At the University stage, however, the proportion of girls is higher than at the undergraduate level. In professional education, women have substantial enrolments in teaching, medicine and fine arts and there is indicated steady improvement in the faculties of arts, science, commerce, engineering, law etc., where they entered much later. In research too, girls' enrolment steadily increased from 20.70 percent in 1970-71 to 27.70 percent in 1981-82. But higher education of women was, and is even today, more confined to the urban upper and middle classes (Report of the C.S.W.I., 1975; Women in India, 1985).
In sum, the data available indicate that female literacy has risen from 18.70 percent in 1971 to 24.82 percent in 1981 and further to 39.42 percent in 1991. Whereas during this period, male literacy has increased from 39.52 percent in 1971 to 48.89 percent in 1981 and further to 63.86 percent in 1991 (Census of India 1981, Census Diary U.P. 1991).

Thus, even though awareness towards female literacy is noticeable, there is still glaring disparity between female and male literacy. This situation is further compounded with regional even intra-regional and urban-rural imbalances in the rate of progress and the problems of dropouts and wastage and stagnation, particularly at the lower levels. The problem of education in India does not concern the females alone, rather it concerns both the sexes. The problems in the field of education that India faces today are undoubtedly

i) spread of literacy
and ii) universalisation of elementary education

A question naturally crops up: why does there exist such a state of education even fortyfive years after independence? The Union as also the State Governments adopted several measures like Adult Education Programmes, Special Award Schemes, and Special Central Financial Assistance Schemes to the nine educationally backward States. There has also been growth of Institutional facilities for spread of education (Women in India, 1985).

To point out pertinently, India spends 3.7 percent of her G.N.P. at present as against 2.9 percent she spent during 1965-66 when the Education Commission submitted its report. Although this figure does not compare well with that of the advanced countries, but it does so well with that of the peer group of developing countries in Asia, like China-2.4 percent, Sri Lanka-2.7 percent, Hong Kong-2.7 percent, Indonesia-0.9 percent and South Korea-3.7 percent (The Statesman, 8.12.93). But in regard to literacy, all other countries are seen to excel India: China-75 percent (1982), Indonesia-64 percent (1981), Sri Lanka-84.8 percent (1983), Hong Kong-75 percent (1985), South Korea-90 percent (1982) and India-36 percent (1982) (Kurien, 1993).

Questions naturally crop up: why is this slow progress as also imbalance in literacy? Where lies the ailment? and so on.
2.2

NEED OF THE STUDY

As already pointed out in Sec. 2.1, the problem that India's educational system is the slow progress in literacy, specially female literacy and the regional and gender imbalances in the rate of progress. In order to tackle the problem it is important to find the causes and trace their sources. Inadequacies of the present system need to be brought out so that the limitations and constraints are appreciated while defining the problems of education and formulating remedial measures.

In the mid '70s, the C.S.W.I. (Report, 1975) in their survey identified some reasons behind female illiteracy and the slow progress of female education of which two, seem to be of crucial importance.

These are:

1) Social Attitudes towards female education, and
2) Population composition

The survey indicates 16.8 percent of the respondents were against education for girls, 64.5 percent were against higher education for them while 77.5 percent supported compulsory education for them only up to the eighth class. Educationists and administrators were however, generally in favour of compulsory education for girls. Further, Education for girls was seen to be most favoured in urban areas, particularly by the middle class for economic reasons. A small group of affluent families opposed it for traditional reasons but others regarded it as an accomplishment and a symbol for modernism. Poorer families did not favour education for girls because the girls had to undertake domestic chores and were often required to contribute to the family income.

The report further reveals that, population composition determines female literacy rates. Cities and regions with a high proportion of Muslim and Scheduled Caste and Tribes were marked by low literacy rates, even in the southern states of the country which, broadly speaking, were always seen to maintain a higher rate of female literacy and a narrow gap in urban and rural literacy rates. On the contrary, regions with relatedly high proportion of Christians were seen to have a high literacy rate. A question naturally crops up, why all this difference?

People are at variance in respect of their life styles, means of living, attitudes and value structure, and because of this in the same region they differ from one another and one community differs from another. This seems to explain why educationists, administrators, the middle class people and the Christians are in favour of women's education; and the affluent are ambivalent in respect of it; while Muslims or Schedule Castes and Tribes, or the poor families are backward even in male literacy. Thus in ultimate analysis, both the causes as highlighted in the C.S.W.I. report (1975), seem to reduce to the attitudinal disposition of
people, towards Women's Education, which again seem to owe to their value structure. The Hon'ble Supreme Court of India called this attitude as apathy towards education (Galanter, 1985).

Modern Psychologists are apt to view attitudes as relatively enduring organizations of beliefs about an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential or discriminatory manner. As a person's belief system represents the total universe of beliefs about the physical world, the social world and himself, it can be analyzed in terms of subsystems of varying breadths. An attitude is one such subsystem of beliefs. (Rokeach, 1968).

Like beliefs, an attitude has cognitive and affective components in addition to its co-native facet of predisposition to action. Thus it is implicit motivation. Some other contemporary Psychologists are apt to view it somewhat differently from structural viewpoint as evaluation based on beliefs, feelings and/or past behaviour, or as associative network. But its importance in social sciences is undisputed (Tresser and Shaffer, 1990).

However, values are more generalized belief systems than attitudes, they refer to preferred end states and preferred ways of doing things. Because of the breadth of the value-construct, values are supposed to be antecedents of, or to cause attitudes and behaviours. Lastly, it is indicated that attitudes are functional and when attitudes are strong, specific and directly relevant, assessed recently and there are no conflicting situational pressures, behaviours are consistent with attitudes (Freedman, Sears and Carlsmith, 1978; Tresser & Sheffer, 1990).

It may be pertinent here to point out that the value system and attitudes seem to determine and mould a nation's destiny. There was a time when Japan was completely devastated in the Second World War. Today, that very nation has surged ahead of all others in the field of economic and technological development. Their amazing progress seems to be the result of their role dedication value and attitude towards family and the society at large (Devos, 1973). By the same yardstick, if India lags behind in any field, it seems to be because of the attitude of her people. For instance, in the wake of the recommendation by the National Committee on Women's Education (1950-59) for special programmes and efforts to bridge the gender gap, special efforts were hurled and girls' enrolment was stepped up from 1960 but the efforts were slackened after 1966 (Report of the C.S.W. I, 1975); But why? It seems it was because of people's apathy. In recent times, massive Functional Literacy Programmes have been launched and as a result the state of Kerala and some districts of other states have been declared fully literate regions. But will this state be sustained? It seems, only future can answer this query.
Thus, both value and attitude seem to be very important and useful in life and as concepts, they are very potent to tap one's motivational status. It necessarily entails: what promotes favourable attitudes towards women's education, what value structure or other factors cause or contribute towards promotion or demotion of attitudes towards women's education? All this calls for both extensive and intensive studies into the nature of attitude towards women's education in relation to values and other probable factors like attitude towards women, traditionalism, attitude towards education, socio-economic status and educational facilities, severally as also conjointly. Such studies seem necessary to cover the whole of the country in general, and backward regions, in particular.

2.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

Chamoli is a backward region in the state of Uttar Pradesh. The district of Chamoli represents the typical characteristics of Garhwal in population composition, social strata, urban-rural habitation and economic conditions (Sec. 1.4). No study seems to have so far been made to probe deep into its state of educational backwardness. To fill up this gap, studies are needed to probe into the attitude of the people of this region towards women's education and the underlying forces responsible for this. The purpose of the study is to probe into the nature of attitude towards women's education, in relation to factors like Attitude towards women, traditionalism, socio-economic status, educational facilities etc. in Chamoli Garhwal, and to explore what factors cause or contribute towards promotion or demotion of attitude towards women's education.

2.4 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The problem of the study is of sociological origin and its solution requires to take the social constraints and regional imbalances into account and also to seek out the sociological factors responsible for them. In other words, before taking up any plan of action, it is necessary to make a thorough assessment of the social and psychosocial processes operating in the educationally backward regions and also to identify the factors or processes that have laid the deep foundation of the backwardness in general, and of the inequality of the sexes in particular.

Obviously in a study like this, it is not possible to cover all the aspects or factors as also the reasons for the whole country. This study delimits its scope to Chamoli Garhwal, admittedly a backward region of the country, and considers attitude towards women's education in relation to factors, like attitude towards women, traditionalism, socio-economic status and educational facilities. As the focus of the study is on women's education it seems attitude towards women is a very important factor, in that, if one thinks of women as equal social partners, he or she is expected to be interested in their welfare. The C.S.W.I. report
(1975) indicates that attitudes towards women’s education display an ambivalence between traditionalism and liberalism and as such, traditionalism is expected to have some sway over the attitude. Further the report reveals that poverty and lack of educational facilities have negative influence over women’s literacy and for this, these factors have been considered in the study in the form of socio-economic status and awareness of educational facilities or simply facilities. The facilities have not been taken as they actually exist, but as the respondents are aware of them in that in attitude formation it is an individual's awareness that counts.

Lastly, even though attitude towards education is an important factor, it has been left out of the study because, the primary focus of the study is on women and secondly, its inclusion might make the study both broad and complex. However, this seems to be a limitation of the study.

2.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study tries to probe into the attitude of the people of Chamoli Garhwal towards women’s education in relation to attitudes towards women, traditionalism, socio-economic status and awareness of the available educational facilities or simply facilities. Solving the problem of educational backwardness has three closely related aspects: existing state, factors responsible and remedy.

In all probability, this is the first study of its kind in the country directed in this regard. This study is expected to cast considerable light on the present state of people's attitude towards women's education and other factors considered and also on how the factors are responsible for the present state of attitude towards women's education, that seems to be at the root of the present state of educational backwardness of Chamoli women. The study seems to go a long way to suggest appropriate steps for the development of favourable attitudes towards Women's Education, by arresting the negative or deterring forces. The study seems to be a leading one to probe into the causal aspect of the attitude towards Women's Education and its finding seems not only to be applicable to Chamoli alone but also be equally applicable to regions of similar settings as also other regions of the country. Herein lies the significance of the study.
2.6 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the study are:

a. To find the descriptive pattern of the people in respect of Attitude towards women's education the criterion, and independent variables viz., attitude towards women (U), traditionalism (T) Educational facilities (C) available and the socio-economic states of the people(s) and also in regard to different criteria of stratification viz. sex, caste and locale (Rural/Urban).

b. To find significant inter-group differences in respect of the variables.

c. To find how the criterion is correlated with other variables.

d. To find inter-correlation of the independent variables.

e. To find how the independent variables determine the criterion.

f. To find the significant predictors of the criterion.

2.7 Assumptions and definitions

2.71 Assumptions -

In the course of development and discussion, some assumptions as below have been made -

a) Attitudes are dynamic or directive.
b) Attitudes are assessable through inventories.
c) People are normal in respect of the different attitudes.
d) Attitudes towards women's education is predictable from the variables mentioned below, i.e. - women's education, women, traditionalism, facilities and socio-economic status - in terms of Linear Multiple Regression equations.
e) 0.05 is the desired level of significance.

2.72 Definitions

Attitude - Attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs about and object or situation, pre-disposing one to respond in some preferential or discriminatory manner.

Tradition - Opinion or belief or custom, handed down from ancestors to posterity.

Socio-economic Status - The position that an individual or family occupies with reference to the prevailing average standard of cultural possession and participation in group activity of the community.