CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial women have excelled as symbol of dedication, hardwork and sacrifice, force behind development, inspiration to novelties, testimony of responsibilities, evidence of love and affection, beckoning light in the darkness and above all meaning to life. Women have been responsible for the gratification of psychological, a socio cultural and physiological needs of all human beings irrespective of age and sex. Hence, the culture of a society was partly judged by the way in which women were treated. As pointed out by Krishnaraj (1988) the mark of a civilized society is the status it accords to women. Hence, explicitly or implicitly women were given importance and equal status. Such attempts were either open or latent.

WOMEN DURING DIFFERENT HISTORICAL PERIODS

There is an ambivalent view about the status of women in ancient India. The first view focusses the equal status of women whereas the second view indicates inhuman treatment given to women. (Ahuja, 1993:91).

During vedic period women were considered as companion and mistress after marriage. Many women were
regarded as rishis and seers (Mahavananda, 1953:4-5). It was observed (Mahavananda, 1953, Sharma, 1981, Devi, 1992, Maurya, 1988, Ghosh, 1989 and Pandey, 1990) that the position of women was much higher than any other ancient society. As mother, she enjoyed a high position and exercised considerable authority in the household affairs (Apte, 1964). They also had the privilege of adoption (Kapadia, 1968, Sastri, 1954:35) indicates that there was no discrimination between men and women before law.

Contrary to this period, the status of women during pauranic period was lowered (Altekar, 1953:27, Ahuja, 1993:94). The Hindu law giver Manu had made women entirely dependent on man.

During the Buddhist period, the position of women improved a little and in religious field superior position was accorded to them (Ahuja, 1993). The position of Buddhist women was higher than that of the Hindu sisters (Thomas, 1964:84).

In medieval period, their position was very poor (Devi, 1982, Maurya, 1988, Ahuja, 1993). General depression of life was witnessed during this period. Muslim kings who ruled India for a long period enforced strict discipline on women and treated them as inferior to men. Seclusion of
women, Purdah system and child marriage were some of the customs followed in this period.

During British period substantial progress was achieved in eliminating inequalities between men and women. A new value system emerged recognizing women as a unique personality (Majumdar, 1965). Many religious and social reformers made great efforts to improve the conditions of women. Their efforts earned women a measure of respectability in society (Sharan, 1985:18). They were given a share in ancestral property (Sethi, 1976:6).

STATUS OF WOMEN IN THE POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

Great achievements have taken place in the lives of Indian women after independence (Kovalsky and Blinora, 1975:211). Equality of sexes under Article 15, right of divorce (Jain, 1988) are some of the progressive measures. From early 1950's onwards, the status of women has been changing a lot gradually. A commission was appointed in 1971 and in January 31, 1992 National Commission for Women (NCW) was set up to look into the women related issues and point out loopholes and gaps.

Some of the broad areas whereby women's status has grown are briefly reviewed here.
'WOMEN AND EDUCATION'

The literacy rate of women in the beginning of the century was 0.6 per cent only and in 1991 it has reached 39.19 per cent (Census of India, 1991). From 1951 onwards it has increased steadily at the rate of five to six per cent in every decade. However, this rate of increase is far from satisfactory when compared to developed countries.

POLICIES ADVOCATING WOMEN'S CONCERNS

Many policy instruments have been brought forth over the years, leading to Action plans and programmes in several spheres. Some of the important policy guiding documents include - The National plan of action for women (NPA) adopted in 1976 became a guiding document for the development of women till 1988. When a National perspective plan for women was formulated. The National perspective plan for women (NPP, 1988-2000) is a long term policy document advocating a holistic approach for the development of women. "Sharm Shakti", the Report of the National Commission on self-employed women and women in informal sector (1988) examines the entire gamut of issues facing women in the unorganised sector and makes for the number of recommendations and betterment of women in the informal sector. The National expert committee on women prisoners (1986) examined the conditions of women prisoners and made many recommendations. National policy for children (NPC)

DEVELOPMENT OF WOMEN THROUGH FIVE YEAR PLANS

The concept of women’s Development in the First Five Year Plan (1951-56) was mainly welfare oriented. The central social welfare board (CSWB), set up in 1953, undertook many welfare measures through the voluntary sector. In the second five year plan (1956-61) women were organised into Mahila Mandals to act at grass-root level organizations. The third, fourth and other interim plans (1961-74) accorded high priority to education of women. In the fifth plan (1974-78) the approach changed from ‘Welfare’ to ‘development’. The sixth five year plan (1980-85) adopted a multi-disciplinary approach on health, education and employment.
The seventh plan (1985-90) accorded priority for raising their economic and social status. The Eighth Five Year plan (1992-97) marks a shift from development to empowerment of women. The plan outlay of Rs.4 crores in first plan has gone upto Rs.2000 crores in the eighth plan.

WOMEN AND WELFARE PROGRAMMES

After Independence, special programmes for the welfare of women were undertaken (Kumar, 1989:5). Family and child welfare programmes, nutrition programmes, protection homes, rehabilitation centres for destitute women, integrated child development scheme (ICDS), integrated rural development scheme (IRDP), development of women and children in rural areas (DWCRA) and Training of Rural Youth for Self-employment (TRYSEM) are some of the programmes for the welfare of the women.

Two important events namely, The international year of the women (IWY) in 1975 and The international women's decade (1976-85) were given due weightage in India. The events had given an opportunity to make a self-assessment of the success and failure in fulfilling the commitment towards the betterment of women. Both long term and short term measures in achieving the 'Forward Looking Strategies for the advancement of women upto the year 2000' were undertaken. The government has set up a separate
Department of women and child Development under the newly created ministry of human Resource Development.

WOMEN AND LEGISLATION

The government has enacted many women-specific and women-related legislations to protect women against social discrimination, violence and atrocities and also to prevent social evils like child marriage, dowry, rape, practice of sati and so on. Very important legislations on women are mentioned here.

2. The special marriage Act, 1954.
15. Amendment to Criminal Laws.
16. Family Courts.

It is clear that there are many protective, constitutional and legislative measures for women. However, it is distressing to note the prevalence of crime against women. Ravindran (1994) observes that the home ministry's National Crime Records Bureau has clocked in violence in crimes against women: a rape takes place every 54 minutes, eve teasing every 51 minutes molestation every 26 minutes, kidnapping/abduction every 43 minutes, a dowry death every 102 minutes, a 'cruelty act' every 33 minutes, a criminal offence every 7 minutes. Between 1987 and 1991 rape and molestation has increased by 26 per cent and dowry deaths by 170 per cent. In Tamil Nadu, female infanticide is higher among females than males.

Sharan (1985:19) mentions about the report of the committee on the status of women in India that despite the egalitarian ethos of the Indian constitution and the progressive legislations passed subsequently, the status of women in general and that of the Hindu women has remained
substantially unchanged. This has been attributed to the traditional customs and roles of women which remained the same. They are still confined to domestic chores.

All these observations demand further thrust in enhancing the status of women in India.

**WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT**

In the past also women have been in the employment field. Aryan women have played an active part in manufacturing arrows and bows, making baskets, weaving clothes and participated in out door agriculture work (Altekar, 1953:27). By that time only three or four professions were open to women and the teaching career was very popular. Medical career was selected by some women and in the realm of business too women were seen.

Arthasastra, written by Chanakya describes the status of women. The harem was guarded by trusted women and they were the main body-guards of the king. Food, garment, flowers and ornaments had to be tested by the trusted women before it was given to the king (Thomas, 1964:71).

These were the two samples of women workers in the past. Nowadays women are commonly found in many occupations. The decennial growth of women's work participation is explained in the following table.
TABLE 1
PERCENTAGE OF WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>10.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>13.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>25.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>28.57</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India, 1991

According to 1991 census 80 per cent of women were in agriculture sector. Only 12 per cent women employees were in central and state administrative service and public sector undertaking. The statistics exhibits the sharp increase of female work force by 2.5 per cent during 1981-91. Between 1971-81 the increase was about 13 per cent.

Ahuja (1993:105) has made an attempt to give female work force in India. The tables are given below.
### TABLE 2

**FEMALE POPULATION AND FEMALE WORKERS IN INDIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Female population (in million)</th>
<th>Female workers main and marginal (in million)</th>
<th>Participation rate of female workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>206.2</td>
<td>255.0</td>
<td>318.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>170.6</td>
<td>205.6</td>
<td>245.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>49.4</td>
<td>73.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TABLE 3

**BREAK UP PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN WORKERS IN INDIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1971</th>
<th>1981</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultivators</td>
<td>15.45</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural labourers</td>
<td>6.87</td>
<td>6.18</td>
<td>6.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other workers</td>
<td>5.61</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total female workers</td>
<td>27.93</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>14.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Referring Rani, Jebaseelan (1995) has reproduced the male and female working population in India in 1988.
TABLE 4

MALE AND FEMALE WORKING POPULATION RATIO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage of total population</th>
<th>Percentage of female population</th>
<th>Percentage of male population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>20.90</td>
<td>79.10</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marginally working</td>
<td>75.27</td>
<td>24.73</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-working</td>
<td>61.30</td>
<td>38.70</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All these above tables indicate the larger participation of women in several fields. But compared to other countries it is quite low. In advanced countries the female work participation rate ranges between 30 per cent to 45 per cent (Mishra, 1994:104). Anyway women's role in society as career women or as housewives is indispensable (Aggarwal, 1977:16).

NEED FOR EMPLOYMENT FOR WOMEN

It is an open secret that women take up employment mainly due to economic necessity and to supplement their family income. However, there are other factors like, to pass time, to meet professional obligations, to attain economic independence and to develop personality (Wadhera, 1976:12). Desire to utilise the education (Sethi, 1969),
social role and personality (Kapur, 1970) and leaving the monotony of home (Vohra and Sen, 1986), are some of the factors identified by many authors. Hoffman (1963), views that job may sometimes operate as a safety valve whereby frustrations that would otherwise expressed in the family are avoided or diverted. Modern women aspire to utilise their education and mental abilities in a very useful way. It is natural that the increase in dual-career families is inevitable (Porter and Angle, 1980).

Parikh and Shah (1994) have made an attempt to trace the career paths of women in work organisations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase I 1950's</th>
<th>Phase II 1970's</th>
<th>Phase III 1980's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educated and waiting for marriage</td>
<td>Their entry was with aspirations for career and growth</td>
<td>Career was an accepted dimension of life space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good use of time and education till children</td>
<td>Regarded work as an integral path of life space</td>
<td>Created role and space in the larger social, cultural and external environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave up job after children</td>
<td>Income and career both were significant</td>
<td>Dual career/income created role definitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were grateful to in-laws for letting them work</td>
<td>Career was insurance against maltreatment by in-laws</td>
<td>In-laws started accepting and taking pride in daughter-in-laws new role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase I 1950's</td>
<td>Phase II 1970's</td>
<td>Phase III 1980's</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushes and pulls of two systems</td>
<td>Home and career were both significant</td>
<td>South partnership in managing home/work interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not rise in hierarchy</td>
<td>Participation in management and decision-making</td>
<td>Policy strategy and corporate membership were legitimately seen as their role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of guilt and anxiety</td>
<td>Income added to social status</td>
<td>Traditional cultural norms integrated with new roles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Held on whatever was available</td>
<td>Did not make choices, only compromises</td>
<td>Acquired a corporate perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty in exercising authority</td>
<td>Became assertive and aggressive</td>
<td>Social identity with professional identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination and deprivation at home and work</td>
<td>Pressure from families continued</td>
<td>Transformed barriers into opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No common role models</td>
<td>Career oriented women role models</td>
<td>They had role models of the previous two phases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job oriented</td>
<td>Career oriented</td>
<td>Profession oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**IMPACT OF EMPLOYMENT ON WORKING WOMEN**

Employment of all types contributed in several ways to woman's power in society and this was reflected in many fields where custom and tradition had prescribed a subordinate role for women (Devi, 1982). A working woman
enhances her status and gets an independent income (Gore, 1968:12-13, Madan, 1976) many young middle class women work before marriage (Ross, 1973:198) and continue to hold the job thereafter. It has also been pointed out that they become an asset to middle class family (Meehta, 1976).

HOSTELS FOR WORKING WOMEN

In order to promote greater mobility for women in the employment market, the nodal department launched a scheme of hostels for working women in 1973 to provide 'safe and cheap' accommodation to single working women who came to cities/towns for the sake of employment. Under this scheme, financial assistance is provided to the extent of 50 per cent of the cost of the land and 75 per cent of the construction of the building to voluntary organisations to provide safe, suitable accommodation to single working women. Assistance is also extended towards purchase of ready-built buildings. Besides, voluntary organisations, public trusts, local bodies women development corporations, universities, schools/colleges of social work are eligible for financial assistance under the programme. Working women whose consolidated income does not exceed Rs.5500/- per month are eligible for accommodation. A resident is allowed to stay in the hostel for a maximum period of five years. Some of these rules are relaxed on humanitarian ground.
At present 675 hostels with attached day care centres have been sanctioned to be constructed all over the country to benefit about 44500 working women and their dependent children numbering about 6000 (Department of Women and Child Development, 1994).

**PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN**

The common problem of working women in India is over work. Most of the working women are capable of managing the multiple roles of wife, mother and career person (Rajvanshi, 1994). A working woman, therefore, is really a super human being (Bhat, 1989, Olsen, 1992). It is a pity to observe her engaged in all these activities for fourteen to sixteen hours a day. In many cases it may exceed this duration.

Cooper and Davidson (1984) mention some specific problems of the women managers: burdens of coping with the role of the ‘token women’, lack of role models and feelings of isolation strains of coping with prejudice and sex stereotyping and overt and indirect discrimination from fellow employees, the organizational structure and climate.

Louis (1990) classifies problems of working women as social, familial, professional and individual.
In the society a working woman faces inadequate social support and is exploited in several ways. One of the exploitation is the sexual harassment (Evans, 1978, Kishwar, 1992) which is widespread in every stratum of the society. The deteriorating moral standard has terribly insulted many working women to develop a sense of insecurity feelings. In addition, discrimination, victimisation and dowry are the other problems a woman encounters in her life.

At home, a working woman is tied up with many domestic responsibilities. As observed by Kalhan (1972) a woman has to ensure that her family does not face any deprivation. The family has to be fed and looked after. Some husbands understandably share the domestic work (Rao, 1990). But not all women get help and when they go for work, they must carry the major responsibility for care of home and children. Considering these problems, a popular concept has evolved in USA that the women do only part-time work or take up work of shorter duration and have more time to spend with their families (Olsen, 1992).

PROBLEMS OF UNMARRIED WORKING WOMEN

Unmarried working women also face many problems in the society. For many traditionally reared women, this is the first exposure openly to society and this creates adjustment problem. Adjustment to work atmosphere is an
important factor. Other social problems mentioned already, apply to these women also. In matters of money, selection of partners and adherence to ageold customs, some women get problems from their family members, especially parents.

PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN IN JOINT FAMILY

Joint family system imposes many restrictions and control on working women. They have no individuality and hence become a support in the hands of the dominant members of the family (Kapur, 1970, Nair, 1970, Rani, 1976 and Geerken and Gore, 1983). Though they earn, the salary has to be handed over to the family head. In many families they are treated like an unpaid servant and they are at the mercy of the elders in the family even for petty expenses.

The worst treatment of working women in some families has been observed by many authors (Madan, 1976). As a silver line in the dark clouds, many families treat working women in a decent way.

PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN STAYING IN THE WORKING WOMEN'S HOSTELS

Apart from the problems discussed earlier, working women staying in women’s hostels face another dimension of the problem. Their problems can be briefed as follows.
1. Problems regarding lack of physical amenities in the hostel.
2. Adherence to rules and regulations.
3. Adjustment problems with fellow inmates and hostel authorities.
4. Lack of recreational activities.
5. Health related problems.

The problems of these women in the society and at workspot are common as indicated already.

**PSYCHOLOGICAL PROBLEMS OF WORKING WOMEN**

All the problems discussed individually and in group normally affect the women mentally. If the women feel the brunt of these problems deeply, they are likely to develop adjustment problem in the family or in their social and emotional life or in their workspot. A sort of guilt feeling arises in their mind due to the non-fulfilment of their legitimate duties (Nye and Hoffman, 1963, Myrdal and Klein, 1968, Nevil and Demico, 1974, 1975). This psychological reaction may be mostly subjective in nature.

The increasing work load at home and the strain of work at office together with diminishing domestic help and lack of household amenities contribute to the intensity of the problems among working women.
Nieva (1985) notes that the employment of women has substantially altered, but not completely changed the relationship of women to their families. She expects help from other members of the family. Her multiplicity of roles has changed their behaviour to be complex in terms of accepted and actual conduct (Hall and Gordne, 1973, Kapur, 1974, Rani, 1976).

Thus career for women is likely to develop insecurity feelings, poor life satisfaction and many adjustment problems.

SURVEY OF EXISTING LITERATURE

In the recent years, researchers in many countries all over the world, have focused their attention towards working women and their problems. But in India there is no adequate attempt at intense level. This area of research generally on women and working women staying in the working women's hostels in particular need to be explored.

It would be relevant to mention here some of the works as part of the background to the present study.

Sharan (1985) classifies the studies on women under two broad categories.
2. Studies on working women.

The general studies on the status of women covers:

a) the position of women in ancient India,
b) changing status of women,
c) women's education and social life, and
d) women and family life (Jabaseelan, 1995).

STUDIES RELATED TO STATUS OF WOMEN IN ANCIENT INDIA

The classical studies by Engels, Lenin, Beauvoir and Bebel and more recently by Gough have attempted to historically explain the cause of the inferior position of women in society (Sharan, 1985:22). Researchers like Altekar (1938, 1962), Mahavananda (1953), Thomas (1964), Baig (1976) have studied the position of women in India. These studies enable other researchers to become familiar with the status of women in different historical periods.

STUDIES RELATED TO CHANGING STATUS OF WOMEN

Krishnaraj (1987), Agarwal (1988), Jain (1988), Joshi (1994), and others highlight the changes in the socio-economic status of women in India in different historical phases. All these studies do not have any adequate empirical data but have given generalisation on the basis of observations. This area of study also needs exploration as regards different factors responsible for these changing status of women.

The compilation of various aspects of women has been done by Rao (1983), Sapru (1989).

**WOMEN EDUCATION AND SOCIAL LIFE**

This area of the research also has been studied by many researchers. Bose (1921), Besant (1932), Dasgupta (1938), Sen (1966), Y.W.C.A (1971), Kalpagam (1980), Desai (1982, 1988), Krishnasamy (1983) and Louis (1990) attempted a broad perspective on women's education and its impact on their social life.

**STUDIES RELATED TO WOMEN AND FAMILY**

The roles and changing structure and functions of family have been studied by Arlene and Jerome (1933), Kapadia (1959), Ross (1961), Gore (1968), Scanzoni and Scanzoni (1981), Augustine (1982), Rao and Rao (1982).
STUDIES ON WORKING WOMEN

Several authors have evinced keen interest on studies related to working women in factories, mines and in other sectors. Many of these studies cover the socio-economic status, psychological and sociological aspects, their roles, problems and the impact of employment on working women.


Sacks (1976), Cooper and Davidson (1984) have conducted studies on the problems of women in top position in soviet union and England respectively.

The characteristics of successful women executives and reasons for their success have been studied by Micas (1981), Vincent (1983), Coar (1984) and Orland (1986).

An attempt was made by Master (1989) to find out similarities or differences in the leadership styles and career paths of women in educational administration.
Handerson (1990) focussed his study on the relationship of coping strategies and risk taking with women executives. Mathur (1992), has studied the degree of adjustment which is found to be related to length of service. Monitoring experiences of women executives were studied by some scholars like Bower (1984), Greene (1987) and Hoy (1989).

Comparative study of men and women employees in the same cadre was conducted by Skarjune (1985) comparison of minority and non-minority was studied by Anguelle (1988), Ottinger (1990) compared women in two sectors.

The adverse working conditions of working women have been highlighted by Gadgil (1965), Sinha and Ranade (1975).

Emancipation of working women has been attempted by Sen Gupta (1960, 1974).

Larosa (1989) has studied the health of the women executives. This study reveals that they had maximized their health through continuing health education and preventive practices.

(1986) and Kapur's (1970, 1974) two studies analyse socio-psychological aspect of working women in India. She observes that more adjustment problems are created and faced by working women and hence they expect their spouses to accommodate and adjust. This point has been supported by other studies conducted by Schnieder (1946), Briffault (1959), Sengupta (1960), Nye and Hoffman (1963), D'Souza (1968), Yanow (1968), Hate (1969), Bhatty and Bhatty (1971), Singh (1972), Callahan (1972), Nevil and Demico (1975), Rani (1976), Chakrobarthy (1978), Blumberg and Dwaraki (1978), Holahan and Gilbert (1979).

Role conflict is another main problem faced by a married working woman. A few researchers have attempted in this area. A brief review of such studies are discussed here.

Libermann (1956) undertook a study on the effects of changes in roles on the attitudes of role occupants. The finding reveals that there are changes in the attitudes of married working women regarding role performance. Male respondents do not have such an attitudinal change.

Ramanamma and Bambawale (1987) mention that women's employment is the double burden and that working women are unable to face adequately both the roles as worker and mother which finally leads to the role conflict. Sinha
(1987) explains that working women have to perform two sets of roles, that is the role of a mother, a wife, a daughter-in-law and a neighbour of the family on the one hand and on the other hand as an employee, she has to perform a specific set of role at her work place which may involve the role of an employee, a subordinate, a colleague, a peer and a supervisor. In this way she has to confront with more conflicting role expectations. Sethi (1988) reveals that the traditional role of woman as a home-maker and socializer remains unaltered inspite of the fact that a woman adds to her role a new dimension that of an economic earner. Agarwal's (1988) study also points out the same view. With a slight variation that the new role of working woman is accepted by the family members but her status towards equality has been fully accepted.

Serious problems due to dual responsibilities in the family life have been revealed by the studies conducted by Devadas (1957), Blood (1963), Nischol (1975) and Mishra (1994).

Attitudes towards job and job satisfaction are also studied by researchers like Paul and Mitchell (1978), Richard and Reuben (1978), Arthur and Raman (1979), Muthiah (1981).

The impact of modernization on the behaviour and the attitudes of the educated urban working women has been studied by Jena (1994). He concludes that working women are slowly but steadily moving away from several traditional beliefs and practices which are not conducive to modernity.

Studies indicate that though the working women are sound financially, they face different levels of adjustment problems. Their social and emotional wellbeing are affected. This has been pointed out by Cottnel (1942), Feld (1963), Phandke (1967), Booth (1977), Wright (1978), Eileen (1982), Reiss (1983), Venkatamurugan (1989), Muralidhar (1989), Kaldate (1990).

The above mentioned studies on working women and their findings serve the researchers to explore specific areas of research. Different dimensions of working women could be explored from these findings. However, many attempts on women remain at the exploratory stage in India. It can be observed that many of these studies just touch one or two aspects. A comprehensive study covering major aspects like adjustment problems, life satisfaction, insecurity
feelings and religious attitude becomes meaningful to prepare a comprehensive profile of working women staying in hostels.

In view of these aspects, an attempt has been made in this exploratory research work to find out relationship between key variables namely adjustment problems, life satisfaction, insecurity feelings and religious attitude and their association with common variables with regard to working women staying in the hostels for working women.