CHAPTER - I

THE PROBLEM

1.1. Rationale of the Problem

S.L. Sharma (1979: iii) states that not long ago society was thought of as a reality sui-generis for beyond the control of individuals to change it - and education as a process of "inducting new entrants into society". The idea that societies can be changed and that education can be a vital instrument of social transformation is of recent origin. Geared to the preservation and perpetuation of tradition in the past, education is now being used to bring about social transformation. This represents a kind of dilemma in respect of the role of education in traditional societies. J.W. Airan (1967:12) says that education plays a significant role not only in organizing human beings but also in controlling human actions. Education is admired and desired by almost all sections of society and .........., the exceptions to it have been many and varied.

According to Vimla Mehta (1979:2) attitudes denote biases, perceptions, convictions, feelings and emotions, hopes and fears. H.D. Lakshminarayana (1975:181-91) has found that education can be a potential source of change in the attitudes and life of young ones like the students. The acquired traditional values may still persist in the minds of the college students and are a force to reckon with. Though one may profess to have no belief in caste system yet one's behaviour towards other ethnic groups indicates the influence of caste. Despite exposure to
modern education there is always a heavy hangover of the traditions and social distance responses, largely appear to be normative, and education has not brought much change in the attitudes of the students towards various type of relationships with different ethnic groups.

Frances Vavrus and Ull Larsen (2003:945-75) state that educational level of the females in a population affects economic development in many ways, including its consequent effects on fertility. In general there is a negative association between the number of years a girl spends in school and her fertility as an adult. The education for Girls' has a direct effect on fertility through the knowledge, skills, and behaviour imparted through schooling that guide child bearing and child-care practices in adulthood.

Many of such studies on education have noted several issues like education and modernization, female and male college students' articulation, effects of tertiary education, parents' education and educational attainment of their offspring, effects of higher education etc., in India and abroad.

Mainly the studies focus on functions and effects of education. Studies of higher education focus on aspects like educational attainment, social change, modernization, gender discrimination, civic engagement of young people, parents' education and their offspring, fertility rates and declining inequality. In a unique study S.L. Sharma (1979) has studied Modernizing Effects of University Education in Chandigrah and used a
scale of modernity. He has basically focused on attitudes on social orientations and studied all students male and female. Such studies since then are rare. Such studies were conducted in 1970's and 1980's since then lots of changes have occurred which may have given more exposure to students and formation of their attitudes as a consequences of higher education. So these contemporary situations require further exploration so that we can know how far higher education is affecting the attitude of those who are in the process of getting it. Thus attitude formation of girl students due to higher education appears to be an important dimension of study in the present times. Therefore it would be worth inquiring and observing how far attitudinal change of post-graduate girl students is taking place, as they have an exposure of few years of higher education, is taking place.

1.2. **Statement of the Problem**

In the light of the above the present study has focused on the following specific objectives/questions –

1. What is the socio-economic background of the female post graduate students?
2. What are the social attitudes of female students who are getting higher education at P.G. level?
3. How far these social attitudes of the female students are related to their socio-economic background?
4. How far there is impact of global media on the social attitudes of female students?
Under the first question, socio-economic background has been studied in terms of: faculty, age, religion, caste, class, marital status, type of family, size of family, parents' education, parents' occupation and place of living etc.

The second issue, social attitudes of female students has been observed in terms of seven orientations namely: Secular orientation, Scientific orientation, Universalistic orientation, Achievement orientation, Egalitarian orientation, Civic orientation, and Independence orientation. These orientations have been adopted from the scale used by S.L. Sharma (1979). All these orientations consist of several observable aspects that have been empirically studied and after initial explorations modifications in S.L. Sharma's scale has been done and the so modified scale has been used to study the attitudes.

Third objective has been focused on the relationships between seven orientations of social attitudes and five variables of socio-economic background namely: faculty, caste, class, type of family and place of living. Their mutual relationships have been studied by using $\chi^2$ statistic.

The last objective is to know the impact of global media. It has been observed as effect of viewing T.V., newspaper reading and such other facilities reflecting exposure to global media on the social attitudes.

1.3. Area of Study

These questions have been studied with required to female students in four girls' colleges in Meerut city. The selection has been
made purposively. Raghunath Girls' P.G. College, Meerut is a famous and old Girls' college in Meerut city. It is situated at Chippi Tank, on Western Kutchari Road. Ismail National Girls' P.G. College is situated near Budhana Gate in Meerut. Kanohar Lal Snatakottar Mahila Mahavidyalaya is situated on Sharda road near Old Delhi Chungi in Meerut. Shahid Mangal Pandey Government Girls' College is the only Government college in Meerut and situated in Madhave Puram, Delhi Road Meerut.

1.4. Universe/Sample, Respondents

As we initially proposed four girls' colleges namely-Raghunath Girls' P.G. College, Ismail National Girls' P.G. College, Kanohar Lal Snatakottar Mahila Mahavidyalaya and Shahid Mangal Pandey Government Girls' College, have been selected for the study. All the students in these colleges have constituted the universe of the study.

Approximately 200 respondents have constituted the size of sample respondents for collection of data/facts from four girls' colleges. A small set of respondents of four girls' colleges have been selected for the case studies for exploration of maximum possible aspects. Thus 2 respondents from each college have been selected for intensive case studies. For looking into the requirement of data for analysis 200 respondents constituted the sample size. Data collected from the 200 respondents have been presented in chapters four, five and six the case studies in chapter seven.
1.5. **Methods of Data Collection**

The data have been collected with the help of specific research techniques namely observation, interview and secondary records. Secondary records have been collected from the office registers of colleges. We proposed two stages for the collection of data. At the first stage, data have been collected through general observation and case study method. Later, at other stages, after conducting the case studies, a survey of 200 respondents was carried out with the help of on interview, which became feasible after exploring the social attitudes and impact of global media through case studies. The data have been collected during the period from Jan 2008 to Dec. 2009.

1.6. **Methods of Data Analysis**

The data have been analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. Data collected through case studies and observation about the social attitudes of female students and impact of global media on their attitudes have been analysed qualitatively. Quantitative analysis has been done of the data collected through interview from 200 respondents by using univariate and bivariate analysis of the various aspects by constructing single variable and bivariate tables. The relationships between socio-economic background and social attitudes of female students have been analysed and tested by using $\chi^2$ statistic.