Chapter 1

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The status of women in any society is a significant pointer to the level of development of that society. With the change in role and status of women, social change occurs. Such changes can be noticed by noting the changes that have taken place in the status of women in a society.

The women population comprises fifty per cent of the population on the globe and still women were not given equal status with men. The subjugation of the female of the species is probably a world phenomenon and must have started with the history of mankind itself. Social conditioning, which would have its roots in the hunter-gatherer stage of human civilization, gave the power of being the provider in the man’s hands and he must have learnt without wasting too much time, about his apparent superiority of physical strength. The result is an unbalanced power equation between men and women, resulting in physical, mental and emotional abuse of the women.

Due to the technical advancement and social development the structure of the family organization is changing, these substantial changes have created new challenging roles and status for women all over the world especially Indian women. Among the women fraternity middle-class and lower-class women are the worst sufferers. As the member of the family she has to perform certain roles apart from taking an active part in economic, health and educational activities.
In developing countries women often work for 16-17 hours a day. This over work leads to susceptibility to disease, malnutrition, and low levels of physical and mental health. Those women who have been absorbed in small scale industries have to accept a salary lower than that of given to men. Most of those women who work in the formal sector are members of the union but do not have a voice in union activities, which are totally male, dominated. Women in small-scale industries are a target of hiring and firing. Invariably they have a husband who is out of work or a prey to a vice such as drugs and drink. In such circumstances women has to support her children and also the husband. Lack of education drives her to take up any available work.

Women in India have always been venerated as “Shakti” or “Power” and have always been worshipped as “Durga”. But men have always exploited the weakness of women and linked the whole system with the belief that women in every aspect were inferior to men. Family in India largely exists in the framework of patrilineal descent. Such families put great emphasis on adjustability in the socialization of girls. The forms of social organization that exert the greatest pressure on women’s roles and status are descent and kinship system, marriage and family organization. These institutions have implications for the status of women in society. The women confront constraints due to distinction between men’s sphere and women’s sphere and between masculine roles and feminine roles. This division of labour leads to the seclusion and segregation of women. The urban woman in India is rapidly changing. Even professional women are expected to hand over their earnings to the husband (or his family), and any assertion of rights leads to violence. So India has the unique distinction of seeing violence against women because they are becoming aware. Men have always perceived themselves to be superior, and an educated and liberated woman is always a thorn in their stride.
In India, the society is generally male dominated and patriarchy is strong despite several movements for upliftment of women launched by women’s organizations in the pre-independence and post-independence period. Male-superiority emanates from castes, class, patriarchy and sexuality of the male. In fact, we may say that the reason for women’s poor condition largely depends on India’s social and cultural heritage and strong tradition of patriarchy and male-domination. In Indian society the status of women has seen many up and downs.

In the Vedic period the women enjoyed high status at par with her male counterpart but with the passage of time her status gradually declined and reached to the lower level by the end of medieval period. During the British period the status of women started picking up and after independence gained momentum due to introduction of number of measures and policies.

A change in the status of women is a phenomenon that depends on a host of factor including her own efforts, value system of a society as well as state sponsored policies. Its nature and pace of direction depends on a number of complex interlinked and interwoven conditions based on economic, political, social, educational and cultural factors, etc.

The impact of education changed women’s role and status in the society during the past few decades. It is no longer a question of what women are capable of doing physically and mentally. Women have proved themselves fit for much wider range of activities than the traditional role of housewife. Marriage and work for educated women are of great social interest and importance in the present day societies in India. Women working outside their homes are not a new
phenomenon because Tribal Women in India have always been working for a living in the fields along with their men. Taking up of employment by the educated middle class and upper class women is comparatively a recent phenomenon. Even the married women are coming out of four walls of their home seeking gainful employment. The degree of freedom given to women to move about in society and to take part in public life gives a good idea of the nature of her changing role and status in the society. **Pandey and Upadhaya (1990)** quoted Gandhiji remarks “women is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in every minutest detail in the activities of man and she has an equal right of freedom and liberty with him.”

The level of change is intimately related to the educational standards. With the rise in educational level, the outlook is changed on many aspects of life. Although the education has made inroads into the lives of everyone, its degree of influence and impact is dissimilar between the two sexes. Education has been an important factor of development, which has helped in raising the status and role of people in the society. Educational advancement and improvement also enhances the people’s participation rate in the activities pertaining to the nation building. An educated citizen is an asset to the nation.

Education is important for everyone, but it is especially significant for girls and women because their educational achievements can have ripple effects within the family and across generations.

Education is a potent tool in the empowerment of women. The greatest single factor, which can incredibly improve the status of women in any society, is education. Education enables women not only to gain more knowledge about the world outside of her hearth and
home but helps her to get status, positive self esteem, and self confidence, necessary courage and inner strength to face challenges in life. Apparently, it also facilitates them to procure a job, supplement the income of family and achieve social status. Education especially of women has a major impact on health and nutrition as an instrument of developing a sustainable strategy for population control. Moreover educated women can play an equally important role as men in nation building. Thus there is no denying the fact that empowering women through education is a basic step to empower nation.

For long tribal communities managed to live in isolation, away from civilization, and maintained their cultural uniqueness. But owing to the advancement in transportation and communications, and rapid industrialization not only of the country at large but also of the tribal belts, it has become difficult for these tribal communities to remain isolated any longer and avoid cultural contacts. In fact, there is hardly any social group today which may be said to mark the ‘zero’ point of cultural contact.

Sociologists and social anthropologists and also some others have observed that culture-contacts, without proper education and preparation, have been harmful to the tribals and created many adjustment problems. As Grigson (1945) has aptly described that the lands in tribal areas contain not only many of the best forests in India but also some of the richest mineral deposits, which increases the economic and other contacts of the tribal communities with modern world. Without education to fit them to stand up to this culture-contact or invasion is a great challenge.

Everywhere the tribal people are in great danger of being suddenly exposed to the altogether new scenario of the social,
economic and industrial revolution in progress elsewhere. Due to lack of education, the tribes lag behind in acquiring new skills required for the use of appropriate new technology and other opportunities and have therefore, failed to avail the benefits from the technological revolution that has changed the economic scenario of the Indian society.

Without proper educational inputs, it is beyond one's imagination to develop the Scheduled Tribes. Through education alone development issues relating to economics, culture, health, nutrition, etc. can be effectively communicated and managed. The basic impact of education on tribals, particularly on women, will result in increase in the standard of living of families, reduction in fertility rate and improvement of health and nutritional status. Female literacy has an important bearing on socio-economic conditions of any society. Unless women are educated, there a little scope for the socio-economic transformation. Thus greater emphasis on educating Tribal Women may provide rapid pace to the development of tribal communities and their contribution to nation building.

The Constitution of India provides a comprehensive framework for the socio-economic development of tribes and for safeguarding them from exploitation from outside. Article 46 of the Constitution directs the State (both Central and State Governments) to promote with special care for the educational and economic interest of the weaker sections and especially of tribes and to protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitations.

In tune with the said philosophy of the tribals development and also to fulfill the constitutional obligations, the governments, both at the State and the Centre, have been constantly making several efforts to
spread education among the tribals in general and for Tribal Women in particular. Various programmes of directed change in educational status of tribal have been in operation for a long time.

The literacy rate, with the governmental and other non-governmental efforts, is picking upwardly. To get a clear perspective we may look at the literacy figures. According to the 1961 census the literacy rate for Tribal Women at the all India level was only 3.16 per cent, in 1971 census it became 4.65 per cent and in 1981 census it rose to 8.05 per cent. During the next decade it was more than doubled and figured at 18.19 per cent in the 1991 Census. The 2001 Census also noticed a sharp rise and put the literacy rate among scheduled tribes at 34.76 per cent (Table 1.1)

Table 1.1: Literacy rate among Tribal Women in India (1961-2001)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>LITERACY RATE (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>4.65</td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>8.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>18.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>34.76</td>
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</tbody>
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Source: website www.tribal.nic.in (Ministry of Tribal Affairs)

As a result of impact of education, the status of Tharu Women, which is taken up for the present study, is changed in many ways. With the attainment of Independence in 1947, the socio-economic transformation in Indian societies has brought about a train of perceptible changes, which also touched the Tharu society. It has specifically affected the status, role, outlook, worldview and the attitudes of the educated Tharu women to a great extent. The status of the educated Tharu women has been changing in different fields –
education, occupation, family, marriage and in the decision-making. To know its extent and direction is a matter of concern to the researchers.

In order to know the impact of education on the changing status of Tharu women, an attempt has been made to study their status in the Udham Singh Nagar District of Uttaranchal State (now known as Uttarakhand). Tharu, which is the largest and oldest ethnic group of the Tarai region, living in villages near dense malaria-infested jungles in regions that were isolated over the millennia, allowing them to develop a unique culture, is mainly found in the Udham Singh Nagar District. As per the Census of 2001, the total population of Tharus in Uttaranchal is 85,665 out of which 43,637 are males and 42,028 are females.

1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is an important task for every investigator that he should be aware of the work already done in the field of his/her research. Best (1962) says “a familiarity with the literature in any problem area helps the student to discover what is already known, what others have attempted to find out, what methods of investigation have been promising and disappointing and what problems remain to be solved”.

“The accumulation of scientific knowledge is a slow and gradual process in which an investigator builds on the works of the past and his findings serve as a starting point for the future. The more the links that can be established between a given study and other studies of a body of theory, the greater the contribution.” (Kamra, 1987)

The investigator too feels that the familiarity of related literature helps in carrying out the investigation successfully, protect against
unnecessary duplication and collecting of that type of information about the study which is needed.

The review of relevant literature available on the related theme has been categorized under the following heads:

1. Education and women empowerment
2. Status of women vis-à-vis Tribal Women
3. Education of tribal vis-à-vis Tribal Women
4. Studies on Tharu Tribe

1.2.1 **Education and women empowerment**

(a) **Education**

Durkheim (1956) defined education as “The caution exercised by the older generation upon those who are not yet ready for social life. Its object is to awaken and develop in the child that physical, intellectual and moral status, which are required of him both by his society as a whole and by the milieu for which he is specially destined.”

According to him the major function of education is the transmission of society’s norms and values. He says, “Society can survive only if there exists among its members a sufficient degree of homogeneity; education perpetuates and reinforces this homogeneity by fixing in the child from the beginning the essential similarities which collective life demands”. He holds that education provides the necessary link between Individuals and society by indoctrinating them with the values and ideals, traditions and thoughts of the community.
Rao (1966) says “literacy is a value in itself. In addition there is an economic reason, a developmental reason for primary education, for it enables children to acquire literacy and to retain it in adulthood, besides cultivating in them the capacity to acquire skills and develop the right attitude to work and production.”

Eisenstadt (1966) has stated that “Education not only imparts general skills such as general literacy and specific vocational skills but it also makes different groups and individuals to identify with various cultural, socio-political symbols and values necessary for the growth of social and political democracy. In a stratified society, increasing equality of educational opportunity would mean not only increasing occupational opportunities for the lower sections of the community but it assumes greater importance as a pre-requisite for intelligent and judicious exercise of franchise and their effective participation in democratic institutions at various levels. This then means that education plays an effective role in political modernization and democratization of a given society.”

Hasley (1970) has rightly said “Education has become part of the economic foundations of modern society – a major avenue of social mobility, a central agency of social distribution, and consequently an object of political debate and social policy as urgent and as important as poverty, sickness or unemployment.”

Blaugh and Ahmad (1973) has pointed out that it is the whole of the environment that educates, namely both the physical environments made up of non-living things and the social environment made up of
individuals and groups. Out of these two, the former may be called the narrower meaning of education and the latter a broader meaning.

Singh (1979) considers that the education is expected to contribute to the socialization of the younger generation by inculcating the values, attitudes and norms of behaviors accepted in society to which they belong to by passing on specific forms of knowledge, skills or occupational techniques. He further states that social changes in the society by the process of education are such as marriage system, women empowerment, occupational changes, economic changes, religious changes, cultural changes, attitudinal changes, etc.

Sharma (2003) feels that the importance of education in human life is evident. This Importance is further classified if we look at these functions of education -- (i) development of a sense of community (ii) encouragement to social welfare (iii) increasing consciousness of other cultures (iv) national development (v) development of personality (vi) character building (vii) preparation for adult life (viii) protection and increase of culture and civilization.

(b) Women Empowerment

Bhasin (1994) considers that empowerment of women means (i) recognizing women’s contribution, women’s knowledge (ii) helping women fight their own fears, and feelings of inadequacy and inferiority (iii) women enhancing self-respect and self-dignity (iv) women controlling their own bodies (v) women becoming economically independent and self-reliant (vi) women controlling resources like land and property (vii) reducing women’s burden of work, especially within
the home (viii) creating and strengthening women’s groups and organizations.

**Sahay (1998)** defines empowerment as a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, to greater decision-making power and control. He further says that women’s empowerment framework can be viewed in terms of five levels of equality -- welfare, access, conscientisation, participation and control -- of which empowerment is an essential element at each level.

**Reddy and others (2007)** submit that women constitute half of the total population in the world and they perform an estimated 60 per cent of the world's work but own only one percent of the world's land and earn just 10 percent of the world's income. Further, they are denied the right to education. Even though they are contributing for the national development, their work is unrecognized and uncounted. As a result of this, they lagged behind in all spheres of life and are suffering from chronic malnutrition, lack of hygiene in the home and ignorance heightens their conditions. Recognizing their potentialities and to convert them as active human resources, the Government of India has formulated and implemented education and welfare programmes. Inspite of these efforts their position has not altered significantly.

**Writer (2010)** says that education is an important aspect of developed nations and it is proved that nations without education can't develop at its full as it can't take full advantage of its resources and human resource is one of the major resource / asset of any nation. Women make almost half of the population of any country, thus their involvement in the development can't be ignored. Without educated women you can't expect the nation to develop as women are the mothers who write the future of a generation.
She further says that educating a woman has many benefits like personal grooming of women, her contribution to support her family, nation development, etc. But recently many other benefits of women education are noticed like women empowerment through education and women education to reduce gender gap etc. When we say women education to reduce gender gap, we mean that women should work shoulder to shoulder with men and contribute to the welfare of the society.

1.2.2 Status of women vis-à-vis Tribal Women

(a) Status of Women

Rajgopal (1936) made a study “Indian Women in the New Age”. This study comes to the conclusion, “women are gradually realizing that they have personalities of their own as human beings and that their mission in life does not end with becoming good wives and wise mothers but also in realizing that they are all members of a civic community and of the body politics.”

The change of attitudes towards employment has been further noted by Kapadia (1953) who mentions that another factor of great importance affecting the family is the employment of women which has become possible through education and present economic strains. Kapadia has found (in relation to the study of Gujarat) that in modern times society’s attitude towards married women’s employment has changed significantly.

Dube (1963) noting the changes in the status of women, observes, “There are unmistakable signs that the traditional
conceptions regarding the place and role of women are slowly changing in contemporary Indian society. The process had been generated and aided by a variety of factors, which are operating almost simultaneously. Increasing opportunities for modern education, greater geographical and occupational mobility and the emergence of new economic patterns are mainly responsible for this trend.

Rama Mehta (1970) in her study of the traditional life of the Hindus presents the educated Hindu women against the background of traditional caste, joint family, parental authority, rituals, customs and family patterns and examines the influence of western education on her, in what has gone deeper and changed the traditional value system.

Rani Kala (1976) in his investigation of the role conflict in working women found that the educated women of today living in urban areas, whether employed or not, are liable to develop a marked tendency to become extraordinary conscious of their individuality status and are proved to have developed egos. The factor of the attitudes of spouses towards each other’s role and status might be of considerable importance of marital harmony or disharmony.

Sood (1991) in her study of “changing Status and Adjustment of Women” provides a deep understanding of the role played by education and employment in raising the status of women. Education and employment have emancipated women from traditional socio-cultural rigidities to a considerable extent. They enjoy today a certain degree of autonomy, identity and self-esteem.

According to Banerji and Sen (2000) today the role of women has become vital and is the key in the process of economic development, women’s participation in education, social life,
industrialization, science and technology, employment as well as in politics began to increase day-by-day. The women in the last decade of the 20th century occupied the key role in different sectors of the society. They are sharing with the men not only in the economic growth process but in the field of administration and political system also.

Murty (2001) in his investigation on women and employment found that today women are engaged in all activities of the economy, in agriculture and industry, in transport and communications, in banking and insurance, in education, health and housing and in all the organized and unorganized sectors of the economy. There is hardly any avenue where women are not present. Their role in productivity in the economy is increasing day-by-day.

(b) Tribal Women

The Elwin Committee (1960) (constituted by Government of India in Special Multipurpose Tribal Blocks) gives a picture of Tribal Women as “In most tribal societies women hold a high and honourable place. She goes proudly free about the country side. In field and forest she works in happy companionship with her husband. She is not subjected to early child bearing. She is generally married when she is mature, and if her marriage is failure (which is seldom) she has the right to divorce.”

Dhebar Commission Report constituted by Government of India (1961) also states that tribals in general is not a drudge or a beast of burden, she is found to be exercising a relatively free and firm hand in all aspects related to her social life unlike in non-tribal societies. The Tribal Women in general and in comparison with caste, enjoy more
freedom in various walks of life. Traditional and customary tribal norms are comparatively more liberal to women.

Pathy (1988) has stated that the fact that she controlled the family economy is the main reason why her status dependent on abundant resources. That was also the basis of the family’s sustenance. It also meant that the woman engaged more on these resources than the man did, as such she had a bigger vested interested in creating them as renewable, i.e. in their sustainable use. This vested interest, her relatively high status and the control she exercised over the family economy depended on the resource as a community asset, not on individual property.

However, owing to the advancement in transportation and communications, and rapid industrialization not only of the country at large but also of the tribal belts resulted in the deterioration of the status of Tribal Women in all spheres of life.

Thekkekara (1993) has said that she had decision-making power in the family as long as the resources belonged to the community as a whole. She, as the main decision-maker in the family, controlled production as part of the family. With individual patta becoming the only form of land ownership after resettlement, this power is transferred to the man and from him to his son. The woman ceases to be the main decision-maker in the family economy and becomes dependent on men. As a result of loss of the assets on which their status depended, women are forced to remain at home and only look after the household, without any productive work outside. They become dependent on men to run the family since they become the only income earners.
Mann (1996) in his study examines the status of Bhil women with in the ideological as well as the actual frame of native social structure and evaluates the parameters of change taking place. He concludes that freedom traditionally enjoyed by Bhil women in the spheres of marriage, pre marital sex, divorce, approach to decision-making body etc. is being gradually curtailed due to Sanskritization.

Fernandes (2005) says much of it has changed during the decades of planned development. Displacement has resulted in the family being alienated from the resource, its sustenance. From the economic point of view it involves impoverishment. But because the community had built its culture and identity around these resources their alienation also results in the weakening of the community support systems and the culture of sustainable development and mutual dependence that was dependent on it. To the woman it has meant the loss of the very foundation of her higher status. She cannot hope to continue the economic autonomy she had in the past.

Grigson (1943) had rightly said “We have to restore and foster the aboriginal’s self-respect by protecting him from loss of land, bond service, debt and oppression, to shield him from malaria, yaws and other sickness, to teach him agriculture and an economic organization suited to his habitat and mentality and to educate him not merely to retain and value his own tribal culture but also to take and hold his due lace in the economic political and cultural life of modern India.”

1.2.3 Education of tribals viz-a-vis Tribal Women

(a) Education of Tribals

The Education Commission (1966) has recommended “Different tribal people are at varying stages of economic development.
There is much difference in the skills they have attained and in the technologies they employ. Therefore, in predominantly tribal areas each group and the area in which it lives should be studied closely and appropriate patterns of development be worked out in close cooperation with the people. In terms of such a design of development the educational programmes, institutions and priorities should be proposed. A uniform approach as between different tribal areas, applied in a mechanical manner will not secure the purpose in view....Aspects of tribal education which might call for special attention will vary from area to area and no pains should be spared in understanding the problems which arise in different contexts."

**Naik (1969)** in his study opined that educational schemes are very important from the point of view of the various changes they bring in the life of a community. Among the Bhils of Madya Pradesh, he concludes that the education seem to be quite a slow factor as far as culture change in the Bhil areas is concerned and the people find it difficult to spare a child for education when their economy is poor and division of labour rigid. The attitudes of the people are largely governed by the idea of economic returns. They do not find any special attraction in education, as it does not produce immediate economic results. The important conclusions were that the educated people continue to adhere to their more traditional and regular form of marriage i.e. marriage by settlement, the educated boys seem to prefer living in the joint household as against the customary Bhil way of separating as soon as the boys get married. In the community, education has introduced some changes in its structure largely through migrations and the people are growing conscious of the educational values in relation to leadership than in anything else.
Vyas and Chaudhary (1970) conducted a study on dropouts in the tribal areas of Udaipur. The important findings were (i) the diminution in number of students in Class II onward was very pronounced in both the areas (ii) the incidence of dropout and stagnation occurred among students belonging to Scheduled Tribes and other castes and there was no evidence to show that it occurred more amongst a particular group of boys and girls (iii) at times the percentage of dropouts and stagnation was found more among students of other castes as compared to the students of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. In higher class (Class VI to Class XI) the extent of stagnation was more and the incidence of dropouts was not high.

Rathnaiah (1977) stated that in a society, such as tribal one, in which the mass of adult population is illiterate, formal education among the children cannot make an appreciable headway unless it is supported by various methods of informal education. Education of adults not only facilitates their active large scale participation in social development programmes but also accelerates the process of education of children in the community. It is, therefore, necessary to give a proper place to the ‘communication multiplier’ in the overall strategy of planned change.

Sharma (1977) in his paper considered various aspects of planning educational development of the tribal areas. A general review of the education scene in the country brings out that the tribal areas stand at a much lower level in terms of literacy and enrolment of school going children compared to the other areas. The level of economic development of these regions is also considerably lower. Thus, whereas the tasks in relation to economic development in these areas
are much heavier, the basic tools available are quite weak. Therefore, education becomes a crucial element for achieving a faster pace of development of these areas.

Minz (1982) suggests that we need a pattern of education and higher education among the tribals, which will promote self awareness, self respect and self confidence in the whole society. This can be achieved through a systematic incorporation of study of tribal history, their social, economic and cultural values in the courses of studies. A concerted effort is necessary to promote the tribals language and literature, social and cultural values in the process of work and life in colleges and schools. It cannot be done with present system of formal schooling and college education in tribal areas. This means that we have to evolve a new concept of education/higher education, a process for forming able men and women to shoulder responsibilities and take up duties in society for the benefit of tribals and for the good of society.

Kumar and Radhakrishnan (1989), in their study of Chattisgarh examined the impact of higher education on scheduled tribal youth and focuses on their crisis of identity and alienation. It raises and seeks to answer several basic questions: Can education alleviate the economic backwardness of tribal groups? How do tribal people themselves perceive education? How do educated tribal people identify themselves with the wider society? This is a case study of the students and families of Chattisgarh and focuses on the impact of education on economic and social mobility and highlights the perceptions of students and parents about education and its advantages and disadvantages, and the problems of integration. It discusses the new values and attitudes the educated have imbibed and the problems they face in their
attempt to integrate. It also evaluates the contribution of education in promoting integration of educated tribal people with national culture.

Heredia (1992) in his study of Tribal Education for Community Development undertook a twofold investigation – (i) the impact of the school on the students and how it can be adapted to their culture; (ii) and the influence of the school on the community and how it can be adjusted to its needs. The participatory method used involves a three-way comparison between mission, government and other private schools, made at three levels – (i) the individual (students, parents, and teachers), (ii) the school, and (iii) the community. Analysing the mismatch between formal educational institutions and tribal life, this study points to a fourfold isolation that must be overcome -- (i) the community within society, (ii) the school within the community, (iii) the pupil within the classroom, and (iv) the teacher within the education system.

Kundu (1994) has given a vivid account on Tribal Education. In the book he highlights general problems in tribal education, provides solutions to these problems, followed by suitable teacher training programmes for the teachers of tribal learners. In his study he discusses the problems and prospects of teaching tribal learners through their languages and scripts and deals with the problems of tribal learners in schools based on dominant, non-tribal cultures, and one with high-caste, non-tribal culture biases.

Reddy et.al. (2010) in their book on the Tribal Education Problems & Strategies has stated that in spite of all the efforts of the Government, the formal system of education has failed to attract and retain the tribals into its fold resulting in large chunk of the tribes still
lagging behind in terms of education when compared with general population. As a result, the policy makers and planners started searching for an alternative system to overcome the present situation.

(b) **Education of Tribal Women**

**Singh et.al. (1974)** conducted a study on tribal students of secondary schools in East Varanasi in U.P. The study revealed that the girls education was in a very poor condition. Out of 240 students only one was a girl student.

**Gokulanathan (1979)** also made a comparative study of tribal and non-tribal students to analyse their n-achievement with reference to racial, socio-cultural, educational and economic background. His findings were that the tribal pupils obtained significantly higher n-achievement scores than the non-tribal pupils. The girls have significantly higher n-achievement than the boys.

**Mitra (1979)** in his study states that the problem of illiteracy among rural women is largely compounded by the problem of illiteracy among rural women of scheduled tribes. The study compares rural female literacy rate of 1961 and 1971, exclusively of those belonging to scheduled tribes.

**Mohan (1988)** observes in his study on the Status of ‘Banjara’ women in India that the extreme isolation of the ‘Banjara’ in their settlements on the edge of the forest has preserved their culture but at too high a cost that they have little or no education and are a prey to the landlords and contractors who mercilessly exploit their ignorance,
illiteracy and weakness for liquor. The level of education received by both the respondents and their daughters is very low, the condition being worse for the respondents in comparison to that of their daughters. But, it is significant to note that there has been an attitudinal change in that the respondents feel that girls should be recipients of education. The main reason that stands out as hindering blocks in the education of tribal girls is the economic constraints that prevail in the family.

Patel (1984) in a study examined about fifty, published as well as unpublished, socio-economic studies/surveys dealing directly or indirectly with the aspects of the education among the tribals in Gujarat so as to obtain a clear picture of the educational development of Tribal Women and its associated variables. The author is to examine the extent to which the educational development of Tribal Women compares with that of Harijan women, non-Tribal Women and tribal men. She also examines traditional norms for female education in the tribal society, wastage and stagnation and individual family and community contextual characteristics associated with a relatively low and uneven educational development of Tribal Women.

Kiran (1992) in her article reviewed the policies for the tribal in India from British period to 7th Five Year Plan with special reference to Rajasthan, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. While explaining why was it that in spite of increasing facilities, schemes, programmes, scholarships, tribals, especially girls were not coming to school and even if they came, they did not stay on. It was felt that the tribals had their own problems like, small agricultural holdings, very low economic standards, lack of means of communication, reluctance to shed their obsolete customs, problems of debts and exploitation by outsiders.
He suggests that before anything is planned for the scheduled tribes either for economic development or for promotion of education, the best way to ensure effective implementation of the schemes is to involve them at every stage, get their sanction/approval and then to get a feedback from them. For girls, if education is related to their needs there would be a positive response.

Reddy (2004) adds that the position of literacy among tribals is extremely poor and poorest among the Tribal Women. Majority of the Tribal Women are illiterate. It would be a Herculean task to bring about any social and economic change among the tribals if their literacy levels do not improve in general and that of their women in particular.

1.2.4 Studies on Tharu Tribe

In his comprehensive study on The Anthropology of the Tharus, Krauskopff (1998) described in detail about the studies on Tharu Tribes. As recorded by him, the oldest available published works were compiled in the different Gazetteers of India (Imperial, NW Provinces, Oudh and Bengal among others), in Tribes and Castes series or in books of the same kind. The most complete reference is an article by Nesfield (1885) who, besides quoting the information of previous Gazetteers, includes material collected by him. He further mentions of Crooke’s (1896) ‘Tribes and Castes of the Northern Provinces of Oudh’ which mainly relies on Nesfield’s article. Another source is quoted, Gospel (1889) in Gonda, which contains first-hand information on the ‘Dangaura Tharus’ of Gonda district by a Christian missionary.
Dev (1932) adopted an evolutionary perspective and dealt with ethnographic study of the Tharu cycle of life customs. Pradhan (1937) in his work gave general information on the Tharu’s origins, physical appearance and dress and the cycle of life rituals and practices.

Majumdar’s (1942) work, on Blood Groups of the Tharus was brought out during Census of India 1941, a topic which was related to the ideological preoccupations of his time with 'race', 'caste' and 'tribe' and with the composition (and classification) of the Indian population. Majumdar (1944) later published a short monograph in which, besides his pervasive quest for Tharu origins, he dealt with the problems of cultural contacts and the superiority of Rana Tharu women.

Srivastava (1958) in his anthropological work aims to examine the contacts of the Tharu with the wider society in Nainital. The aim was to indicate the extent and nature of changes in the culture of the Tharus of Nani Tal Tarai as a result of either deliberate adoption or unconscious imitation of the higher cultures. An endeavour was also made to further analyse whether changes have come in Tharu culture through processes of simple adoption of acculturation, acceptance and adaptation or assimilation.

Kochar (1963) has studied in detail fission and composition of Tharu joint families which helps the researchers in getting a micro level account about Tharu Tribe. Mathur (1967), in his work gives a detailed note about marriage among the ‘Ranas’.

The Census of 1961 gave way to three village survey monographs, that of the Rana Tharu village of Bankati in Kheri district and of Dangaura Tharu Rajderwa and Suganagar Domri villages in Gonda (Sharma 1964). Their aim was to study 'the dynamics of change.
in the social, cultural and economic life of rural community’ in order to promote rural development and the enforcement of social laws. The most valuable parts of these surveys are the statistics on household and economy (which give a good picture of the Tharu joint family system), and the precise descriptions of dresses, jewellery and house building.

**Jain (1991)** highlights the institution of marriage of the Rana Tharu Tribe in Tharu region of Lakhimpur Kheri, Gonda and Bahriach (U.P.). Empirical report, sampling method, interview, schedule, non-participant observation methods have been used. He examines the moral, religious or social control among them to save the marriage bonds from being broken. The problem of divorce, bride price and child marriage are still prevalent among the Tharu. Due to illiteracy they spend lavishly on social customs, traditions, marriage and mourning ceremonies. Facilities for education and development of means of communication and transport will bring them closer to societies of urban areas. The process of industrialization, urbanization and sanskritization is operating slowly.

**Hasan (1993)** had a long term involvement with Tharus (mainly the Ranas and other related groups like the Boksas) which culminated in the form of a book dealing with a Rana Tharu village of Kheri district, close to Dudwa National Park and the Nepal border. It gives a description of the village's relationships with the Nepalese Tharus and with the forest officials, the village being under the control of the Forest Department, which acts as a kind of zamindar, and those dealing with economic questions.
Kumar et.al. (2006) research work on ethnomedicinal knowledge among Tharu Tribe was carried out in six villages of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh to study application of plants at home scale level in treating various kinds of ailments. He identified thirty-one plant species used by the villagers for the treatment of various diseases at home scale level. He noticed that twenty plant species were used for curing more than one disease. Three plants, *Aloe barbadensis Mill*, *Asparagus racemosus Rox*, and *Tinospora cordifolia Willd* were used against more than five diseases. It was found that elder people had more inclination towards herbal medicines followed by middle-aged and young people. Since the knowledge of various medicinal plants being used in herbal treatment and their method of use is confined to mostly local healers, he recommends that it is of utmost importance to record this knowledge for future generations; otherwise it will be lost forever.

Pathak (2006) in his research work has concluded that with the passage of time though there is an upward trend in socio-economic status of Tharu Tribe, a diminishing trend has been noticed in the original cultural setup. Thus neither the development is continuous nor is it equally affecting the Tharu Tribe as a whole. He further states that based on the findings of his study, though their educational and economic status has been strengthened, erosion in their traditional values has been noticed simultaneously.

Verma (2009), in his study concluded that the Tharu community continues to be one of the few tribal communities of India in which women still enjoy a reasonably empowered status. Women live with fewer restrictions and enjoy respect in the family and in the community.

In his another study Verma (2010) highlights that the Tharu culture is very Eco-Friendly, all cultural activities of this tribe are deeply
related with nature. Their residence, food, clothes, art, religion, economy and many other aspects of life are based on nature and keep ecological balance. Tharu people worship mainly their tribal Goddess (The Earth) called as ‘Bhumsen’ in their folk language. There is a well knit family system in this community. Women have high reputation and enough social and economic rights in their family system.

1.3 SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The above studies were related to different issues of Tribes. These studies have been done by social scientists on different issues such as health, economic, political, education, agriculture, employment, etc. Some studies were also focused on Tharu tribe. From these studies some substantive issues emerge, which are given below:

1. Education is the main problem of tribe.
2. Cultural integration of changing pattern in tribes.
3. Ecological, socio-economic, administrative, poverty, communication, alcoholism and health, etc. are the various problems in the tribal society.
4. Institution of marriage is the main aspect of culture change among the Tharu.
5. Government programmes play major role in the betterment and development of tribal society.
6. Education and awareness of government policies, interaction with other people are the important factors in the development of a Tribe.
7. There is a change in the pattern of living of Tharus with the interaction of the wider society and modernization.