CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION
This study was mainly concerned with examining the impact of socialising agents on the political socialisation of college girl students. It explores the impact of socialising agents upon the political knowledge, political values and political attitudes of the respondents. Some of the conclusions can be drawn on the basis of findings of the data analysed in the study. The study started with the following hypotheses:

(1) To explore the impact of family, it was hypothesised that the higher the education of the family the higher would be the political knowledge, progressive political values and liberal attitude. It was found that the family education influences political values (Table 5:2) and attitudes (Table 5:3) more than political knowledge (Table 5:1). The family exerts its influence as a socialising agent if the family atmosphere is more democratic. It was, therefore, hypothesised that the higher the extent of discussions in the family the higher is the impact on political knowledge, progressive values and liberal attitudes of the respondents. Family discussions, as the study found, significantly influence the political knowledge (Table 5:11) and progressive values (Table 5:14) of the respondents. However, it was difficult to assess the positive or negative impact of family discussion
on the attitudes of the respondents (Table 5:15).

Participation in decision-making was considered as one of the aspects of family atmosphere. Since the number of responses in the 'not consulted' category was small, no conclusion was possible. Analysis of the data revealed that the impact of the family is more on the respondents' political action or opinion formation and voting for the first time (Tables 5:18 and 5:19). It was assumed that the higher the level of family participation, the higher would be the political knowledge, and progressive values. The findings did not show any positive association between family participation and political knowledge or political values of the respondents. The study also indicated that respondents do not agree to prefer the same party as their parents do.

(2) Impact of the college was observed with the hypothesis that the higher the level of participation in extra-curricular activities in college, the higher is the level of political knowledge and more would be the progressive values. This hypothesis has been proved to some extent. Participation in extra-curricular activities influences the medium level of political knowledge and it has positive influence on the progressive values of the respondents. It was also found that the science faculty
influences political knowledge at the medium level more than the other two faculties do. The Arts faculty influences liberal attitude of the respondents. The respondents who stay at home may have a higher level of political knowledge. Their participation in extra-curricular activities of the college is also more than that of those who do not stay at home.

(3) It was hypothesised that the higher the exposure to the mass-media, the higher would be the level of political knowledge. This hypothesis has been significantly proved. The exposure to the mass-media develops political knowledge of the respondents (Table 5:50). The higher exposure may influence the liberal attitudes of the respondents, but this exposure does not influence the political values.

(4) The hypothesis was framed that marital status influences the participatory attitude more than political knowledge and political values. It was found that married respondents are more liberal in their attitude than the unmarried respondents (Table 6:3). The marital status has no influence on political knowledge (Table 6:1). However, unmarried respondents are slightly more progressive in their political values than the married respondents (Table 6:2).
The influence of religion was explored with the hypothesis that Hindus would be more liberal in their attitude towards women's participation in politics and would be more progressive than non-Hindus. This hypothesis has been proved valid. It was found that Hindus are slightly less conservative and more progressive than non-Hindus. (Table 6:9). Hindus are significantly more liberal than non-Hindus in their attitude towards women's participation in politics (Table 6:10).

It was also observed that Hindus have scored significantly more in political knowledge than the non-Hindus.

To explore the impact of caste in the political socialisation process it was hypothesised that the higher the caste the more liberal would be the political attitudes and progressive values. It was found that Brahmin and Scheduled caste respondents are more liberal in their attitude (Table 6:14), but Scheduled caste respondents are conservative about education of women and reservation of jobs for women (Table 6:15 and 6:16). Caste has a significant influence on the political values (Table 6:17).

The study also revealed that Brahmin respondents have scored significantly more in political knowledge than the respondents from other castes.
(7) It was hypothesised that the higher the level of economic class of the family, the higher would be the level of participation and liberal attitude. The hypothesis has been partially proved. It was found that though higher economic class of the family has no influence on the actual participation (Table 6:24), it significantly influences the democratic or liberal attitudes of the respondents (Table 6:22).

It was also indicated that the higher economic class has no influence on the higher level of political knowledge. It is the middle class respondents who scored higher in political knowledge.

(8) Considering the impact of the mother tongue as a socialising agent, the hypothesis was framed that the more the use of mother tongue (Marathi), the greater is the possibility of higher political knowledge. This hypothesis has been significantly proved. It was found that Marathi speaking respondents have significantly more political knowledge than respondents from other language categories (Table 6:30).

It was also found that the mother tongue has no influence on the political values of the respondents.

The data also showed that the respondents from urban background may have more political knowledge, but in actual
participation, the rural respondents exceed the urban respondents. As far as the school as an agent of political socialisation is concerned, the data showed that the impact of school is limited to some extent. The respondents who had moderate teachers in school, who came from girls' schools and actively participated in extra-curricular activities are likely to possess higher political knowledge. The respondents coming from co-educational schools may have a liberal attitude.

The data revealed that peer influence is insignificant. Peer groups do not influence political knowledge, political attitudes or the political values of the respondents.

The data showed that political orientation of the respondents is the sum total of the influences of all or some of the socialising agents. The following conclusions would give some idea as to which of the agents particularly influenced political knowledge, political values, political attitudes and political participation of the respondents.

(1) Respondents studying in the science faculty, who extensively use the college library, belong to the democratic family atmosphere where family discussions often takes place, where respondents can participate in decision-making, are likely to acquire higher political knowledge. The respondents coming from girls' schools, participate actively
in extra-curricular activities, highly exposed to the mass-media are likely to possess a higher level of political knowledge. The Hindu respondents coming from a Brahmin, middle class urban background, whose mother-tongue is Marathi are likely to obtain higher political knowledge.

(2) The respondents whose families are highly educated, where family discussions are more, are likely to be progressive. So also the respondents, who actively participate in school and college extra-curricular activities, may inculcate progressive values. The unmarried, Hindu, Maratha or Scheduled caste respondents and those who have chosen Marathi as their medium of instruction are likely to be more progressive.

(3) The respondents from the Arts faculty whose family education is high, where family discussions are extensive and who are highly exposed to the mass-media are likely to form a liberal attitude about participation of women in politics. Respondents who are Brahmin and middle class are likely to be liberal in their attitude about women's participation in politics. Respondents from co-educational schools and belonging to Maratha community tend to be liberal in their attitude towards reservation of jobs for women. Respondents who are brought up in politicised families, of high economic class
and participate actively in school extra-curricular activities are likely to develop a democratic attitude as a means to influence the government.

(4) Respondents who are Brahmin, middle class and have rural background are likely to be more favourable to political participation.

As discussed earlier, the process of political socialisation of women is different from the general process. Political socialisation of women is influenced more by culture. In the words of Ted Tapper, "Sex differences may be more a consequence of culture than biology, but it appears to be a universal norm that culture will follow the pattern of differences first established by biology." (Ted Tapper, 1976, page 186). In the Indian set-up this aspect has continued to influence the womenfolk. Therefore, before making any generalisation from these conclusions, this background which has limited the impact of socialising agents should be considered. Another fact to be considered is that agental influence is one part of political learning because the individual is capable of doing a substantial amount of learning on his own. The major limitation of making generalisations from these conclusions would be that the process of political socialisation is very complex. It is difficult to isolate and identify the impact of one agent from the other.
Though this study has tried to find out the impact of various agents, it could not definitely locate the extent of impact of each agent. The agental influences may be simultaneous and harmonious or may be totally contradictory. Besides, to learn the political game once, is not enough for the impact of political socialisation. Agents like school, college and peers to some extent become politically significant once in a while, i.e. like curriculum at a particular period in the college or discussions with peers at the time of major political events. These contacts are short-lived and therefore their impact does not become significant. As far as the impact of family is concerned it can be pointed out that in general, political behaviour of women is family oriented. It is, therefore, natural that the family through its democratic atmosphere influences the respondents. Along with family atmosphere, some of the aspects of college and school might have influenced the respondents. Since the respondents are educated, it is likely that their exposure to the mass-media has influenced their political learning. Thus it can be said that the influence of the agents cannot be separated. The political orientation of the respondents is a result of the sum total of the influence of all or some agents.