

INTRODUCING THE SUBJECT

The Sociologists as well as the Government are taking much interest into the affairs of the fair sex. In 1975 the United Nations came forward with its all-round programme for the development of women, all over the world. The year 1975 was designated as the International Women's Year. The UNO did not, however, stop at just declaring International Women's Year; it proclaimed for a Women's decade until 1985 in the pursuance of the programmes for women undertaken in the International Women's Year. This emboldened women in both developed and developing countries to come forward and register their claims for equality of opportunities, along with the men-folk, in every walk of life. But there remains always a gap between aspirations and attainments. Therefore, what started during the International Women's Year 1975, is being pursued with all earnestness and emphasis till date.

With this backdrop in mind the present researcher has endeavoured to make an indepth study into the working condition of the women in West Bengal, with special reference to the women medics in their struggle for professionalization and self-identity. As is obtained in all the countries of the world, women's status and position was grudgingly accepted by the men-folk. Social historians have shown how "the underside of history" was very much neglected. There are evidences how women fared in physics, chemistry, astronomy for ages. Unfortunately the Royal Society of London and Academié des Sciences in Paris did not

admit their first woman, Majory Stephenson and Kathleen Lonsdale in England until 1945 and Yvonne Choquet-Bruhat in Paris until 1979. This shows the nadir of negligence shown to the women, even of eminence.

Women, however, did not take this situation lying low. They have tried to forge ahead and establish themselves as far as they can. The present study is a document of their struggle to establish themselves, here and abroad.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Term
AMWI	Association of Medical Women in India
BMJ	British Medical Journal
C. S. O.	Central Statistical Office
D. N. E. S.	Directorate of National Employment Services
D. G. E. T.	Directorate General of Employment and Training
H. C. Paper	House of Commons Paper
H. M. S. O.	Her Majesty's Stationary Office
IMG	Indian Medical Gazette
IMR	Indian Medical Record
Inc.	Incorporated
JAMA	Journal of American Medical Association
Par. Papers	Parliamentary Papers
RMO	Regional Medical Officer
RS	Residential Surgeon
W. B. H. S.	West Bengal Health Service

N.B. Relevant tables have been put at the end of each chapter, although, occasionally one or two tables have crept into the main body of the chapters.