CHAPTER 2
THE BACKDROP: WOMEN'S EDUCATION SYSTEM

Kathleen Neveland, a researcher with the world-watch Institute, Washington, wrote a report in 1979 about the approach of women to higher education in different parts of the world. Her comments are:

As this year's ranks of young people stepped forward to receive their college degrees across the United States a majority of the faces in those ranks were female. Because the credentials conferred by colleges or universities are increasingly important in a competitive world, this trend has far-reaching implications for the distribution of power, status and income between men and women in our society.

Since the end of military draft, male undergraduate enrollment has declined somewhat, while the enrollment of young women has held steady. As a result, among undergraduates less than 22 years old, women have outnumbered men since the mid-seventies. In the 1976-77 school year, 52 percent of the students nationwide were young women - a margin of 2,00,000 over the male student population.
Female enrollment has also shown dramatic strides at the graduate level, particularly in the traditionally masculine professional schools, where academic qualifications are closely tied to employment prospects: schools of law, business, medicine and even agriculture are admitting many more women than they did a decade ago. Female enrollment in American law schools rose from 4 per cent to 23 per cent between 1965 and 1973, an increase that is roughly parallel to medical schools' admissions of women. Agricultural colleges, once almost exclusively male, by 1976 had one female student for every three males nationwide.

Even business schools, those supposed bastions of social conservatism, are rapidly increasing female enrollment, led by some of the country's most respected institutions - Harvard, Stanford University of Chicago and Columbia. From these institutions come many of society's most influential members. The inclusion of more women among their graduates sets the stage for the entry of more women into the country's professional elite.

There are some other countries where the number of women actually surpasses the number of men in colleges and universities. In the Philippines, where teaching is a highly feminised profession (even at university level 40 per cent of the teachers are women), college enrollment is 55 per cent
female. The majority of students in Kuwaiti colleges are female, because so many of the men who pursue serious professional training go abroad for their schooling, but even in countries where women's share of enrollment is relatively small, progress in recent years is in many cases impressive.

The increase in the absolute number of college women is often more impressive than the proportion, since college enrollment of males has increased rapidly too. In India, there were 43,000 women studying at the university level in 1951, whereas in 1971 the number was close to 6,56,000. The proportion of women students to males had doubled, from 11 per cent to 22 per cent. The number of female college students in Japan increased 26-fold between 1950 and 1975, as they came to represent roughly one-third of the total student body.

This has had many ramifications. The educational experience does not end on the campus. It conditions a woman's ability throughout her life to earn an income, to participate in public life, and to achieve personal autonomy.

In virtually every country, the highest employment rates are found among women with college degrees, especially those who have had advanced professional training. In the United States, 9.1 per cent of the women who earned doctoral
degrees in the late fifties were holding jobs in the late sixties. In countries like Brazil, Egypt, Syria, and Turkey, where overall employment rates for women are below 10 percent, two out of three female college graduates work for pay. Thus, increasing female college enrollments strongly suggest that the number of women working for pay will continue to rise.

The impact of the change in education extends beyond the world of work. Political leadership, for example, is virtually everywhere drawn from the ranks of the educated. The legal profession, in particular, has been a traditional springboard into politics. Thus the increase in women graduates of law schools is a positive sign for the future of women in politics, as well as in the practice of law.

Formal education is a necessary, but not a sufficient condition, for women's equal participation in society. The great strides that women have made in higher education must now be matched by opportunities for them to use their skills in a system that uses objective qualifications, talent and energy, rather than sex as its criteria for advancement. Both women and society as a whole will benefit.

This is the state of affair throughout the world. UNESCO and other such agencies are also quite considerate towards women's education while forming their policy documents.
One of the UNESCO recommendations concerning technical and vocational education in 1973 reads as follows:

"Particular attention should be given to guidance for girls and women: (a) this guidance should cover the same broad range of education, training and employment opportunities as for boys (b) it should systematically encourage girls and women to take advantage of the opportunities available to them."

WOMEN'S EDUCATION - A COMPARATIVE PICTURE OF DEVELOPED COUNTRIES.

Neither comprehensive nor sufficiently up-to-date, the picture presented here mainly signifies an attempt to broadly delineate the features of the educational systems of a few representative yet leading countries of the world, including India, and against such a backdrop to indicate the progress of women's education in these countries.

The countries included in this study are: UK, USA, USSR, West Germany, Japan and UAR and, of course, India. In a study of this kind, UK should invariably find a place for the modern educational system in India has been built largely upon the pattern prevailing in that country. The USA and the USSR have been included for their leading positions in
the present day world. The origin of the educational patterns of the modern world can be traced to those of the continental countries, particularly Germany and therefore West Germany has been taken up to represent the continent. Japan, where 100% literacy has been achieved, represents Asian education at its peak, and a comparative study with the same would help to give a better appreciation of the problem. Among the developing countries, besides India, the UAR has a great leeway to make up in the field of women's education and the inclusion of this country would thus be more appropriate in making a correct appreciation of ours (Thackersey, 1970).

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The aims of the public system of education in Great Britain are: "to secure for children a happier childhood and better start in life; to ensure a fuller measure of educational opportunity for young people and to provide means for all of developing the various talents with which they are endowed and so enriching the inheritance of the country whose citizens they are".

Education between the ages of 5 to 15 is compulsory; this includes the primary stage corresponding to the age-group 5 to 11. Co-education is the pattern accepted at the
primary level, after which separate schools for boys and girls are provided. Secondary education for a child starts at the age of 11, after one undergoes a number of testing processes. Co-education comes back again at the collegiate level. At present there are a few colleges in Britain exclusively for women, but the trend is towards gradually converting them into co-educational institutions to meet the public demand.

Broadly, there are three types of publicly maintained secondary schools, viz. grammar schools, secondary modern schools and secondary technical schools. Grammar schools meet the needs of those who are likely to profit from an academic type of education and who generally aspire to seek admission into universities. Secondary modern schools, which form the largest group of secondary institutions, provide general education with a practical bias. Secondary technical schools form a small group and offer a type of education which is related largely to industry, commerce and agriculture but is essentially general, and not vocational, in content.

There are independent schools catering to the needs of all groups of students and include nursery or kindergarten, primary and secondary schools. The most important are known as public schools.
There are at present 27 universities in the United Kingdom. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, that came into being as early as 12th century A.D., consist of a number of residential colleges.

In the early nineteenth century it was generally believed that a woman was the keeper of the 'home and hearth'. It was not until the latter part of the century that the first few girls' public schools were started in England as a challenge to the traditional approach. At the same time, higher education was also made available to women by starting separate colleges for women. The year 1949 saw the establishment of Bedford College, the first women's college in Britain. Today, political, social, economic and educational equality of opportunity between men and women is universally recognised and modern women are being trained to fulfil the manifold purposes of home-making, earning a living, being educated for citizenship and getting equipped to utilise leisure hours more fruitfully. (British Information Service 1964).

THE UNITED STATES

In the USA today it is well-recognised that the education of a woman, whether she takes up employment or not, is of as great importance to the country and to humanity as a whole, as it is to determine one's self-satisfaction and sense of
achievement. Nevertheless, the progress of women's education in America can be judged from the ever-increasing proportion of women in the labour force. To-day women constitute about one-third of the total labour force in America. The demand for women labour force is increasing, this will evidently bring more women into higher education programmes during the years to come.

At present, American high schools each year turn out around 1.5 million students, and the number of girls exceeds that of boys by nearly 0.1 million. And it is common knowledge that as a group, girls graduate with higher grades than boys.

In so far as the American structure of education is concerned, it may in general be classified into three levels, viz. elementary, secondary and higher. Besides, there are schools for adults, vocational schools and schools for children with special problems. The system here is more flexible than in many other countries.

Generally, children enter the first grade at about the age of six. Elementary schools consists either of six-year grades followed by a six-year secondary school or of eight year grades followed by a four-year secondary school. The system of higher education in America differs from that in India. An institution of higher education in America may be a University
with several departments or an individual college, chartered by the state legislature to confer degrees. Colleges are not affiliated to the universities in the United States as they are in India. There are over 2,000 colleges and universities in the United States, but their patterns and standards of education are not uniform, because each state is free to chart its own educational system and maintain its own educational standards. Leaving a few state-maintained universities, most educational institutions in America are privately managed. They are mainly supported by tuition fees, donations, etc.

The organisational structure of higher education differs from state to state. However, it generally takes the form of (i) junior colleges with two years of instruction, (ii) colleges with four years of instruction and (iii) universities with four years of instruction (Tackersey 1970).

The chart on the next page will give a clear picture of what is explained above.

**THE USSR**

Education in the Soviet Union forms the basis of a socialistic pattern of society and provides a strong motivating force to the people. This country has achieved great progress in the field of education. There has been a great
GENERAL PATTERN OF EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE
IN THE U.S.A.

FIG. 2.1
awakening among masses and the country has eradicated illiteracy. Universal compulsory primary education was introduced during 1929-32 and the year 1962-63 witnessed the introduction of universal compulsory eight-year education. The country is now getting ready to introduce universal secondary education.

Co-education is one of the most important aspects of education here, and there is no difference in the people's attitude towards the education of boys and girls at any stage. Girls and boys prepare themselves for the development of their country on absolute parity. Soviet educators firmly believe that physiological and psychological differences should not play an important role in the total development of one's personality, and so there is no difference in the curricula for boys and girls.

Complete equality of sexes prevails in every sphere of life. Women take their place in the national economy along with men. According to the 1959 USSR census, 41 per cent of those who have completed higher education are women. Among technicians - those who have completed specialised secondary education - 57 per cent are women. The magnitude of the effort that has made this level of economic and social equality possible can be gauged easily, if one recalls that only a generation ago literacy among women was barely 13 per cent and in the Republic of Central Asia it was almost nil.
Before starting with formal education, children up to the age of 7 go to pre-school establishments. Nurseries, creches and day care centres serve children up to the age of 3 and the kindergarten serves children in the age-group 3 to 6. These are organised by people's enterprises and fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministries of Health and Education respectively.

As indicated, formal education begins when the child is seven years old and is at present compulsory for the first eight classes. This system is uniformly applied throughout the country. The complete secondary school course lasts for 11 years. It is unified and integrated without a break at any stage and is referred to as "secondary general education". The structural pattern of the school system throughout the country is the same and the curriculum is almost identical. There are special schools for sports, music, ballet, foreign languages, etc. in addition to schools for mentally defective and physically handicapped children.

In between the compulsory school stage and the university stage, there are technical or specialised secondary schools with a four-year period of study for a course of general secondary education and technical schools which offer courses for preparing skilled workers and farm operators through short term courses of ten months to two years, which can be joined after completing 8 years of compulsory education.
For these workers who have not been able to complete secondary education, facilities are provided to complete their education in evening (shift) schools or through correspondence courses.

Higher education is imparted through universities and institutes. While the universities are mainly concerned with academic training of the fundamental subjects, the institutes impart professional training. An institute specialises only in one branch in accordance with the requirements of the locality in which it is located, whereas a university has several faculties or departments. Universities in the first instance cover a period of five years, whereas at the institute the first phase extends to four to six years. After completing the first phase of university education and taking a state examination, a student is eligible to enroll himself for the degree of "KANDIDAT OF SCIENCE", which takes three years. Then he can prepare himself for the doctorate of science which takes four years and is the highest academic distinction conferred on a scholar. Separate research institutes under the Academy of Sciences cater to the needs of higher research (Singh 1962).

The chart on the next page clearly shows the structural pattern of the Soviet educational system.
STRUCTURE OF EDUCATION IN USSR

FIG. 2.2
THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

Beginning at the school level, there are generally three types of schools in the Federal Republic of Germany: the elementary school ("Volksschule"—people's school), the intermediate school ("Mittelschule") and the high school ("gymnasium"). Compulsory education is in force for the age-group 6 to 18. The first four grades of elementary schools are called basic schools. After that a pupil can stay in the elementary school for another 4 to 5 years in the upper level, or join an intermediate school for a further period of six years or join a gymnasium for five years more. After completing the elementary school (upper level), the pupil usually becomes an apprentice and simultaneously attends a part-time vocational school. After the tenth grade of either an intermediate school or a gymnasium, a pupil attains the level of the Indian School Certificate examination. The upper level of gymnasium corresponds to the level of an Indian college leading to a Bachelor's Degree. The final examination of the high school is called the 'Abitur' (from Latin meaning 'he will leave'). This is a certificate saying that the student is qualified to join a university, if he has reached the age of 18.

One of the characteristic features of German university life is the 'academic freedom' enjoyed by students. This term denotes two things: the teacher is free to choose the
contents of his lectures without the prescription of a rigid course, and the student may attend whichever lectures he likes according to the plan of his studies. The student is also free to migrate from one university to another. The word 'university' itself is derived from the Latin word 'universitas', meaning a corporation of teachers and students. It combines self-education and general education and aims at making the student a responsible citizen.

The German university has no college system and no examination at the end of a semester or an academic term. All universities in Germany are of the unitary type and the entire teaching is organised by the university. The theoretical side of learning is well-supplemented by the practical side through seminars, practicals and library facilities. At the conclusion of studies, there is a final examination.

Besides the ordinary universities there are technical universities in Germany, both having several common features. The main difference between them lies in the fact that the technical universities produce scientific personnel to meet the needs of the present scientific age. The technical universities have several research institutes attached to them and a very close contact is maintained between technology and industry. Another category of institutes, namely schools of engineering and mining, also exists. They lay emphasis on the practical side.
In the Federal Republic, there are hardly any separate or special institutes for girls and women, as co-education is definitely favoured. All vocations are open to girls and boys alike; any difference or divergence between their education is hardly perceptible (Hirekar, 1964).

THE UNITED ARAB REPUBLIC

The early nineteenth century saw poor progress in Egypt as far as women's education was concerned. Girls were confined mostly to the home and whatever little education they received was in the form of religious and domestic instruction. During 1833-35, state and foreign schools were established in Egypt for the purpose of preparing women as midwives and teachers. These schools proved popular and encouraged the opening of primary schools.

Social progress and the feminist movement brightened the prospect of education for girls and the advent of the twentieth century witnessed a change in this direction. As soon as independence was proclaimed in 1923, a number of primary and secondary schools were started to prepare girls for their due place in the public life. The principle of differentiation of curricula was not accepted, and schools for boys and girls were run on similar lines. The portals of the university were also gradually thrown open to women during this period. In this period of transition, women's
colleges and institutes were founded and higher technical institutes specialising in home economics, drawing and music were also started.

The different stages of education in the UAR, which are not dissimilar for boys and girls, are:

(a) The primary level extending to six years, where free and compulsory education is imparted through co-educational institutions; the age of admission to primary schools is six.

(b) The preparatory school level has different categories:

   (i) general preparatory for academic work

   (ii) technical preparatory preparing pupils for commercial schools and technical preparatories and

   (iii) practical preparatory schools, where girls can prepare for some wage-earning vocations.

   (education for boys and girls at the preparatory schools, spread over a three-year period, is separate and free).

(c) Secondary schools differentiated into general or academic secondary schools and technical secondary schools and

(d) the university stage where various courses are open to women.
ALL the universities admit women on the same footing as men, although a few separate institutions of higher learning for only women do exist.

The secondary school span extends to three years and this too is free and separate. Special types of institutes exist at this level - the sanitary officers' school, primary training schools for teachers and schools of nursing and midwifery.

At present only primary and university education is coeducational and expansion is necessary in the programmes covering technical and vocational education for girls. Disparity still exists but will disappear in the course of time (Ward, 1963).

JAPAN

The modern system of education in Japan originated in 1872. After World War II, there was a shift in emphasis and the system now has a democratic base. Education is now governed by constitutional and statutory enactments and 'equal educational opportunities are provided for all in keeping with their individual abilities'.

The Fundamental Law of Education, 1947, sets forth the aims and principles to be followed. Articles 3, 4 and 5 under Law 23 describe and prescribe the status girls and women are entitled to under the liberal Japanese educational system.
Article 3 states: "The people shall be given equal opportunities of receiving education according to their ability and they shall not be subject to educational discrimination on account of race, creed, sex, social status, economic position, or family origin".

Article 4 on compulsory education states: "The people shall be obligated to have boys and girls under their protection receive nine years' general education".

Coming to the very important question of co-education, Article 5 states: "Men and women shall esteem and cooperate with each other. Co-education, therefore, shall be recognised in education".

The compulsory period of education of nine years covers the elementary and lower secondary school stages. In upper secondary schools there are various types of courses such as general, agricultural, industrial, business, etc.

The evening course programmes in universities take four or more years, except for the courses of medicine and dentistry which take a longer time to complete. Technical colleges are of recent origin, having been established only in 1962."
Curricula of two years and three years are offered at the junior colleges. Upper secondary schools have full time, part-time and correspondence courses. The latter two naturally take longer to complete than the full-time course.

Special schools are those meant for the blind, the deaf and such other handicapped children.

The percentage of women in junior colleges and miscellaneous schools is higher, as most of the higher courses of home economics are offered at the junior level. The latter category of schools include courses like dress-making, domestic arts and other courses for women.

It is interesting to note that the percentage of enrollment in elementary schools is 99.9 and that in lower secondary schools it is 99.8. Disparity between men and women taking advantage of education is noted only at the higher level, that is in the age group 18 to 25. (Thackersey 1964).

INDIA

To quote from the Report of The Education Commission (1964-66): "The most important and urgent reform needed in education (in India) is to transform it, to endeavour to relate it to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby make it a powerful instrument of social, economic
and cultural transformation necessary for the realisation of the national goals. For this purpose, education should be developed so as to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, accelerate the process of modernisation and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values.

The pattern of general education in India consists of the following stages:

(i) Elementary
(ii) Secondary and
(iii) University and higher education

In most of the states, elementary education is divided into two stages, namely primary and middle. The duration of these stages differs from state to state, but in most of the states, at present the duration of the primary stage is five years (I-V class) and that of middle stage three years (VI-VIII class). The duration of the secondary stage in most states is two years and higher secondary two years. The university stage consists of undergraduate and postgraduate education. The undergraduate course is mostly of three years' duration; it is of four years in a few cases where a student has passed out from a secondary school rather than a higher secondary school. The postgraduate course is of two years (Cere 1964).

While the above indicates the general or the predominant pattern of the educational system in the country, the
structure varies from state to state or area to area. The Education Commission has recommended the following broad structure:

(a) One to three years of pre-school education

(b) A ten-year period of general education which may be subdivided into a primary stage of 7 to 8 years (a lower primary stage of 4 to 5 years and a higher primary stage of 3 to 2 years) and lower secondary stage of 3 to 2 years of general education or 1 to 3 years of vocational education (the enrollment in vocational courses being raised to 20 per cent of the total).

(c) A higher secondary stage of two years of general education or one to three years of vocational education (the enrollments in vocational education being raised to 30 per cent of the total) and

(d) A higher education stage having a course of three years or more for the first degree, followed by courses of varying duration for the second or research degrees.

WOMEN’S EDUCATION IN INDIA

One of the many glories of ancient India was the high social status enjoyed by women and the educational opportunity accorded to them. Indian mythology is full of figures like Durga, who saved the gods from the Asuras not once but
many times, and Chitrangada, who proved equal to Arjuna on the battlefield. Traditionally, the woman was looked upon as Goddess Earth, Ardhangini (half of man), a symbol of life and strength (Noulik, 1980). But this concept got lost in the dark ages that followed the vedic period and the woman became merely housewife and a mother. The biological functions took most of her time and made her dependent on men for protection (Nard, 1963). Agitations for social reforms like the abolition of Sati and child marriages and the demand for women's education which started at the end of the last century, aroused some concern about women's status. Later Mahatma Gandhi's (1937) call to women to join the freedom struggle started a new era. The non-violent nature of the struggle, which demanded suffering and sacrifice and refrained from inflicting death or violence, suited the feminine temperament and the response was enthusiastic. Gloria Steiner, a well-known leader of the women's movement, has very rightly said that the "Gandhian tactics suit the feminist movement".

In order to appreciate the impact of the growth and progress of women's education during the post-independence period, it is necessary to briefly trace the history of women's education during the British period. This will help in understanding the post-independence trends (Narullah, 1951). To get a clear picture of the growth of the education
of women, we may conveniently divide the events into the following phases:

1. 1813 - 1854 and the Woods' Despatch
2. 1854 - 1902 the Victorian Era in Indian Education
3. 1902 - 1921 the period of Transition
4. 1921 - 1937 education under Dyarchy
5. 1937 - 1947 Education under provincial autonomy

THE FIRST PHASE : 1813 to 1854.

Education in India under the British rule got attention only from the beginning of the nineteenth century with the Charter Act of 1813, although education still remained a minor subject. Even in 1835 Macaulay's famous Minute, which contained the germ of the future policy of the East India Company towards education of Indians did not contain any reference of women's education. Under the circumstances, it was natural that the position of women's education was unsatisfactory.

The important enterprises which influenced official educational policy during this period were worked by missionaries, work done by private educational bodies including British officials and non-officials (Gumushta, 1969).

THE SECOND PHASE : 1854 to 1902

The renewal of the East India Company's Charter in
1899 emphasised the need for an inquiry into the educational policy of the company. As the Wood's Despatch, passed in 1854, laid down a detailed policy for the country's future educational reconstruction, it is very often known as the "Wood's Education Despatch" and is regarded as "The Magna Carta of English Education in India". It was an important landmark as it set forth a scheme of education wider and more comprehensive than any suggested so far.

It contained several new schemes relating to the medium of instruction, setting up of an education department, the establishment of universities and a net-work of graded schools, conditions for grant-in-aid, and finally the education and employment of women.

Women's education in the Victorian Era (1834 to 1902) can be conveniently sub-divided into two periods: (a) 1834 to 1882 and (b) 1882 to 1902.

(a) 1834 to 1882

This period was comparatively a period of peace and tranquility and the most harmonious relations existed between the rulers and the ruled. During this period, a keen interest was taken by those concerned with the question of education. Education of women received its due share too, as the Government assumed direct responsibility for making women literate
under the Despatch of 1854. Wherever possible, special girls' schools were started by the newly created departments of education.

The main features of expansion in women's education during this period were:

(i) concentration of pupils at the primary stage
(ii) slow progress in higher education
(iii) training of women primary teachers
(iv) prejudice against co-education and
(v) demand for differentiation of curricula.

In 1882, the Government of India appointed a Commission "to inquire into the manner in which effect had been given to the programmes of the Despatch of 1854 and to suggest such measures as it may think desirable in order to further the carrying out of the policy laid down therein."

The Commission made recommendations on several issues covering almost every aspect of female education. However, the emphasis was on voluntary expansion; but this did not help promote the programme because lack of public support in this field. The Commission also failed to make any specific recommendation about finance. Thus, although most of the recommendations of the Commission were accepted by the Government, expansion of women's education did not take place at the rate at which it should have done (Aggarwal, 1969).
(b) 1882 to 1902:

During the two decades between 1882 to 1902, the education of women made slow but steady progress.

(i) Collegiate Education: The most significant achievement of this period was the entry of women into universities. The first two Indian women graduates passed out from the Bethune College, Calcutta, in 1883. It was not difficult for Indian universities to change their regulations to admit women as soon as the need arose. The number of women students in Indian universities rose from 6 in 1881-82 to 264 in 1901-02. Two important features of this development were the acceptance, by Indian society, of the principle of providing collegiate education to women and the starting of separate colleges for women, as this new departure implied resistance to orthodoxy. By 1901-02 there were as many as 12 separate colleges for women.

(ii) Secondary Education: The period also witnessed the amelioration of the social position of women and an expansion in women's education: This resulted in the recognition of the need for secondary education for girls, just as the public had accepted the necessity for elementary education for girls during the earlier part of this period.

The total number of girls studying in secondary schools in 1902 was 41,362 as against only 2,054 in 1882.
(iii) Primary Education: Progress here was even greater. In 1901-02 the total number of girls attending school was 3,463,510 (160,164 in boys' schools and 184,346 in girls' schools) as against 124,491 in 1891-92.

In 1891, one girl out of every 3 was in a mixed school; in 1901-02 this ratio had gone up to one girl to one boy. This was a very welcome change as social prejudice against co-education, at least as far as primary education was concerned.

(iv) Professional Education: The statistics of 1901-02 show that progress in this field was extremely slow.

The Third Phase: 1902 to 1921

This period has distinctive features like provision of larger finance, a more active governmental role in education, vigorous attempts to improve education qualitatively unprecedented expansion of education in all branches and the growth of a spirit of nationalism among the people. Lord Curzon supported the cause of women's education and a similar policy was enunciated by a Government Resolution on Education Policy (1913).

This policy was important in as much as it emphasised the social aspect of the problems for overcoming social prejudice. It also sounded a note of dissatisfaction with the existing system of education, which lacked practical
training and was not related to the social needs of women.

This period witnessed steady growth in education for women at all stages as indicated below.

(a) Collegiate education expanded rapidly. 1921-22 statistics reveal that there were 1263 women reading in arts colleges as against 6 in 1892 and 177 in 1902. Quantitative progress was thus quite encouraging. Even on the qualitative side, women were showing excellent progress in examination results. However, women had still not begun to participate in the corporate life of colleges.

A significant step in this direction was the establishment of the Indian Women's University in 1916 by Maharshi Karve on the model of the Women's University of Japan. Its ideal was to produce good mothers and wives. It tried:

(a) To make provision for the higher education of women through modern Indian languages (mother tongues) as the media of instruction

(b) To regulate pre-university education, to start, aid, maintain and affiliate institutions for such education and to formulate courses of studies specially suited to the needs and requirements of women.
(c) To make provision for the training of teachers for primary and secondary schools;

(d) To institute and confer such degrees and diplomas, titles, certificates and marks of honour in respect of degrees and examinations as may be prescribed by the regulations; and

(e) Such other objects, not inconsistent with these, as may be added from time to time by the senate.

This was a great venture, private universities being unknown in India. Although the initial progress of this university was slow, a liberal donation of Rs.15 lakh given by Sir Vithaldas Thackersey placed it on a safe financial footing and assured it of a stable future.

Today this university, located in Bombay, is known as the Shreeawati Nathibai Damodar Thackersey Women's University and looks after the higher education of over 7000 girls and women every year. Though originally an unrecognized and private institution, it now enjoys full recognition and an equal status with any other university in the country.

(b) Secondary education revealed a tremendous increase in the number of pupils which in 1921-22 rose to 36,698 in high schools and 92,464 in middle schools as against 9,274 and 32,308 in 1911-02.
Primary education witnessed an unprecedented expansion and the number of students rose from 349,510 in 1901-02 to 1,198,330 in 1921-22.

In professional education there was no progress. An increasing number of girls were now attracted to new careers; besides teaching and medicine, commerce and agriculture were gaining gradual popularity (Altekar, 1937).

THE FOURTH PHASE: 1921 to 1937:

The factors which helped in the expansion of women's education during the period under review were: rise in the age of marriage, greater political and social awakening of women specially under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, a new leadership rising in their midst which led to greater education, and the establishment of the All India Women's Conference (1926).

In spite of expansion, the total education of women was comparatively very low as the number of girls being educated was only 2.38% of the total population.

A stage was now reached for introduction a planned, comprehensive and large-scale drive for the education of women. This view was shared by the Hartog Committee which expressed the opinion that education was not the privilege of one sex only, but equally the right of both the sexes and
felt that in the interest of the advance of Indian education as a whole, priority should be given to the education of women in every scheme of expansion.

THE FIFTH PHASE: 1937 to 1947:

During this period, higher education for women saw rapid progress. As the volume of total employment increased, more and more women became career-minded and Indian society very gradually, though grudgingly, began accepting this change.

Reviewing the progress achieved in women's education during the British period, the following controversies and movements can be said to have affected the question one way or another.

Credit for a remarkable change in this direction must be given to social workers and British administrators who gradually changed public opinion on women's education. The story of women's education in India is largely one of private enterprise (Alva, 1912).

In order to appreciate the progress in this field, admittedly a very slow one, we should understand the social position of women. The customs of the purdah and segregation of womenfolk were prevalent among Muslims, while Hindu women
were faced with problems of child marriage, Sati, absence of
diverse, enforced asceticism for widows, devdasis, female
infanticide and a very strong social prejudice against the
very idea of women's education. The greatest single contrib-
ution in overcoming these obstacles and raising the position
of women during this period was made by Mahatma Gandhi. He
was a strong advocate of equality of men and woman. The
following words quoted from his writings emphasise his
views on this subject:

"I am uncompromising in the matter of women's rights.
In my opinion she should labour under no legal
disability not suffered by men. I should treat
daughters and sons on a footing of equality".

The fight put up under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership
during the various movements against foreign domination
helped women secure emancipation. In this Indian Renaissance
women walked hand in hand with men and fought shoulder to
shoulder with them against an alien rule. This fight helped
women to achieve emancipation and gave them a status which
is worthy of the best traditions of Indian culture.

This period thus helped in gradually overcoming
public prejudice against women going in for education at
various levels and also entering professional fields as
career-women. A band of workers who could participate
intelligently in the social, political and economic problems grew up due to this new development.

Another feature of this period was the increasing demand for mixed schools, popularising co-education.

In spite of the above encouraging trends, the overall education of women was still very backward as the number of girls educated was still only 2.38% of the total population. The following table will give the reader a comparative picture of the gap that existed between the education of boys and girls, and men and women and the tremendous task that lay ahead to make up the leeway:

**TABLE 2.1**

**EDUCATION OF GIRLS AND WOMEN IN INDIA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of boys enrolled</th>
<th>No. of girls enrolled</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of girls for every 100 boys at school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University and colleges of General education</td>
<td>1,75,854</td>
<td>20,304</td>
<td>1,96,158</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleges of Professional &amp; Special Education</td>
<td>41,234</td>
<td>4,903</td>
<td>46,137</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High schools</td>
<td>1,912,667</td>
<td>280,772</td>
<td>2,193,439</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle schools</td>
<td>1,459,882</td>
<td>321,508</td>
<td>1,781,390</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary schools</td>
<td>9,561,063</td>
<td>475,165</td>
<td>13,036,248</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other special schools</td>
<td>442,801</td>
<td>56,090</td>
<td>498,891</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>13,993,521</td>
<td>4,156,742</td>
<td>17,750,263</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N.B. Unrecognised institutions are excluded.
When India achieved independence, the education of women was about a hundred and thirty years old. During this period, there was improvement both quantitatively as well as qualitatively. Compared to other countries, however, progress was limited and the pace was very slow. Even boys' education in India, compared to other countries, was distinctively backward. The tremendous gap that existed between the education of girls and boys, and men and women in India showed that the position of girls' education was still worse.

Another important point to be noted was that education of women was mostly concentrated in urban areas. In rural areas there was practically no education.

The pace of women's education was mainly left to private efforts; and as private efforts were more or less limited to urban areas, rural areas naturally remained backward. Lack of funds and lack of adequate machinery to deal with this tremendous problem were mainly responsible for this deplorable state of affairs.

POST INDEPENDENCE PERIOD

The post-independence period has been one of rapid expansion as far as the quantitative aspect of women's education is concerned. However, the apparent progress cannot be described as satisfactory in relation to the overall expansion of education in the country; and the education of girls and women in
in the first two decades after independence leaves much to be desired (Arora, 1968).

THE WIDENING DISPARITY

In 1940-50 the number of girls under instruction for every hundred boys enrolled was only 33, and it went up to 49 by 1965-66. It means that to reach parity between the education of boys and that of girls at this rate of progress a very long time would be required (Gere, 1964).

Even the target fixed for the first and second plans for women's education tended to widen this disparity. These unsatisfactory results are mainly due to:

(1) The lead given by the Sargent Report that a stage had already been reached when it was not necessary to treat the problem of women's education as a special one

(2) No adequate machinery was created to meet the problem and

(3) No special funds were allocated for the development of women's education in the Central and state budgets and the plans.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE.

In order to find out ways and means to deal with the vital problem, the Government of India appointed a Committee known as the National Committee on Women's Education, in
1959. The Committee recommended that the education of women must be given special attention for at least some years to come and special machinery should be created for this purpose. It strongly recommended that if any substantial progress in the direction of women's education was to be made effective, special funds must be allotted in the various plan periods for furthering and developing this programme.

It recommended that this amount should be utilised for the development of middle and secondary schools for girls, and towards training institutions for women. As the education of women in rural areas in particular was at a low ebb, it recommended that liberal grants should be given for meeting this special need. The University Grants Commission was also urged to set apart a special fund for the higher education of women.

At the Centre the Committee suggested the creation of a National Council for Women's Education, for guidance, leadership and advice. At the state level, it recommended the setting up of State Councils for girls' and women's education. The Committee also considered major problems relating to the education of women like increased enrollment of different age-groups, wastage and stagnation, co-education and differentiation of curricula, employment of women, training
facilities, vocational courses for women, the role of voluntary organisations in promoting girls' education.

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR WOMEN'S EDUCATION.

The Union Ministry of Education set up the National Council for Women’s Education in 1959, based on the recommendations made by National Committee. The main functions of the National Council are:

(a) To advise the Government on issues relating to the education of girls
(b) To suggest policies, programmes, targets and priorities for the expansion and improvement of the education of girls and women
(c) To suggest measures for utilising, to the furthest extent, voluntary efforts made in the field
(d) To suggest suitable measures for educating public opinion in this behalf
(e) To assess the progress achieved from time to time and suggest evaluation of work done or being done, carefully watching the pace of such progress and
(f) To recommend collection of special data on the relevant problems and to recommend sample surveys and research projects and to hold seminars as may be deemed necessary from time to time.
It was also decided that a woman not connected with the Government should be appointed as chairman of this Council. Accordingly, the first Chairman appointed by the Ministry of Education was Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh.

PRESENT TRENDS.

Although the disparity between the enrollment of boys and girls is gradually narrowing, it is still considerable. The progress in terms of enrollment dealt with individually was satisfactory, but the targets set earlier as a whole were not reached. India woefully lacks educated womanpower in a large variety of professions and occupations (Naik, 1974).

WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN GUJARAT.

The women's liberation movement as such has been practically unknown in India. A progressive state like Gujarat has also no impact of this movement. However, history tells us that women have not been completely out of the picture. In fact, some of them have been in the forefront in public life (Dave 71). The history of women's education in Gujarat can be roughly divided in the following ways:

1) First phase = 1813 to 1854
2) Second phase = 1854 to 1902
3) Third phase = 1902 to 1947
4) Fourth phase = 1947 to 1960
5) Fifth phase = 1960 to 1972
FIRST PHASE - 1813 to 1854 : BEGINNINGS OF MODERN EDUCATION.

The East India Company was the first body compelled to accept responsibility for the education of Indians. At this time, Indian private efforts was exclusively meant for boys and most of the private educational institutions for girls were conducted by missionaries. A splendid lead was given at this juncture by liberal Englishmen who realised that the education of women in India could not be developed properly unless it was placed on a firmly secular basis and organised by the Indians themselves. Among them may be mentioned David Hare, Professor Patten, J.E.D. Bethune and Lord Dalhousie. Professor Patten of the Elphinstone College, Bombay, was responsible for the establishment of the students Literary & Scientific Society in 1848, which organised a number of girls' schools in the city. The 1834 Despatch found that non-official effort had nursed the new born education of women satisfactorily, in spite of lack of support from the State. In Bombay, the Despatch fund 65 girl's schools with an enrollment of about 6,500 pupils.

The London Missionary Society had opened the first girl's school in 1819 at Surat. In 1846 Mr. Karunashankar had started a girls' school at Ahmedabad. In 1850 Mr. Maganbhai Karamchand had donated Rs.20,000 for starting two girls' schools at Ahmedabad. This was not a bright picture by any means. But it
was a great contrast to the conditions that existed at the
eading of the nineteenth century (Desai, 1967).

SECOND PHASE - 1845 to 1902: STATE EFFORTS

With the Despatch of 1854, the education of women entered
a new phase. The primary responsibility for its development
still lay with non-official efforts - missionaries or
Indians. But the state was no longer indifferent; it promised
financial assistance and even direct action, if necessary.
Unfortunately, the enthusiasm with which the Despatch supported
the education of women was greatly undermined by the distur-
bances of 1857.

The establishment of municipalities and the levy of the
local fund cess were major events in the history of primary
education; they gave a great fillip to the development of the
education of women also. The municipalities were local bodies
and included the Indian representatives. It is true that the
zeal of these local bodies for the cause of women's education
was not uniform, but it has to be admitted that the local
bodies did a good service to the education of women by esta-
lishing special primary schools for girls, wherever necessary
and possible. As a result, the education of girls increased
between 1870-71 and 1881-82.

An event of great significance which occurred during
this period was the visit of the great English social
reformer, Miss Mary Carpenter. Her great contribution in this field was to suggest that training colleges for women teachers should be established. She had opened a "Female Normal Class" in 1870 at Ahmedabad, which was named the "Female Training College" in 1874. It opened up new opportunities to several women who were in need of a remunerative vocation to give a meaning and purpose to their lives (Thakkar, 1979).

In 1881, the Indian Education Commission discussed the problem of women's education with great insight and in considerable detail. In order to encourage the employment of women teachers, it suggested (i) the adoption of pupil teacher system (ii) the establishment of additional normal schools under Government control (iii) the payment of liberal grants-in-aid to training institutions conducted by private effort (iv) the offer of liberal inducements to the wives of school masters to qualify themselves as teachers (v) training of widows as teachers for primary schools (vi) the offer of liberal prizes to girls who would agree to become teachers and (vii) the grant of special assistance to girls' schools with attached hostels. Unfortunately the Report of the Commission were not implemented as a special programme for the development of women education.

In 1901 Lady Vidyagauri Neelkant and Sardagauri Mehta, two sisters graduated from Gujarat. After that the number of females graduates increased regularly.
There were 22 girls schools run by Kathiawad State and 20 girls schools run by private agencies in 1881-82.

One significant development of the latter half of the nineteenth century was the opening up of careers outside the home to women. The first career to be opened was that of teachers. The next was medicine. Besides, there were a fairly large number of women undergoing training as nurses, midwives etc. A liberal encouragement from different sources was available, but as in the case of secondary and collegiate education, most of the students in medical and art courses were Europeans, Anglo Indians, Indian Christians or Parsis. The Hindu and Muslim women had not yet taken kindly to these careers (Parulekar, 1930.)

THIRD PHASE - 1902 to 1947: A PERIOD OF DEVELOPMENT.

The education of women showed better progress during the next twenty years. A significant development in this period was the considerable rise in the age of marriage, especially in the urban areas and among the upper classes of society. This was mainly because of the pressure of changing social and economic circumstances. Another social factor which contributed to this was the gradual breakup of the old system of joint families. Child marriages could exist largely because of the joint family system which could easily
accommodate the child wife, but they were unsuitable to the modern small family where the wife was expected to shoulder the responsibilities of managing the household immediately after marriage. This rise in the age of marriage naturally increased the educational opportunities for girls and their continuance in secondary schools and even colleges became possible for the first time. This trend was strengthened by the demand of educated men for educated wives. The marriage market has always exercised a strong influence on the education of women (Vakil, 1983).

The first conference for women's education was organised in 1916 in Gujarat. As a result, the Gujarat Vidyapeeth was established in 1920, for educating men and women in the rural areas. In 1925 Kadwani Mandal was established at Bhavnagar for giving an impetus to women's education. Another important development in this period was the establishment of the Indian women's university in Bombay by Maharshi D.K. Karve in 1961 with the help of a magnificent donation made by the late Sir Vithal Das Thackersey. This was originally an unrecognised and private institution, but it has since been raised to the dignity of a statutory university.

In 1921, education at the state level was transferred to the control of Indian ministers and in 1937, Provincial Autonomy was introduced. These changes made it possible to
abandon the hesitant and over-cautious policies of the British Government. Other favourable factors were (i) the awakening of the people on account of the political struggle for independence (ii) a still further rise in the age of marriage partly due to the Sarda Act, but mainly because of socio-economic pressures; (iii) the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi who dominated the entire history of these days and (iv) the phenomenal awakening of Indian women which found its most striking and significant expression in the various representative organisations that rapidly sprang up all over the country (Gandhi, 1931).

On the negative side, we may mention that this was a period of general financial stringency. People were engaged in political struggle and had little time for large scale constructive activities. Another weakness was that, by and large, this advance in the education of women was confined to the urban areas only. The reasons for the slow advance of the education of women were (i) the decision of the government to take no direct action in the matter and to leave the education of women mainly to private efforts of the people; (ii) no adequate machinery was created to deal with the important problem of the education of women; (iii) education as a whole was starved of funds (Dessi Neera, 1937).
FOURTH PHASE - 1947 to 1960: POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD:

With the attainment of Independence in 1947, the approach of the Government and the public to the problem of women's education underwent a revolutionary change. The old over cautious approach to social reform was abandoned once and for all and was replaced by a national pledge to create a new social order based on justice and equality of all citizens, irrespective of religion, race, caste, color or sex. Independence had been achieved and the people were now determined to find solutions to the socio-economic problems of the country. The stage was therefore fully set to give social, economic and political equality to women and to tackle the difficult problems of their education in a bold and challenging manner (Mata, 1969).

At this time 1/3 Gujarat was under Bombay State which included five districts namely Bharuch, Surat, Panchmahal, Kheda and Ahmedabad. The rest of Gujarat was under Baroda and Bhavnagar States. It was only in 1960 that all were united into one State. The 1956-57 statistics reveal 451 girls students per 1000 boys. The 1961 statistics reveal that out of the 16 districts of Gujarat, Surat had 80.80% female literacy while in Panchmahal district it was only 1.74%. These were the two extremes, with the remaining districts falling in between.
Nevertheless, the record of the last ten years leaves much to be desired. From the statistics, when we measure the increase as compared to the total increase during the period and when we take into account the fact that girls and boys were more or less equal in numbers, we find that the progress achieved can hardly be called satisfactory. The main problem before the state is to give equality of educational opportunity to women and the first requirement of this programme is to bridge the gap that now exists between the education of men and women (Thakkar, 1979).

FIFTH PHASE - 1960 to 1972: PRESENT POSITION.

Gujarat became an independent state on May 1, 1960. It consisted of 19 districts. The 1961 statistics reveal that only 19.10% of the females were educated on an average. The Education Commission (1964-66) on women's education was appointed during this period by the Government. The Commission came out with many original suggestions. Special attention was drawn to following:

(1) The education of women should be regarded as a major programme in education for some year to come and a bold and determined effort should be made to face the difficulties involved and to close the existing gap between the education of men and women in as short a time as possible.
(2) Special schemes should be prepared for this purpose and the funds required for them should be provided on a priority basis.

(3) Both at the Centre and the states, there should be a special machinery to look after the education of girls and women. It should bring together officials and non-officials in the planning and implementation of programmes for women's education.

Government girls' schools were quite popular during this period. Girls studying in Government schools were 18 times more than in private schools. Economic considerations may be the reason for this popularity.

In 1961-62, 25 per cent of the female students were going in for secondary education while in 1969-70 it had increased to 32 per cent. The 7% increase is bound to effect the higher education of girls in Gujarat. As far as higher education was concerned, there were 36,824 girls out of a total of 1,45,384 in 1970-71. This leads to 25.29 per cent girls studying, which was increasing every year (Desai Sarej, 1972).

In 1961, Gujarat numbered third in the field of education while now it is fourth. A great deal of progress
was made in women's education, specially higher education. This was the period when vocational education was thought so for girls so that the so-called social prejudices against increased participation of women in economic activities outside the household would automatically vanish (Thakkar, 1979).