CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
"Education is the key that opens the door in life which is essentially social in character"

"Education enables a woman to become as an enlightened wife and mother".

Sociologists have been viewing education through adopting functionalist perspective. It is pertinent here to quote Durkheim's definition of Education: "Education is the means by which society prepares within the children the essential conditions of its existence".

Ward (1883) in his Dynamic Sociology regarded 'education' as the proximate means of progress of society. Small (1896) wrote, "Sociology demands of education that they shall not rate themselves as leaders of children but as makers of society."

According to the Sociologists, 'Sociology of Education' is concerned with the analysis and understanding of formal education as a social institution. The educational system is expected to contribute to the 'Socialization' or the younger generation by inculcating the values, attitudes and norms of behaviour accepted in the society to which they belong as well as by passing on specific forms of knowledge, skills or occupational techniques. The educational system is also responsible for expanding the body of knowledge and
techniques possessed by the society. Consequently the system heavily influences cultural conservation and determines the pace of 'Social Change'.

Whether an individual is learning within a family or in a school, whether he is working at home or in a factory, whether he is at play in his peer group or elsewhere, he is not a one way process, a social process wherein two or more individuals with similar or differing consequences. The sociology of Education has evolved out of this acceptance of the social nature of Education.

'Sociology of Education' is interested in the study of the educational system in relation to the total society. The school has long been recognized as a "Social Institution". Willard Waller's (1932) study is the first qualitative study of the school as a social institution. That work is considered to be a pioneering and illuminating study in the field even now.

WOMEN AND EDUCATION

Education should be regarded as the "Process to fulfil aspirations and develop the potentialities of each individual human being to meet the evermore pressing demands of the world in transformation".

During the first half of the 19th century, Education for women was limited to only a small minority of aristocratic families. The progress of education among the
girls after the Independence is however not phenomenal. In 1951, the percentage of female literacy among the total female population was 7.93 percentage and it was increased to 24.82 percentage in 1981. The highest rate of literacy rate for females is in the age group of 10 to 14 years. The main causes for the low level of literacy can be poverty, economic difficulties, fear of loosing the meager income generated by the employment of children at work place. Parents do not see any benefit in educating the girls, to look after children at home, domestic help and also due to social inhibitions.

Educational status of women was most significantly related with participation of women in work force. It was only after the first world war that the effect of westernization brought in the principles of liberty and equality. Another important factor that encouraged Indian women to move out of their homes was the call given by the Indian National Congress leaders like Gandhiji.

Indian reformers like Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar-Chandra, Dayananda Saraswati, Rambhai Ranade, Tilak, Karvae fought for the liberation of women. The Christian Missionaries, played an important role in providing education to women. After second world war, women in greater numbers entered various occupations, accepted in professions. Compulsory free primary education was provided.

In late 19th and early 20th century education amongst Indian women gained tremendous momentum, giving rise to a
later marriage pattern. The western educated boys preferred educated girls as their life partners especially in urban areas. Western education became a means of achieving better status and helped to promote education among the girls. Initially widows and destitute women were encouraged to seek employment outside the home for economic consideration. Instead of keeping the educated girls without any occupation till they were married, favoured employment. It was the prevailing dowry system and increased age of marriage that contributed to the acceptance of employment of unmarried educated women, who were encouraged by their parents.

For a large and populous country like India, the women pioneers are very few in number. They have great distinction backed by immense courage which has opened the way for the rest of the women folk. Indian women entered the field of medicine only by the middle of the 20th century, but already the number is impressive. The talent and aptitude for leadership has been found in the Indian women. The women have developed the qualities of constancy, persistence, endurance and self-abnegation. To this if we can add training and education, courage and unorthodoxy, creativity and determination, the Indian women of the future would move onwards towards disciplined excellence in the years to come. The emergence of women in journalism in India is not more than four decades old. The Radio and Television offer better facilities for women professionals. There are a large number
of women on the regular staff of the AIR. Now-a-days, Television offers more varied opportunities to educated women.

Education has opened and is constantly opening new vistas for her; the support given by the law and the constitution of free India has helped her to move boldly forward, the initial battle for emancipation is over. She has now achieved the chance to prepare for herself a place in the world as a total individual with a human and courageous personality.

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Out of total number of educated women in India, only an infinitely small percentage of women are gainfully employed.

"Employment" of an educated middle class women is a new phenomenon in an urban setting. Lower income classes always found their women-folk in urban as well as in rural areas contributing their might to help the family. Working women in lower classes accept work in unskilled and semi-skilled categories and remain there throughout their life due to lack of basic training and education.

Massive industrialisation, growing urbanisation and socio-economic revolution, higher education (literacy) have together encouraged the middle class to take up employment. Industrialisation led to the higher participation of female labour.
The educational expansion has greatly improved women's skills to take up specialized jobs and ability to use improved technology. The high cost of living in cities offered strong motivation for female work participation to supplement the family. Women's employment is viewed as an indicator of women's economic contribution and socio-economic development. The economic dependence of women on their husbands income is reduced by women's employment.

Women's work status and employment are greatly influenced by fertility levels. Modern health facilities and contraceptives greatly helped women in increasing and active participation in employment. Though the husbands and parents-in-laws favour employment of educated wives and daughter-in-laws they still do not accord an equal status in the family. Thus the educated earning women in the middle class family are passing through a transitional period assigned with a dual role of a working wife and the mother. Women engaged in blue-collar jobs are relatively older in age, illiterate, hail from rural areas and have low income levels as compared to white collar job holders. White collar job holders belong to nuclear families, urban oriented and exposed to mass communication more than the former. The concentration of higher caste was found to be higher in white collar than in blue collar jobs. The restrictions imposed on working women are more pronounced in white collar jobs than in blue collar jobs. The women engaged in white collar jobs enjoy greater
freedom in respect of children's education but have lesser power in economic activities.

The primary sector constituted the main sphere of female employment. The power relationship within the family remain unaltered and there seems to be no direct relationship between the earning status of a woman and her power to take important family decisions. The role of educated earning women in the Indian family is changing fast but their status is not changing at the same ratio. The women's status is said to be higher when she contributes greatly to the subsistence of the society and retain the control of the wealth or products she produces.

Employed women are engaged in white collar jobs like teaching, service, medicine.

Employed women get help from servants, co-operation from husband, assisted by labour and time-saving gadgets in the house, whose children have crossed the age of care-taking stage, who has developed rational outlook towards life and not burdened with the religious obligations which lead to ease stress, strain, burden of the upper class women. Modern labour saving devices have revolutionized the kitchen in western countries and have proved a real boon to the working wives. Employed women are subjected to role conflict. The level of economic equality and independence are the real indicators to measure the status of women in any society.
SOCIAL CONDITIONS

Women is considered as secondary citizens with no independence of any sort. Women were targets of social exploitation, economic exploitation and subordination. Employed women as helping daughter, obedient wife and an ideal mother sincerely surrenders her pay-pocket to the male head of the family." Large majority of women has no control over their earnings. If any compromises are to be "made regarding financial matters women are the first to be axed. The influence of women is very little on the family budgets debts and repayments. The cultural content has given the women the freedom to work as a secondary bread-winner. Women's employment does not always bring about an egalitarian distribution of powers within the family.

THE RISE OF WOMEN TEACHER

A striking phenomenon of the contemporary south Asian scene is the visibility of women teachers. They form a major segment of educated middle class women stepping out in increasingly larger number into the world of work in these societies.

Education has introduced a non-traditional element of a modern occupational role in their existing family-centred role structure. The addition of an occupational role raises their status as women and is also a source of potential crises of adjustment and commitment between and within their
two roles as women and as teachers. The emergence of women teachers marks a new adjustment in the South Asian family. It also suggests a redefinition of roles of women. We see, thus, the women teacher in two situations—the family which to all appearances, is basically similar in traditional as well as modern settings, and the school which has had to cope with changes at two levels, the changes from the traditional institution of learning to the contemporary school, and the very fact of women's entry into teaching as an occupation.

Teaching was the first modern occupation thrown open to women in South Asia. The rise of teaching as an occupation for women in contemporary South Asian societies and the growth in their numbers was due to an equally large expansion of education of women.

Female teachers are as such seen as continuing the mother's "expressive" role. Froebels decision to train women rather than men to work with young children led to the opening of the new post-elementary education and teacher training centres for women which acted as a counterveiling influence to the androcentric educational theories of Rousseau which had decidedly given a set back to women's education.

Women teachers form 26 percentage of the first level, 23 percentage of the second level and 18 percentage of the higher education teachers in India. There is acute shortage of women science and mathematics teachers in schools. In higher education women teachers predominate in general arts
courses (including education) and to an extent in science and commerce courses now but are in great minority in institution of professional and technical education. In most States of India separate female inspectorates were formed. In India, in educationally advanced States like Kerala or the Union Territory of Delhi, more than half the teachers and educational administrators are female. States like Punjab and Andhra Pradesh have fixed a minimum quota of 30 to 40 percentage for women in educational administration. Of all women teachers, in India, 71 percentage are employed at the primary stage, 21 percentage at the secondary level and only 8 percentage in higher education.