SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The present study was undertaken to find out the impact of economic growth on the status of women. It was assumed that with the development of economy and economic well-being of the family, the benefits would percolate to the women and with the economic growth there would be a relative elevation in the status of women. To test this assumption, two villages from Himachal Pradesh in the district of Mandi were identified. The village Nagwain, during the last two decades, had witnessed economic growth with the introduction of cash crops like vegetables and fruits. Village Nagwain was selected because it had changed its economy from subsistence to market. Another village, Maloh, in the same district was selected where people still live at the subsistence level and new modes of production have not yet reached. Secondly, it is located at a distance of seven kilometres from the nearest town area i.e., Sunder Nagar.

As the number of households in both the villages was limited, it was decided to take all the households for the present study and the eldest female member was treated as a unit of study. In this way we had 175 households at Maloh, and 164 at Nagwain. The per capita income of the residents of Nagwain was found to be quite high as compared with Maloh.
To determine the status of women in both the villages, different indicators were used. Before drawing any conclusions, let us summarise our findings based on different indices adopted for the evaluation of the status of women at both the villages.

**Demographic and health indicators**

With the help of certain demographic and health indicators, an attempt was made to find out the presence or absence of discrimination against women as well as to find out the extent of change that has taken place in the status of women of the younger generation.

1.1 Age at marriage was taken as one of the indicators of the status of women. It was assumed that if a woman is married at a younger age and there is wide age gap between the husband and the wife, she would have a lower status. In our study, we found that the average age at marriage for the respondents was 14.25 years and 15.17 years in Maloh and Nagwain respectively. On the other hand, average age of the husbands was 23.7 years in Maloh and 24.15 years in Nagwain indicating an age gap of 9.48 and 8.45 years respectively. The results clearly indicate that though the average age at marriage of the respondents at Nagwain was relatively higher than that at Maloh, nevertheless, the age at marriage at both the villages was quite low in contrast with the national average. Secondly, the age
gap between the husband and the wife was also quite considerable, indicating the low status of women in both the villages.

To find out the extent of change that has taken place with regard to age at marriage of women, the children of the respondents were taken into account and the average age at marriage was worked out. It was noted that the mean age at marriage for daughters at Maloh was 15.05 years and at Nagwain it was 15.88 years indicating a slight increase in age at marriage. Nevertheless, the age at marriage of the younger generation still remains below the national average indicating that their status has not yet improved with regard to this variable. However, no marked difference was found in the age at marriage of the younger generation at both the villages. In addition to working out the mean age at marriage of the daughters of the respondents, the average age at marriage of their sons was also worked out which came to 24.44 years at Maloh, and 25.44 years at Nagwain. It is clear from the analysis that so far as the male members of both the generations are concerned, their age at marriage is quite high in contrast with their spouses and the average age at marriage for the husbands and the sons is higher than the national average. It can, thus, be concluded that with regard to age at marriage, the women have lower status in both the villages.
Fertility dynamics of the respondents of both the villages was another indicator taken to gauge the status of women by taking into account the mean age at first child birth. It was found that the mean age at first child birth for the respondents at Maloh was 18.3 years, whereas it was 17.2 years at Nagwain. Fertility dynamics for the younger generation were also considered to find out the trend of change. The mean age at first child birth for the daughters of the respondents at Maloh was found to be 18.8 years, whereas at Nagwain it was 19.9 years. The younger generation at Nagwain had a higher mean age at first child birth in contrast with the younger generation of Maloh, indicating a slight improvement in the status of younger women at Nagwain.

Fertility performance of the respondents was also seen with reference to the number of conceptions, miscarriages and live births. On all the three counts we did not find any difference so far as the respondents of both the villages were concerned. When the fertility performance of the respondents was compared with that of their daughters, it was noted that the daughters had a lower fertility performance than their mothers, which was attributed to their higher mean age at first child birth. As the younger generation (daughters of the respondents) has not completed its fertility span, it is difficult
to draw any conclusions. Nevertheless, it was noted that at Nagwain the mean age at first child birth was higher, even though the mean age at marriage of the younger generation of both the villages was almost constant, indicating a slight improvement in the status of the younger generation at Nagwain.

1.3 To find out the extent of discrimination against the women, infant and child mortality was worked out for both the villages. Some of the studies have indicated that due to discriminatory social practices, mortality is higher for the female child as compared with the male child. Data of our study, however, revealed the opposite trend. At both the generations, the male infant and child mortality was higher than that for the females at both the villages. Further, the percentage of households experiencing infant and child mortality was higher at Maloh when compared with Nagwain. Our results do not support the common contention that female child mortality is higher as compared with male child because of discriminatory social practices.

1.4 A few studies have indicated the existence of discriminatory practices with regard to providing health facilities to the women. In the present study, immunization and breast feeding were taken as two health indicators to find out the presence or absence of sex discrimination. With regard to immunization, we did not find any discrimination in either village,
and also, we did not find any discrimination at the inter-generational level. More than four-fifths children of the first and second generation were immunized irrespective of sex at both the villages. Further, non-immunization was attributed to ignorance and non-availability of the facilities rather than sex discrimination. Hence, on this variable also we did not find the practice of sex discrimination at either village.

1.5 Breast feeding was another health indicator taken for the present study. It was assumed that a female child was likely to be breast fed for a lesser duration than a male child. In our study, we noticed that on an average the respondents breast fed for 2.2 years whereas their female children were breast fed on an average of 1.8 years at Maloh. In case of Nagwain, the duration of breast feeding was comparatively low. The respondents on an average breast fed their children for a period of 1.7 years, whereas their female children were breast fed on an average of 1.2 years. However, at both the villages, either with regard to the respondents themselves, or their children, no discrimination based on sex was practised. Hence, both at the inter-village, and at the intergenerational levels, we found that the female children were not discriminated against.

1.6 Sex ratio has also been used by scholars to determine the status of women. It is generally believed that discriminatory practices against women, as well as a low age at first child birth result into high female mortality leading to a lower female
sex ratio. In our study, we found that there were 922 females per 1000 males as compared with 1033 females per 1000 males in Maloh and Nagwain respectively. Hence, on the face value it can be maintained that women in Nagwain are better placed as compared with their counterparts at Maloh. We have, however, noted earlier that in both the villages under study, sex discriminating practices were non-existent. The low female ratio at Maloh is attributed to the economic compulsions. Due to poverty and low yield from the farm, the women are forced to seek employment outside the village. Further, due to poor living conditions, very few women migrate to Maloh in marriages. On the other hand, more women move out of Maloh in marriages. Hence, low sex ratio of the females at village Maloh was found to be because of their migrating out of the village rather than due to discriminatory practices.

On the basis of demographic and health indicators, we did not find much difference in both the villages. Women of both the generations were married at low age indicating their low position. However, we did not find the prevalence of discriminatory practices against female children with regard to health indicators which may be attributed to social customs rather than to the growth of economy.

Educational Indicators

Differential literacy rate, enrolment for higher education and
drop-out rates among males and females can also help us to find out the extent of sex discrimination which prevails in a given society. The presence and absence of discrimination against women was worked out in the present study based on education by sex and generation, dropout rate by sex and generation and studies outside the village by sex and generation.

2.1 The illiteracy was quite high at both the villages so far as the first generation was concerned. When the literacy of the respondents was compared with that of their brothers, it was noted that at Maloh, as compared with 8.6 per cent female literates, 39.2 per cent brothers of the respondents were literate. Similarly, at Nagwain, as compared to 17.7 per cent female literates among the respondents, 37.5 per cent of their brothers were literate, indicating the prevalence of discrimination against the women. At the intergenerational level, we noticed that the female children had a higher literacy rate as compared to the respondents. At Maloh, the literacy rate had increased to 36.11 per cent, whereas at Nagwain, it was still higher, i.e., 41.58 per cent. However, when the literacy rate of the children was compared by the sex of the children, it was noted that the male children of the respondents had a higher literacy rate than their daughters. This was true in both the villages, though female children at the second generation at Nagwain had higher literacy rate than the female children at Maloh. The results
of our findings indicate that even at the second generation discrimination prevailed. An attempt was also made to find out the extent of sex discrimination by taking into account the children of school going age at both the villages. The data thus collected indicated a positive trend, and it was noted that the literacy rate among the school going population was more than 90 per cent at both the villages. However, when the data was cross tabulated with the sex of the children, we noticed that at Maloh in contrast with 93.63 per cent female children, 98.14 per cent male children were attending the school. At Nagwain as compared with 100 per cent male children attending the school, only 87.16 per cent female children were going to the school. The data revealed that in the younger age group, i.e., 6 to 16 years, the literacy rate at both the villages was quite high though there was a slight discrimination against the female children. The results indicate a changed attitude of the parents in favour of giving education to the younger generation irrespective of the sex. The change cannot be attributed to the economic growth because we noticed high female literacy at Maloh rather than at Nagwain.

2.2 The dropout rate is another indicator on the basis of which we can find out the presence or absence of sex discrimination. The educational attainments, of the adult members (16 and above) of the households at both the villages were worked out.
It was noted that at Maloh, more women dropped out after completing primary and middle level of education, indicating a discrimination against the female children. The situation in Nagwain was different from that of Maloh as we did not find any appreciable difference in the level of education of the literate male and female members. As compared with 44.8 per cent female members, 39.8 per cent male members could complete education up to the high school level. Further, we did not find any difference based on sex with regard to college and university education. The data help us to conclude that sex discrimination with regard to educational attainment of the adult members was pronounced at Maloh, and the dropout rate was also quite high in case of female children, whereas at Nagwain such discriminations were not found, indicating relatively a higher status of women at Nagwain.

2.3 The presence or absence of sex discrimination was also analysed by taking into account the proportion of male and female children who were allowed to go outside the village for the purposes of studying. In the case of the respondents of both the villages, the number of female members who were allowed to go outside the village for studies was less as compared with their brothers. At village Maloh, as compared with 20 per cent women, 67 per cent of the brothers were allowed to go outside the village for studies. Similarly, at Nagwain, as compared
with 31 per cent female respondents, more than 57 per cent of
the brothers were permitted to go outside the village for
studies, indicating the prevalence of sex discrimination in the
first generation. The data with regard to second generation
indicate a lesser number of female children going outside the
village as compared with their mothers. The decrease was not
attributed to increased sex discrimination but the availability
of educational facilities at the respective villages. At Maloh
there was a middle school and at Nagwain there was a high
school and most of the girls dropout at these levels. The
existence of sex discrimination is implicit because the parents
do not send them outside the village to acquire higher education
than what is available at the village level. It was noted that
there was a greater sex discrimination at Maloh as compared
with Nagwain.

2.4 Almost all the respondents in both the villages indicate
that they did not practise sex discrimination so far as imparting
education to the children was concerned. They, however,
contended that girls should get education up to the middle, and
at the most, a high school level. Further, they did not
perceive that education would help the female children to get
jobs in formal organizations. The female children were educated
so that they could help their children in the studies. The
respondents on the other hand maintained that education was
necessary for the sons so that they could become economically independent. The different reasons given by the respondents clearly indicate the prevalence of sex discrimination at both the villages.

Educational indicators revealed that women of the first generation were discriminated against. However, in the younger generation, there was a greater appreciation of the education irrespective of the sex and village. More than 90 per cent of the children in the younger age group (6 to 16 years) were attending the school. We did, however, note the prevalence of sex discrimination in both the villages with regard to dropout rate and studies outside the village. In short, it can be concluded that although with the availability of educational facilities, female children of younger age group are being educated, yet they are still being discriminated against with regard to the purposes for which they are being educated, as well as, the level of education they are attaining. The changed scenario is not attributed to economic well-being of the family, but to changed attitude of the parents, as well as, the availability of educational facilities in the respondents' villages.

**Economic Indicators**

The economic indicator for the status of women has been worked out on the basis of their work participation as well as the returns they receive out of this. Their work had been divided
into two categories, first, the household work, and second, their economic activities. The household activities included cooking, washing, looking after the children, animal care and fetching water and wood for household consumption. Under economic activities, their work on their own farm, or in others' farms, and the time spent on such activities had been taken. Information also was sought from the daily wage earners regarding the amount they received, and the wage differential between men and women. Further, information was also collected with regard to land ownership, access to cash credit loan as well as their membership in formal economic organizations.

3.1 **Household activities**: It has been noticed that household work consumes most of the time of women of both the villages. Household work also includes sewing, knitting etc. The respondents in both the villages spent more than 4 hours on an average on household work and no change was noticed in the second generation. It was encouraging to note that in both the villages, the male members extended help in the performance of household chores.

3.2 **Water and fuel collection**: In village Maloh, 138 respondents out of a total of 175 admitted that women collected fuel and water for household consumption. But at village Nagwain, the task of fuel collection came under men's work, and
fetching water was women's work. No change of work was noticed in the second generation in both the villages.

3.3 **Care of livestock** : In both the villages more than 73 per cent respondents admitted that care of livestock was under the domain of women. In a few families, both male and female members took care of animals. But the disposal of cowdung in the villages was the sole responsibility of women.

3.4 **Economic Activities** : The nature of economic activities has been broadly divided into two: employment in formal sector, where not a single woman was found to be working, and informal sector. The women engaged in informal sector have been grouped according to their work organization.

(i) Women working on family farm.
(ii) Women working on a daily wage basis, i.e., on the farms of others or as artisan workers.
(iii) Women working on a daily wage basis and artisan, as well as, on their own fields.

More than 97 per cent respondents in Maloh, and 92 per cent in Nagwain, were found working on their own farms. The rest were either the wives of govt. officials or landlords or did not have any land of their own. In both the villages, women worked on an average of 7 hours in a day in the fields. The number of working hours for women at Nagwain were not
reduced with the development of its economy. Further, work participation of their daughters or daughters-in-law did not indicate any marked change. The women in both the villages worked for more than 11 hours per day (4 hours for household work and 7 hours for economic activities).

The work activities in both the villages have been divided into three: (1) agricultural work, (ii) vegetables work and (iii) horticultural work. In agricultural work, women in both the villages do all types of work which includes breaking clods, throwing seeds, levelling fields, weeding, harvesting, fertilizing, threshing and collection of the produce etc. However, ploughing is done by men. Vegetables work also includes all activities similar to the agricultural work. Horticulture includes plantation, putting cowdung and fertilizers to the plants, weeding, spraying, plucking fruit and packing fruit. Except spraying, in pruning and marketing, women have an equal work participation.

3.5 A few women also worked on a daily wage basis to supplement their family income. As there was no work at Maloh, a small number of women worked on a daily wage basis. As far as the wage difference are concerned, it has been found that only one respondent out of 14 in Maloh was found to be aware about the official wages. At Nagwain, on the other hand, more than 79 per cent respondents contended that they were aware
about official rates yet were paid less than the male workers. Discrimination on the basis of wage by sex was evident in both the villages. It was the economic compulsion, which forced women to accept the low wages.

3.6 **Access to credit**: In Maloh, out of 175 respondents only 8 respondents secured loans from the bank ranging from rupees 500 to 10,000, and at Nagwain, there were 5 respondents out of 164 who could get loans upto Rs. 5000/- only. No difference was noticed on the village basis and it was only the menfolk who took the advantages of the banking facilities because the land and orchards were in their names. Hence, women's right to get loans from the banks was very much restricted and they were discriminated, against.

3.7 **Ownership of Land**: In rural India, land not only gives status and recognition to the owners, but also gives them rights and powers to the means of production. In village Maloh, only 13 respondents out of 175, and in village Nagwain, only 6 respondents out of 164 had land in their own names. The land ownership was given to women under special circumstances, i.e., when she was a widow, or the only daughter of her parents, or when her male child was a minor. So it was noted that inspite of their hard work, they did not have control over means of production, i.e., land and tools. Further, no difference in both the villages was noticed.
3.8 **Access to Extension Services**: Data pertaining to benefits received from agricultural/horticultural extension centres revealed that women at Maloh had neither visited these centres, nor benefitted from them, because village Maloh did not have any such centre, and no demonstration for the use of new technology was held. In the case of village Nagwain, a horticulture extension centre was located in the village and people were free to seek advice. Only 18 respondents admitted that they had visited the centre and had benefitted. A majority of the beneficiaries were men. The benefits of developmental activities had not reached the women.

3.9 **Membership in Co-operative Organization**: To evaluate the status of women, their membership in co-operative society was also taken into account. The government of the state has encouraged the villages to form co-operative societies to manage the governmental assistance either in the shape of subsidised material, or services. Any adult member can have a membership of the co-operative society. In Maloh, only 4 women, and in Nagwain, only 2 women had memberships of such co-operative societies. The results of our study clearly establish that leadership role still remains with men, and women continue to play a submissive role.

Taking into account women's work participation, it is concluded that despite active work participation, its benefits
Social Indicators

The position of women was gauged taking into account a number of customs and social practices. The sex discrimination and inequality is not only perpetuated, but also reinforced by these social practices. Hence, an attempt was made to find out the status of women with the help of certain practices which designated their lower status and the extent to which such discriminatory practices had been discarded.

4.1 As far as the respondents at both the villages were concerned, their marriages were arranged by their parents and they were never consulted. In case of the younger generation, there was however, a slight change in the marriage practices. A significant minority of the younger generation were consulted before their marriage. Nevertheless, in both the villages, arranged marriages were still prevalent indicating a lower status of the women.
4.2 With regard to dowry practices, it was noted that in both the villages the practice of dowry was found to be very common. However, in recent years with the growth of the economy at Nagwain, the evil of dowry has taken new dimensions which has adversely affected their already low status.

4.3 The social custom of purdah was generally not observed in both the villages. It was limited to the Brahmin and the Khatri families. The level of economy was found to have no association with the purdah system. Further, the younger generation even from the families of the Brahmins and the Khatris, have stopped observing purdah system.

4.4 The status of women was also viewed taking into account, the order in which the members of the family took meals. Irrespective of the villages, it was noted that in very few households all the members ate together. Either the children or the male members of the family ate first, or the children and the male members ate first. Women ate in the end after everybody finished their meals indicating not only the existence of discriminatory practices but also the low status of women.

4.5 With the exception of 14 households from both the villages, the heads of the households were men. The wives became heads only under adverse family circumstances, i.e., when they were widows, or without a grown-up male child.
4.6 Being a head of the household does not entitle a woman to own land of the family whereas in the case of men, headship and ownership of land go together. In case of women, no association was found between headship and ownership of land in either village. It was only under adverse family circumstances that the land was transferred to women.

4.7 With regard to intra-family power dynamics, it was noted that the authority was vested in either the husband, or the male children, and the women still remained dependent on menfolk in both the villages.

4.8 Widow remarriage among the members of the scheduled castes at Nagwain was a common practice. However, among the Khatri and the Brahmin families, widow remarriage was not permitted. At Maloh, on the other hand, levirate practice was quite common among the Rajput families. Hence, it was noted that the practice of widow remarriage went with the caste rather than with the economy of the place.

4.9 In addition to social customs and practices, political awareness on the part of our respondents was also evaluated. With regard to their right in the family property, it was noticed that as compared with four per cent respondents of Maloh, more than 28 per cent respondents at Nagwain were aware of their rights in the family property indicating a relatively higher level of awareness among the respondents of Nagwain.
4.10 The voting behaviour pattern of the respondents indicated that a majority of our respondents still remained under the control of their menfolk and they voted as per the decision of their husbands, or based on a family decision. The situation was relatively better in the case of the younger generation. As compared with 20 percent female children at Maloh, approximately 44 percent at Nagwain voted according to their personal decision. This clearly indicates a greater freedom being granted to the younger generation at Nagwain.

4.11 Participation in social organizations in the shape of the membership in Mahila Mandals was also taken into account, and it was observed that a majority of the women did not seek membership in the organizations because their menfolk did not want so. Their hesitation to seek membership in non-political voluntary organizations meant for the upliftment of the womenfolk clearly indicates their social dependency and low status.

In short, it can be concluded that in the villages under study, certain social practices like purdah system and restrictions regarding widow remarriage were not present which could be attributed to the cultural and economic ethos rather than to the level of economic development. Changed attitudes regarding marriages in which the consent of younger generation is taken, can be attributed to the overall changes in the society as this
particular fact was noticed in both the villages. Relatively greater freedom to the younger generation at Nagwain can be attributed to its higher educational attainment as compared with the younger generation at Maloh. It can, thus, be concluded that their active work participation and growth of economy have failed to elevate the status of women and the benefits of economic well-being have not percolated to the social practices which exhibit the low status of the women.

Keeping in view the objectives of the present study the findings can be summarized as under:

i) The shift in the economy has no bearing on the age at marriage, fertility and mortality rates, and on making available health services to both the sexes.

ii) No association was found between economic growth and literacy among the younger female children. The dropout rate was found to be linked with the purpose for which female children were being educated.

iii) Economic prosperity of the family had no bearing on women's work participation. Further, the benefits of economic prosperity were not equally shared by both the sexes.

iv) Economy was found to be related to social practices. Absence of purdah system was attributed to women's work
participation, and widow remarriage was allowed to check a division in the family property. However, the economic growth has created the problem of dowry. Intra-family power dynamics had no association with economic growth. Women played only expressive and subordinate roles, and men controlled the means of production and played the leadership roles.

v) No marked difference was found in the status of women in either village. In short, economic development of the region failed to elevate the status of women.

After having summarized the findings, let us take up different indicators based on which the status of women in the villages under study was compared. An attempt will also be made to compare the findings of our study with that of other scholars.

On the basis of the demographic indicators, we did not find any marked difference in either village. Even in the case of the younger generation, the average mean age at marriage for girls remained lower than 16 years. Similarly, no difference was noticeable with regard to the number of conceptions, miscarriages and total live births.

So far as mortality was concerned, the female child mortality was found to be lower than the male child mortality
in both the villages. Our results do not support the general contention that due to discriminatory practices, female child mortality is higher (Bhaskar and Misra, 1980; Mahadevan, 1986; Singh, 1988).

The results of our study do not support the hypothesis proposed by Mahadevan (1986) that with the economic development of a region there are appropriate changes in fertility and mortality. We also did not find the prevalence of discriminatory practices with regard to immunization and breast feeding.

In short, low age at marriage and a lack of discriminatory practices can be attributed to local social values rather than to the growth of economy.

So far as the educational indicators were concerned, we noticed the prevalence of discriminatory practices in favour of male children in the older generation. However, in the younger generation such discriminatory practices have almost been removed. Now, more than 90 per cent children in the school going age, irrespective of their sex, were attending the schools at both the villages. The findings of our study do not support the contention that female children are discriminated against with regard to imparting education to them (UN., 1987; Mies, 1987; Mahajan, 1989; Seth, 1990). With regard to drop out rate, it was noted that the women of the younger generation of
Nagwain were better placed as compared with those of Maloh. However, when the purpose of imparting education to the female child was considered, discrimination became quite evident at both the villages. Importance being given to educating the younger generation, irrespective of the sex, at both the villages can be attributed to the overall changes in the region.

On the economic front, we did not find any change in their work participation. Our results are not consistent with the findings of other scholars that women's work participation increases or decreases with the change in the mode of production (Borandtzez, 1982; Kelker, 1982; Patel, 1984; Hay, 1984; Ghosh, 1984; Godre and Mahalla, 1985; Chand et al, 1985; Ranjarao and Attari, 1985; Joshi and Alshi, 1985; Roy et al, 1985; Suryawanshi and Kapaga, 1985; Marothia and Sharma, 1985; Bardhan, 1985; Sosodia, 1985; Gupta, 1986; UN, 1987; Singh and Singh, 1987; Singh, 1988; Malkiat Kaur, 1988). We also did not find any association between caste and work participation. Women from Rajput and other high castes were found to be participating in the work activities along with the members of the lower castes. A few female members of Khatri and Brahmin castes at Nagwain were not found to be working in the fields which was attributed to the nature of the occupations of their families rather than castes. Hence, our results also do not support the findings of other scholars that women of upper castes do not work in the fields (Hargopal, 1982; Indira Devi, 1984; Ghosh, 1985; Azad et al., 1985).
Inspite of women's active work participation and growth of economy, their benefits in the shape of ownership of land, property, and access to credit etc. have not reached them. The wage differences still exist. In short, we did not find any difference in the economic status of women of both the villages, who, despite their active work remained dependent upon men.

With regard to social indicators, we did not find the practice of purdah system. Widow remarriages were found to be associated with caste. Among the Rajputs and the scheduled castes, widow remarriages were quite common in both the villages. So far as the intra-family power dynamics were concerned, it was noted that power and authority were vested with the male members in both the villages. Our results do not support the contention of a few scholars that because of equal work participation, women have an equal say in the family decision making. On the other hand, we found women-headed households or land ownerships only under adverse family circumstances (Saikia, 1980; Singh, 1981; Davilalitha, 1982; Sharma, 1983; Fazila Banulilly, 1987; Shramshakti, 1988; Singh et al., 1988; Girippa, 1988; Bhuyan and Tripathy, 1988; Yale Sulvia, 1989; Kumari, R., 1989).

The economic growth has adversely affected the status of women. With greater wealth, the practice of dowry has become very elaborate, and costly items are given to show off...
one's riches. Such a situation was more prominent at Nagwain. We did not find any association between economic well-being of the family and social practices.

So far as their political participation was concerned, it was restricted only to casting votes at the time of election. They were still under the domain of male members who influenced their decisions to cast vote in favour of a particular candidate or a party. Similarly, their membership and participation in social organizations were also influenced by the wishes of the men. In short, they continue to remain the followers, and the leadership roles are played by the men.

Conclusion

Keeping in view the findings of the study, it can be concluded that economic development of a region does not help in the elevation of the status of women which is enshrined in the social and cultural values. For the removal of inequality, based on sex and discriminatory practices against the women, we have to shift our focus on the properties, of the society and culture instead of depending upon the economic growth model. The status of women can be elevated only when they are made free from economic, social and psychological dependency.