CHAPTER - 1
INTRODUCTION

Man is primarily distinguishable from the lower animals because of his educable ability. He is endowed with intelligence; he wants to remain active, energetic and even original. He desires to go ahead in all respects. It is education which promotes his intelligence, enables him to be industrious and ensures his progress.

The ancient Indian concept of education - Vidya, comes from the Sanskrit word Vit, (to know). It means knowledge, science, learning, core education, scholarship and philosophy. Indians have considered knowledge as the third eye of man, which gives his insight into all affairs and teaches him how to act. The illumination gives to one by Vidya shatters illusions, removes difficulties and enables him to realise the true value of life. A person who does not possess the light of education, may be described blind.

Education increases one's fame, destroys his difficulties and makes him purer and more cultured. Education is thus a veritable "desire yielding tree".
Wealth, connections (rich friends), office, birth, deeds, knowledge and age are of the factors which primarily add to the respectability of a person. But knowledge is the highest of them all, in as much as it is the source of health and virtues. A Sanskrit saying goes like this: "Swadeso pujyate raja, Vidya Sarvatra pujyate". This means that a king is respected in his own kingdom while learned men are respected everywhere. Vidya, considered to be the origin of all human happiness, increases one's efficiency and enables him to get fame and wealth by securing respect in public assemblies and royal courts. It promote one's material as well as spiritual welfare, both in "this" as well as in the "life after". Devoid of Vidya one is a mere beast; Vidya elevates one into human being. Life without Vidya is, therefore, utterly futile and worthless. Because it sharpens the intellect, improves the grasping power and develops the faculty of discrimination and protects one from falling into errors. Vidya enables one to live as a decent and useful citizen of the society.

Anthromology and Education

Today, educationists, policy makers, agents of change, education administrators, anthropologists, etc. talk of education. They also use many terms such as
education, schooling, learning, socialization and enculturation. To an anthropologist education means enculturation. He always takes 'education' in a broader sense of learning and not in a narrow sense, the way the formal educationists look at it. He also looks at education in its sociological background and concentrates on this aspect than on education administration, teaching methods and aids, teacher training and curriculum. But now the concept of education being changed the anthropologist has begun to see his task in each of these above fields.

To a professional educationist like Quillen (1963:60) education is a cultural process through which members of a society learn the behaviour necessary to continue their culture. According to such a view the school - the formal teaching and learning agency, is the only place to do this and they do not take into consideration the other agencies which are informal. Training, which means schooling to an educationist, is received in formal educational institutions like school, from a trained teacher, on a set of topics or subjects at certain timings (c.f. Herskovits, 1949:319).

Though today school and schooling play a very important role in education and personality formation, we should bear in mind that it is after all one of the many agencies involved in the process of education.
Anthropologists studied simpler societies, which, in most of the cases are non-literate or illiterate, and transmitted their culture - art, craft, religion, customs, manners, etc., to the next generation through enculturation. A child born into such society acquired the cultural knowledge of its group as it grew into a full fledged member. But the modern literate societies do this job through education, by formally imparting the existing knowledge in schools, through formal teaching. This means imparting of knowledge can be done in two ways - formally and informally, the former in schools and the latter through participation and outside the schools.

Anthropologists have helped educationists in making the modern education acceptable to tribal and simpler societies. Here they explained the meaning of education, the relation between the teacher and the taught and also the relevance of the subject matter taught or learnt to the people. On the other hand, they also helped the education administrators in organizing schools and also helped them in formulating the syllabus, etc. How along with other social scientists the anthropologists have been trying to understand the impact of education in simpler societies. This is important because the aims, objectives and meaning of education differ each from peasant, tribal,
rural and urban societies. Above all owing to the liberal and welfare policies of Indian government, now the formal education is available to all citizens and in a more easy and convenient manner. Further, the government of India which has planned to achieve change in the attitude of the society with regards to science and technology and also to accept them to bring about the national development, has made education compulsory up to the age of 14. Thus, now education which has been received by rural population as a felt need, and as a directed programme, or a status symbol, has brought a lot of change in the rural society. Many of these changes are both advantageous and disadvantageous as well.

An anthropologist can help develop suitable methods of enquiring for studying education process, by providing a broader perspective to the term, education. He can also help to know the impact of school or schooling on a community or a society. He can also help teachers in the field of formal education by providing them information on the role played by the non-school educational experiences (c.f., Quillen, 1963:50).

*Education and Social Change*

In the primitive and rural societies the institution
of family performed a variety of functions including the training of children in different skills, trades and occupations, etc. In the present day communities, educational institutions are entrusted with the task of imparting formal education to the younger members of the society. The schools and colleges are responsible for the physical, mental and intellectual development of girls and training them for specialised trades and professions. In present times, the term education, therefore, refers to formal schooling. In modern times the main aim of education is to develop rational faculties of human beings so that they can have independent thinking and their actions are not governed by any stereotype norms or principles. This type of training helps the women to challenge the dogmatic beliefs and to inculcate rational thinking. The encouragement of rational and independent thinking helps to change the behaviour of any woman; as thought and behaviour are closely interrelated. Education can be regarded as influencing both the thoughts and behaviour patterns of the individual members of various social groups, the social structural elements of a community are bound to have a significant impact. Education helps a woman in inculcating new ideas and thought patterns along with the transmission of established cultural and social values. It does not permit an individual to develop a dogmatic believer; it makes her a rational human being.
capable of challenging the past values and creating new ones. To provide for change is the creative function of education.

The function of education is the development of certain personal attributes which are prerequisites for the special roles that the individuals fill in the society. As a corollary, these personal attributes must be distributed among the population in such a way as to ensure the satisfactory operation of the social system. In a changing society, young and adult women find that they do not possess certain skills and competencies that are essential elements in the roles they want or are expected to play. Since new roles for adults are normally extensions or minor modifications of their earlier roles, education is essentially a relative minor phase of the total life of the adult women. For young girls, on the other hand, the changes from the relatively simple and limited roles of young girls, to the different, more varied and complex ones of adults are of major significance. Education is thus of central importance in the lives of young girls.

Education is not, however, the only means by which, man develops ability to fill the roles that society demands. The home, peer group, adult group associations,
tenplsa and the mass communication develop certain attributes and helps to gain more specialised experience. 
An anthropologist gives more importance to these agencies than the school.

Education and changing status and Role of Women

Status of women in any society depends upon their ability to earn the status. Adequate education and knowledge can only hold strong conception. Education not only awakens urge for a prestigious position, whether in home or in society as a whole, but also supplies strength to retain that position against many hazards of life. Otherwise, even if status is conferred upon them, they will not take time to loose it, without realizing what they are loosing. Unfortunately this weakness has befallen the Indian women. Ignorance, lack of education, economic instability, conflict in family, frustration has resulted in suicides among women than men. Torture of daughter-in-law by parents-in-law, lower facilities for girls or women with the household, inequality of wages between male and female labour, the burden of the domestic work rests upon women. These ill-treatment naturally created insecurity to women in the society. In order to find out the causes in rural area, a village cannot be studied in isolation from the
outside world. We should attach more importance with regard to education, particularly with respect to women's education, while studying this problem.

Regarding the role of women, both educated and uneducated are fighting to uphold their new and old ideas. Modernity is replacing the traditional taboos. Since the conflict regarding role, obligations and views of women on health, food, politics, economy, leisure, religion have resulted in controversial outlook and have given rise to new conflict idea. Rights and obligations of both educated and uneducated women in family and generally in society, may create friction in inter-personal relationships, more so in status and values of women.

Education, exaggerated emphasis on individuality complexities of modern life and individual gratification, makes it most difficult for women to adjust to the new ideals and new moral obligations. On account of this, the problem of change in status and values due to education on rural women has acquired greater importance today. Now, that educated women have nearly come out of the traditional bond, problem of her role and position in the rural setting has come to light and it is this problem which is being dealt within the present study.
Women in changing society:

The impact of industrialisation, urban influence, and secularisation has brought about socio-psychological changes in the attitudes and values of people. Accordingly, the attitude of educated women have considerably changed, particularly with regard to age of marriage, marriage choice, her roles and statuses in the society. Studies by Nate (1930 and 1946), Merchant (1930), Desai (1945), etc. give some idea of the processes of the change in the position and attitudes of women during pre-independence days. Nate (1930) on the basis of her study, says that compared to the past a deep and vital change has taken place in the socio-economic condition and personal status of women. Merchant on the other hand who studied aspects of marriage, found that personal conception is gaining ground in this field and this change is fast replacing the religious conception of marriage with that of the civil (Merchant, 1930). Desai (1951) noted that more and more women have begun to consider self respect and the development of personality as the necessary goal of life. He also found that sacramental marriage and joint family which are regarded as two old pillars of the Hindu society, are weakening. However, the situation of women with regard to status, role and rights is not happy even today and women has been exploited in many fields. The situation cannot be changed just by giving
education or providing political and other rights. As Lecalo Dube (1973) says that a better status cannot be achieved for the women, unless their economic and social utility is enhanced in the eyes of their families and the nation, by opportunities to take part in socially and economically productive roles. Till then says Dube, the national neglect of women will continue.

In recent years a number of studies have been conducted on the changing opinion of women. For example, the study of Premilla Kapoor, on the attitude of educated women, undertaken during 1957-59 reveals that, women preferred marriage by choice in which personal considerations were found to be predominant. Case studies revealed their views about husband-wife relationship and their expectations and demands out of matrimony. A large majority of them desired to have a relation of co-partnership with their husbands. They expected a large measure of happiness in their married life and demanded personal gratification of their emotional, physiological, social and economic needs out of their marriage. They put more emphasis on their privileges than on their obligations (Kapoor, 1970).

Gurumurthy (1974) in his study of graduate women of Karnad town with regard to their opinion about education, marriage, family life, job, found that there is a significant change
in their attitude. The changes in the attitude of women indicates that these changes are due to impact of education, urban and western influences on urban women. These have not so far affected the rural women. However, educational facilities provided recently in rural area are also bringing a lot of change in the position and role of rural women.

**Change and the rural women:**

Rural women are often described as static or 'unchanging'. The rate of change among rural folk is insignificant when compared with the urban folk. Villagers always seems to be trying to catch up with their urban sisters, who nevertheless are always many steps ahead of them. It is the lagging relationship between the city and village which keeps village women backward, old fashioned and static, etc. Once attempted the disparity disappear as it is happening in industrial world.

It is found that rural parents send their daughters to school without any aim in life. The girls study in schools and colleges because they have no other option between schooling and marriage. They are more worried about marriage than career and are also silent on these
issues. Therefore, drop outs and wastage is more among girls than boys, in rural society.

It has been said that most parents of rural girls are satisfied with their daughters' roles as future mothers and house wives. So education to them is just a means of spending time till they get married. There are girls to whom school means more than a period of waiting. Further, majority of the rural population is economically poor, socially low and come from families which are not much interested in education. The reasons given for this is that they are more worried about their basic needs of life and the benefits it brings.

Parents' ignorance, blind belief, rigidity, lack of educational facilities, lack of encouragement, cultural lag, socio-economic conditions, lack of communication have kept the rural women under the shadow of stagnancy. Studies conducted by Ishwaran (1977) and Gurumurthy (1976) reveal that the villages are tied with not only to cities, but in general, to other villages as well. Through social, religious, and economic net works they maintain close contact with people in neighbouring villages so that every village community is in fact a part of a much wider rural unit. So unless the whole rural society changes we cannot
expect change in one or two villages. The above mentioned limitations are main draw backs for social change among women of rural society.

A review of research on the conditions of women:

Research on the conditions of women in India does not have long history. During the past three decades anthropologists have taken interest in the study of tribal and rural India. A few studies on rural women were holistic or touched upon several aspects of social structure. But any discussion on status of women was obviously precluded with a few exceptions. The impact of education, urbanisation and industrialisation came as a common concern found generally in the studies of western culture. In the Indian context research has been scanty and no fruitful generalisations could be derived on the nation as a whole. Further, research on the status of women, particularly of the educated working women, their aspirations and problems were largely conducted by male researchers. However, recently, a few studies have come up on women in different societies and fields.

The change in the status and role of women studied by researchers, has assumed that the attitude change like
the family change, studied by Kilpatrik (1963:184), is
initiated at the level of different classes of women-folk.
Various earlier studies like those of Merchant (1930),
Dasai (1945), Hate (1946, 1950, 1959), Desai (1957),
Tandon (1959), Pratima Kanooor (1960-1970), Sanotha (1970),
Thi Banerjee (1972), Girija Gupta (1976), Raj Ushen Sethi
(1976) and Gummurthy (1974) have shown that how the
attitudes of women particularly of educated, have considerably
changed, specially with regard to their own opinion on
marriage, custom, religion, dress, politics, health, food
and leisure time activities. Because of education, today
women are found expressing their opinion on marriage, sex,
love, etc. more freely than they used to do before. This
itself is a marked change in their attitude. Besides the
above mentioned works on women, there are other research
works on women with regard to their life and living
conditions. These have helped to get more informations and
methods to understand the different aspects of women's life.
Thus one can get today a lot of material on the position of
women and her new roles in changing society.

Aims of the Study:

Changing status and roles is a new area of interest
to both educationists and anthropologists to study. More
recent anthropological literature stimulated by this interest
has grown largely out of field work in peasant, rural and urban communities. Much of the current data depicts societies undergoing major social change. Such studies are valuable and certainly reflect legitimate concerns in anthropology, but the material cannot be used to fill-in the gaps left by earlier accounts which so excluded any attention to women.

If there is any single point on which the world will agree today is the immense significance of education. Although India is regarded as a seat of one of the earliest civilisations of the world, most of our women at present still remain illiterate. Education in the formal sense was the privilege of limited portion of the population, to which, though with quite numerous and other notable exceptions, women did not usually belong.

The report published in 1959 by International Institute of Differing Civilizations, states that, non-literate women in the total female population of Asia are as follows: Ceylon 41%, Thailand 64%, Malaya 84%, India 92%, Vietnam 30%, Philippines 40%. In India, in 1947, the proportion of girls to boys in educational institutions was 30 to 100. The disparity was widest in higher education, with only 7 girls for every 100 girls of a total of 42,97,725
girl students studied in 1947. Of these majority, 34,78,168 were in primary schools, 60,2,230 in secondary schools and only 23,207 in colleges. According to the 1941 census, the literacy rate for women was as low as 6.0, against 22.5 for men. Within ten years, female literacy rose to 7.8 and by 1951 it rose to 12.90 per cent. In the same year the male literacy rate rose to 34.4 per cent. Besides this, in urban area the education of girls is gaining wide acceptance, especially among middle class families. In rural area, even today, girls' education still lags considerably behind that of boys. The research data reveals that women have not been given proper encouragement for studies. Hindu custom and tradition have kept her behind the screen of hopes.

Rural women still live in backward conditions. Their position has not yet improved in any of the fields. Even today the Indian parents are more worried about the birth of a daughter than a son and welcome her birth as a curse. Naturally they are also not bothering about her personal interest and progress.

Urban women whether she is from upper or from the lower strata, will be in position to get educational facilities. Economic and social conditions will not
suppress her ambition to get education. Western culture, education facilities, employment opportunities have widened her role and raised her status. Educated employed women are an asset to the family at present in the urban area. But rural women are suffering from lack of these facilities.

The only remedy to set right this drawback is to provide education to rural mass in general. Educated women, who are expected to have imbued the values of a changed society, may be gauged from their personalities. Women have been selected here for our study because they have an important role to play in the socialization of the individual and if a change in their attitudes and beliefs does not take place, it may be postulated that not much can be achieved by way of the transformation of society (c.f. Promilla Kapoor, 1970).

In order to study the changes which are taking place, an attempt is made to interrelate the relevant cultural aspects. To examine the changes between literate and illiterate women, an account of social setting, marriage, dress, ornament, leisure, recreation, public life, food and food habits, health and hygiene, the behaviour patterns are studied. The investigator's aim is to study the changes in
status and values of women due to the impact of education in rural set-up, with other aspects of life within the limits of the village.

Objectives of the Study:

Objectives of the present study are to assess the impact of education on the status and roles of women in a village. It is pointed out that education is an important factor which helps in bringing about social change. The education factor being exogenous to the rural communities, it affects individual personality and thus facilitates the process of social change. However, this does not mean that education is the only factor which has contributed to the social change. There are other factors which have influenced in bringing about a social change. Social change is a complex phenomenon and is the result of the interplay of a number of factors. Out of various factors which affect the status of women an attempt has been made on one of them, that precisely is education. The change in the attitude of women in the chosen areas like dress, religion, politics, leisure, recreation, marriage, role performance, social behaviour and inter-relationship. Further, it has been ventured to find out whether such changes have had any impact on the status and roles of women of the village.
The village chosen for our study is fairly big and has certain distinctive features. A depth study with reference to these features, it is hoped, will help us to understand the customs and norms which are intimately bound with different structural elements of the society.

Importance of the Study:

The present study of change in the status and roles of women assumes significance in the context of rapid changes that are taking place in rural society. The changes were accelerated after the Independence of India. Specific and detailed studies on the impact of education in particular on various aspects of rural society are scare. However, the present study attempts to analyse in detail the various changes that are taking place in the life and living of women in the village owing to introduction of education. It is found that though education has vital roles to play in this direction, it is not very easy to expect changes because of cultural inertia. To eradicate this inertia a lot of effort is required, which can be best exerted through education and propaganda. It is only through education that people can be enlightened and consequently persuaded to abandon the old and accept the new. The significance of the present study, therefore, lies in finding out how much change
education has brought in the status and roles of the women.

Studies on changes taken place in urban society and also on urban women are common. In a way much concentration, devotion and time is put on the study of problems concerning urban women than rural women. However, anthropologists and rural sociologists have studied rural society in India. But their approach is wholistic and generic and very few studied women exclusively. Among these very few attempted further to study the changing status and roles of women from the point of introduction of modern education. For the present study social, economic, political, religious, health and hygienic, leisure and recreation aspects are selected. However, these areas are not new either to educationists or anthropologists. But what is new here is the role played by education in changing the status and roles of rural women in the above areas of village life.

Methodology:

The present study of change in status and roles of women in rural society is made along the anthropologists' functional - wholistic approach. The functional relation of education social, economic and ritual life of the society
is understood in the holistic background of the village and the rural society as a whole.

(a) Selection of the village:

The selection of locales of research and sample were guided by the above delimitation of the problem. Step sampling technique was used in selecting the village. After selecting the taluka a list of all the villages with secondary schools was prepared and one among them was selected at random, for our study. The village selected by us has all the requirements like a suitable size of population, multi-caste and multi-occupational background and presence of educational institutions of different levels since long. As it stands today there is a secondary school, a higher primary school and a nursery school in the village which were established in the years 1963, 1956 and 1973 respectively. However, 80% of women of this village are illiterate. It gave us an opportunity to select informants from both educated and illiterate groups, giving proportionate representation.

After the introduction of irrigation facilities the village situation has changed a lot. Added to this is the urban influence brought by improved transportation and
communication facilities. This changing situation was more suitable for our study of statuses and roles of rural females.

(b) **Scope of the study:**

The geographical scope of the study is restricted to one village. The educational programme and its history, villagers' conception of education and women's education, status and roles the women had under traditional set-up and the possible changes that are taken place in them owing to acquisition of modern education; the impact of education on the socio-economic and politico-religious and health and hygienic aspects of women with regards to their values, beliefs, etc. come under the scope of the study. Though the change taken place or taking place is our main concern here, it is studied in its historical context. So a study of background of all the societal fields of the village are included in the scope of the study. Similarly though one village is the limit of our study, the village and its activities cannot be studied in isolation. Therefore, they are studied in the background of the region. Further, though both literate and illiterate women are our concern they are again studied as members of the village system, in their relation with man and nature, to understand their position, relation, etc. properly.
(c) Hypothesis:

The following set of hypothesis have been formulated:

1) Education is likely to bring about changes in the interactional pattern of rural women, cutting across caste restrictions;

2) Education brings better statuses and roles to women in rural set-up;

3) Women with education are likely to be changed in their values;

4) Educated women use their leisure time in a better way than the illiterate.

(d) Data collection:

In the year 1977-78, a fact finding survey of socio-economic conditions, educational level of women in the village was conducted; keeping specially in view the changes taken place in the status of both literate and illiterate women. Data were also collected on the total strength of girls, who were studying in secondary schools, from VIIIth to Xth standards, for five years, from 1971 to 1976. The school drop-outs and stagnation cases of girls during the same period was also studied.
A house to house census of the village was collected during the months of May and June, 1978. This helped us in selecting our informants for depth interviews. A representative sampling technique was used in selecting informants to this, giving equal representation to different castes. A second criterion of age was used to select respondents. The informants, who were between the ages of 16 and 45, including both married and unmarried, were selected. They came from different backgrounds such as agricultural, business, white collar job, landless and labour. The sample like the scope of the enquiry, is selective and seeks to assess the impact of both modern and traditional influences.

The following enquiry is based on the depth interview with one hundred women - fifty literate who have completed their secondary education and fifty illiterates, who have not received any formal education at all. Here an attempt is made to examine the influence of education on informants as to whether it has changed them superficially or has gone deeper and changed their value system, which led to assimilation of modern life and thoughts.

Each of the respondents was interviewed with the help of a depth interview schedule which had nine sections.
and 119 items. The questions put were open ended and provided lot of scope for the informant to express. Their statements were faithfully recorded. Though interviews were conducted in isolation, most of the respondents were initially reluctant to express. Later when proper rapport was established, gradually they begin to express freely. In addition a few important activities were observed through participation. The official documents in the schools, panchayat and other offices were also consulted for data. A few relevant cases were also collected using case study technique.

Since the researcher knows the language of the people, there was no problem with regard to communication with them. The study as such spreads over three years, starting from June 1977. After the library preparation the census of the village was taken in March-April 1978. The data collected so were analysed according to the anthropological method of comparison. The opinion of educated informants on status, roles and values are compared with that of the illiterates of the village. The data are analysed on structural - functional lines of anthropology and presented in tabular and essay form.
Finally, our area of interest and scope of study is one village, as such we cannot hope to present our data in a more generalized way. However, the data from the village in a way represents the region and so the findings are analyzed and interpreted in a broader spectrum of rural setting.