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CHAPTER : I

INTRODUCTION

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1. INTRODUCTION

India has the third largest higher education system in the world next to China and United States. It has a total of 496 universities, out of these 239 are State Universities, 130 deemed universities, 40 Central Universities, 49 Private Universities and 38 institutions of national importance (Universities Handbook, 2010). In these 496 Universities, we find many women in teaching profession. But one finds very few women at top levels such as Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and Dean, even though there are a large number of women who choose teaching as their profession. The reality is that women's participation at decision-making levels in any field is dismally low. Considering the fact that they constitute almost half the population they are very few in decision making process. The picture is the same in Educational Administration. Although women have gained access to higher education all over the world, the scenario is same, that their numbers are still far below men in the management of institutions of higher education. That women are lagging behind men in taking up educational opportunities possibly contributes to the fact that women are not visible in large numbers at higher positions in educational administration. But there are many within the profession who are very capable and could wear the mantle of administrator easily. Yet these women do not seem to aspire for it.

As a matter of fact, most professionals, men or women, such as scientists and doctors, do not like administration because it is mundane and routine. But, generalization notwithstanding, there is greater love among men for the power and influence that goes with administrative posts. The "power structure" in institutions quite often inhibits women. Men say that it is women themselves who deny themselves the chances for upward mobility (Pradhan. S. et.al., 2009). This is referred to as `psycho-social' causes, which could include the behavioral traits and skills of women. Perhaps

their attachment to familial duties, whether shared or not by their men folk, makes them less mobile and unwilling for transfers or changes of any kind. Maybe the situation in the home is such that women are fearful of their men folk/in-laws, and they may not want to appear as ambitious or desiring to rise in their career. Gender Stereotypes and the patriarchal ethos possibly govern their thinking (Asthana, 1992, Pyke, 2001). But still we find that there are some women who have taken up the challenging task, reached to the top and even sustained that position. They are known for their contribution in the field of educational administration. Who are those few women who could do that? These women who have made an entry into a least traveled path can be role models for other women. If some of them can reach that height then why the others cannot reach there? What is so specific about them that they can achieve is worth investigating. Research focusing on women who have achieved administrative positions in higher education should be undertaken in order to give comprehensive understanding of the issues and obstacles that are faced by women administrators in higher education and the strategies they adopted to overcome those obstacles. The insight into the life of those women who have achieved administrative positions will give learning experiences to other women who are aspiring for administrative positions. Before we understand the pathways of the women who have made to administrative positions, it is very important for one to understand the status of women in Indian society over a period of time. It is world wide recognized that women have been the victims of discrimination both in the developed as well as underdeveloped countries. We can see this discrimination being manifested in many spheres like political, social, familial, and economic. This discrimination against women is a matter of great concern all over the world. Women and their problems have acquired a steadily growing importance in the field of Social Sciences. Women as daughters, wives and mothers, are caught in the life cycle that begins with unequal treatment, with early marriage and often ends with the child birth. Bringing women out of the house and making them capable to join the main stream of national life is an important step. It is well established that women are an important component in the complex subject of development who constitute nearly half of the population and cannot be ignored for any planned and rapid progress of the nation.

1.1 STATUS OF INDIAN WOMEN THROUGH AGES

The status of women in any civilization shows the stage of evolution at which the civilization has arrived. The term 'status', includes personal and proprietary rights and also duties, liabilities and disabilities. In the case of Indian woman, it means her personal rights, proprietary rights, her duties, liabilities and disabilities vis-à-vis the society and her family members. To understand the traditional status of women in India the information is being derived from the historical accounts and classical texts. For the purpose of depicting a brief history of the changing positions and role of women in India, five broad categories have been considered which are viz., Vedic Period, Post Vedic Period, Islamic Period, British period and Contemporary period after independence.

The literature on Indian history has contradictory and conflicting views on the status of women. It can properly be understood within the socio-cultural condition of any society. The concept of ardhangini in the Indian society suggests that women had equal status to men. None of them was superior. Traditional India has always accorded woman a high place and indeed equality. Ideally women were accepted as a living force in the society, the embodiment of Shakti and a symbol of purity, religiousness, spirituality and sacrifice. In practice, however they were suppressed, deprived of various things and were exploited by men. They were also denied equal rights in marriage, family, social, educational, economic and political fields. They were always given a subordinate status. According to Mehta (1970), there is recorded evidence to show that women was not always without rights nor was constantly in subjection. There is greater evidence to show that contrary was equally true. For many centuries her position continued to be one in which she did not have either legal or social rights to make her independent of the family into which she was born and married. She further remarks that the status of women is complex question and has to be studied as an integral part of socio economic structure in which women live. It cannot be dissociated from it. The changes that have taken place in their position are a part of the process of transformation of a traditional society. The various stages of this transformation may be briefly dwelt upon as follows:

1.1.1 VEDIC PERIOD

The position of women in Hindu society at the dawn of civilization during the Vedic Period was much better. No nation has held women in higher esteem than the Hindus. There are evidence to believe that Indian women shared a responsible position with men and played a pivotal role in evolving a definite culture and tradition. There is almost consensus of opinion among great scholars of classical literature that during the Vedic Period (2500-1500 BC) a woman's status was equal to that of man. This can be judged by the way in which the birth of girls was received. We do not find any of the hymns in Rig-Veda which considered the birth of girl child as inauspicious. Hindu mythology witnesses that the status of Hindu woman during the Vedic Period was honorable and respectable. In Vedic Period we also find parents who would perform Kanyasraddhas on the second day of the moon for the blessing of getting learned and capable daughters. The Rig-Veda also praises the father of many daughters. Girls were educated like boys. The girls also had to spend the early years of their life in Brahmacharya ashram after observing Upanayana Sanskara for study of Vedas. After this Upanayana ceremony, the Vedic women carried on the study of Vedas, recited Vedic mantras, performed Vedic rites and rituals, undertook Vedic vows and did whatever was necessary for the proper performance of yagayajna, just like a son (Rigveda). Upanayana Sanskara was thought necessary for girls otherwise automatically they would be reduced to the status of shudras. Boys and girls had equal opportunity to advanced education. Attainment of women in intellectual field can be inferred from the fact that some of the hymns are attributed to female rishis. They were on the same footing as men. They learnt the Vedas, were entitled to recite the Vedas and they were teachers as well as learners. They were poetesses, teachers and intellectuals of the day. The girls could quit before recommended period of Brahmacharya ashram as they were married at 16/17 years of age. They were then called Sadyovahas. If she continued her studies, she was called Brahmavadini. During Vedic Period one comes across references of lady sages like Gosha, Apala, Lopamudra, Indrani, Maitreyi and Gargi. Gargi was one of the greatest Vedic scholars of her time. She challenged Yagnavalkaya and put many subtle and intricate questions to him (Yagnavalkya smriti). Apart form a literary career, women entered field of teaching, medicine, military and administration (Upadhyaya, 1974).

The marriages of girls used to take place with their consent. The educated girls had naturally an effective voice in the selection of their life partners. There used to be swayamwara marriages where women were given the chance of selecting their partners. The husband and wife stood on equal footing and prayed for long lasting love and friendship. There was no tradition of child marriage prevailing in Vedic Society. There used to be instances of love marriages also. Polygamy prevailed to some extent among the rich and royal families but ordinarily monogamy was the rule. It can be concluded that both men and women had a considerable freedom in selecting their partners though parents often arranged the suitable match (Upadhyaya,1974). Widows were allowed to remarry if they so desired. The position of a daughter during the Vedic period did not suffer from authoritative interference. She was socialized with a high degree of modesty. The women during the Vedic era had sufficient freedom of going out to attend fairs, festivals, assemblies. They were not confined to the four walls of their family houses. We do not even find mention of purdah system in any literature during this period. The daughter did not have any right to hold, acquire or dispose of property. She did not enjoy any legal status in the Rig Vedic times. But the unmarried daughter who stayed with the parents got a share in the property. The social and familial status of the daughter was fairly satisfactory in this period.

The Vedic society was patriarchal and male dominated. The household was raked by a house lord, who had almost absolute control over all the members of the family and to him his wife or wives were bound by a strict tie of life long duty and obedience. Marriage, in fact was a religious necessity for both men and women. The Vedic woman being sahadharminini or patni had the fullest right to participate in all the religious ceremonies with her husband. She could also perform sacrifices independently and was not regarded as an impediment in religious pursuits. Her position was an honored one in the family. Her social status was not just of a loving wife but also of a loving mother. She was described by the Vedic age as an ornament of home. Her social status was of an absolute equality with man in the eyes of the religion. The strong cultural background of Indian society and high status of women kept them healthy from all perspectives – social, physical and psychological.

1.1.2 POST-VEDIC PERIOD

During the Post- Vedic Period, women started loosing the status in the society, which she attained in the Vedic age. She lost her independence. She became a subject to protection. Manu the progenitor of Hindu race stated that woman should be kept day and night in subordination by males of the family – woman has to be protected by her father in childhood, by her husband at young age and by the sons in old age (Manu Smriti). She lost her identity after marriage. Manu's codes are legal authority of the time with respect to Hindu family. He regards daughters as an object of highest tenderness. He did not treat women at par with man so far as rituals of Vedas are concerned. The women were not eligible for the study of Vedas, nor for use of mantras in performing sacraments except marriage.

In this period we could see perceptible changes in the status of the women due to various reasons. Among which the most important reason was the denial of education. With the lapse of time, the position of the daughter also changed. During this period there was a gradual decline in the women's education. Girls were not allowed to go to the houses of the preceptor or centers of education but were taught only by near relatives like father, brother or uncle. Therefore, only the girls of rich and cultured families received religious and other training. As a result, there appeared a tendency to curtail the religious rights and privileges of women in general. The desire to get son to provide for the future, become quite intense and daughters came to be looked upon as encumbrances and the marriage age of the girls was also lowered. They had some voice in the selection of their life partners. Love marriages were also common. Among the Kshatriyas, swayamwara was fairly common in practice. The social and familial status of the daughter deteriorated in the Post-Vedic Period. The women were not allowed to participate in the performance of sacrificial ceremonies. They eventually began to lose touch with Vedas and were pushed back to domestic duties. The duties of Veda became the monopoly of men. Women also ceased to attend public meetings. Having lost their importance as comrades of men in public activities, they came to be honored merely as mothers. In this period there was discontinuance of Upanayana. These all produced disastrous consequences regarding the position and status of women. Marriage was settled soon after puberty. Early marriages became the hindrances in the education of girls. The institution of caste became very rigid with

strict hierarchical gradations. Brahmanical order was firmly established. Inter caste marriages were not allowed. Polygamy and Monogamy was prevalent. Brahmans could possess three wives, Kshtrayias two wives, and Vaishyas one besides one sudras wife for all, only for pleasure and not for religious rites. Women came to be regarded as being of the same status as sudras. During this period on the one hand woman was being idealized and on the other hand was given a much degraded status. Over the property of her husband it was generally considered that women had no right during his lifetime beyond the right of maintenance and residence. The women had her own property called stridhana; she was given only limited ownership. It seems the spirit of the Hindu law was not to allow women independence as regards the disposing of property but had the right of possession and right of enjoyment. It can be said that the social status of the wife was not satisfactory. Evidences of widow re-marriage during this period are conflicting, there are cases of permission as well as prohibition. A widow was generally not allowed to remarry. The position of widows became pitiable in this period. Widowhood was considered both undesirable as well as inauspicious. The widow was to avoid for the duration of a year, the use of honey, meat, spirits and liquor as well as salt and was to sleep on ground. The birth of a son was regarded necessary to pay off the debt to ancestors. Putra signifies one who saves a person from hell. The practice of sati was recommended by many of the later authorities and was well established by the end of sixth century A.D. Many unjust social customs like child marriages, sati, polygamy during this period reduced the status of women. They were regarded as 'nari-sudras'.

1.1.3 ISLAMIC PERIOD

In the Muslim period, around eleventh century onwards the position of women further deteriorated. Women faced a number of hardships and cruelty due to evil practices like child marriages, the purdah system, sati, widowhood, prostitution and devdasi system. Hindu women like their Muslim counterparts also adopted the purdah. In the Northern India, this practice was very religiously enforced. Most women being subject to purdah had no opportunity to education. During the Muslim rule the literacy among Hindu women went further down rapidly. Rich and cultured families were as a rule ruined by the new political revolution; they were no longer in a position to make special arrangements for the education of their daughters. The daughters in Rajput and

Nair families could read and write; the same was the case with Jain nuns, who were generally in a position to read their religious scriptures. These however were exceptional cases. The decline of literacy among women was so marked and rapid that by the beginning of nineteenth century hardly one women in hundred could read in Madras and Malva region. In the former province in 1826 A.D only 4,023 girls were attending schools as against 1,57,664 boys. According to the then population of the presidency the percentage of girls receiving some kind of education was only 0.5. The women during this period remained somewhere in between two portals, with no education, no special privileges but simplicity, patience, perseverance, endurance, understanding, immense love for home and children and intense religious inclinations. During this period the role of women conformed to the dictum laid down by Manu, the great law giver of second century that 'a woman does not deserve freedom, and she should be throughout dependent on the man. Another dictum laid down by him was that a woman should be subservient in all stages of her life-'in childhood to the father, in youth to the husband and his elderly kins and to some when widowed.' Child marriage was very popular practice of the social life of Mughal period (Misra, 1957). Hindu daughters too were married before the age of nine or ten years and in some cases were married even before they had learnt to talk. The legal position of Hindu women with regard to inheritance was again unsatisfactory. Women were excluded from succession to property and made them dependent on men. All these social circumstances led to the further deterioration in the position of the daughters. Alongwith the insecurity and uncertainty that prevailed in the Mughal period, the practice of purdah became rigid and women were forbidden even to visit the holy shrines. Both Hindu and Muslim women lost all their liberal activities and became the property of their male masters. The practice of purdah, invented to protect women, had a restrictive effect. As a result, the social life of women narrowed down. Widow Remarriage was prohibited and they had to follow strict rules and restrictions. During this period "sati" became more frequent among royal families in northern India and quite common in Kashmir. The practice of "sati" and "jauhar" was also quite common as well as popular particularly among the Rajputs and Marathas of Central India. From time to time protestant movements like Buddhism, Jainism, Vaishnavism and Sikhism made sincere efforts to improve the status of women. They too regarded women as mothers and wives but necessarily inferior to men. In the history of India, eighteenth century was a period of overall decline of women. It was the darkest period

so far as women were concerned. Political decay following the advent of various European powers, combined with fossilized customs, tradition, superstition and irrational bigotry, ruined the nation. Under the new conditions, women lost their independent identity. They did not enjoy a separate world of their own.

1.1.4 BRITISH PERIOD

In the latter half of the eighteenth century, when the Britishers came to India, women's status had dropped to the lowest level. It was the worst period in the history of the century because of child marriages and sati system. Women were denied equal rights in marital, familial, social, educational, economic and political fields. The marriage ideals, power and authority exercised by the joint family and caste system combined within the four walls of the house, made it difficult for them to seek full personality development. They had scant personal identity and few rights. This deterioration in the status of women brought about a number of consequences. The uneducated were considered on a level with shudras, married before their characters were fully developed, transferred from the loving sympathetic atmosphere of parent's house to the house of the parents-in-law where the atmosphere of awe prevailed apprehensive of suppression, frequently forced to drag on a miserable existence. They had no status; they were more like puppets which move when someone else pulls the strings than individual human beings with minds of their own. During British Period, Indian society faced significant modifications. The British government worked slowly and succeeded in providing alternative way of life for those who wanted to change by introducing a new type of economy, state structure, and educational system and also by passing new social legislations. For the upliftment of women in India several factors are responsible. The first one was the direct influence of the British noted for their courtesy towards women; the general awakening of Asians in twentieth century and the political struggle for Indian's independence also gave considerable force to the feminist movement in India. The pitiful and pitiable plight of the widows who were forced to commit 'sati' attracted attention of a good number of enlightened Indians and the British under the leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. Lord William Bentick passed a historic resolution of great importance on December, 14, 1829, by which sati was made "a crime of culpable homicide punishable with fine, imprisonment or both."

The position of girls, women and widows improved during the British period. They introduced female education in India. But the system of child marriage came in the way of the spread of female education. Hence in 1929 they passed the child marriage restraint act. This act restricted the evils of early marriage and increase in the number of girl widows. The act not only prohibited the solemnization of child marriages but also raised the minimum age for marriage of girls to fourteen years. Under section 5 of the 1929 Act, the marriage of girls below fourteen years and boys below eighteen years of age was to be penalized. This Act was also known as Sarda Act. This also helped in promoting girls education. This led to the improvement in the position of the daughter. To improve the economic condition of women The Hindu Women's Right to Property Act of 1937 was passed. Besides these governmental activities, in 1917, Mrs. Annie Besant tried to promote women's education through the Indian Association. In 1920 the federation of University of women was established and in 1925 the National Council of Women started.

The familial social status of the wife also improved during the British Period because of rise in female education and the rise in the marriage age. The Hindu Women's Right of Separate Residence and Maintenance Act of 1946 enabled Hindu wives to claim maintenance even without having judicial separator under certain circumstances. Women acquired a new social status because of new social legislation called the Civil Indian Marriage Act III of 1872.

The familial, social and legal position of the Hindu women was greatly improved during the British Period. Although a small section of women took advantage of these measures and privileges given, their initiation was indeed significant. During Indian's struggle for freedom, thousands of women took part under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, Sarojini Naidu, Vijayalaxmi Pandit and Kasturba Gandhi were some of the unique women personalities.

1.1.5 CONTEMPORARY PERIOD

Due to principles of democracy based on liberty, a woman's role began to change toward greater emancipation from man's domination. Free India has carried forward

the process to a point where at least legally men and women are equal. Some of the basic cultural orientations towards men and women in the contemporary Indian society have been shaped by the historical developments and the persistence of local and regional traditions. The contradictory attitudes which is expressed about women in past persists even today. On the one hand the women is regarded as the highest embodiment of purity and power which is a symbol for religiousness and spirituality, on the other hand they are viewed as weak and dependent creatures in need of constant guidance and protection. Till date there exists the desirability of male child in the society as in the Hindus the attainment of salvation is important and a male can only offer water to the spirits of the deceased ancestors. A son alone has the right to perform essential rites ensuring the passage to heaven or attainment of salvation. This makes desire for a male offspring very strong. It is also a belief that parents can depend on sons for support of old age and are looked upon as potential builders of family prestige and prosperity. On the contrary the daughters are considered to be destined for others. The upbringing of daughters is a worry for parents. The difficulties and expenses involved in their upbringing and marriage becomes the reason for their being undesirable by many parents. In Indian society, outside the educated elite group girls are often considered an economic liability because of tradition that requires a girl's parents to provide her with dowry at the time of marriage. There is a tradition of Kanyadan where the parents offer the daughter to the bride groom and also give affectionate gifts in kind or cash with the intention of setting up her house so that new couple can start a comfortable life. Over a period of time these traditions became a compulsion and the whole process of marriage got commercialized. This dowry system directly leads to several other harmful practices against women and girls in India like burning of brides over disputes, mental harassment and many such features.

The assumption of superiority of males has build up the ideas of male dominance and female dependence. Thus most of the major decision making roles come in the domain of male member. These cultural attributes have a great impact on the development of women in India. It also varies according to other variables operating in the society such as caste, class, rural, urban, education, region and other socio-economic parameters. The role of wife-mother was affected by this new freedom. In

India due to efforts of social reformers and social legislations, women were brought out of the confines of their homes. The process of industrialization and urbanization had share in the changes which followed. It was the 20th century that brought about dynamic changes and new concepts which affected the status of women giving them fresh dignity and importance. The constitution of Indian Republic has incorporated in its objectives the principles of equality and has ushered the Indian womenfolk into the new era. It has also proclaimed the equality of men and women in all domains of life. In Article 15 of the Constitution it is mentioned that, 'the state shall not discriminate against any citizen only on the ground of religion, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. Article 16 expressively provides that, 'there shall be equality of opportunity for all citizens in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the state'. Under Article 325 and 326 women are not only given voting rights but are also given the right to stand for elections. Even the Directive principles of State policy enumerate certain directives towards the emancipation of women. Article 39 provides 'equal pay for equal work irrespective of sex'. The modern Indian legislations have established the position of the women by offering her the same rights, opportunities and openings which man have. The Hindu succession Act, 1956 has statutorily recognized the right to property on the Hindu daughter. This Act has placed the daughter at par with the son. Now she can succeed to the undivided interest of her father in the joint property and to the separated property of the father along with other heirs specified in clause I of the schedule. Dowry system, an abominable social evil, which makes young women's life miserable, has been curbed by the enactment of the Dowry prohibition Act of 1961. Education is also made free and compulsory for all the children of 6-14 age groups as per Article 45. Accessibility to education and availability of increasing opportunities for acquiring education has brought about tremendous changes in the role of women.

At present, the wife enjoys respectable position. She can even live separately under section 18 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act, 1956 and can claim maintenance under certain circumstances. Widow Remarriage is legalized. Section 14 of the Hindu Succession Act 1956 has made her the absolute owner of the property. She is not deprived of the property which she has inherited from her first husband even after her remarriage. Section 8 of the Hindu Adoption and Maintenance Act,

1956, recognizes her as the natural and legal guardian of her minor children after their father. These legislations have promoted emancipation of women to a very large extent. Besides these legislations, under the provision of Directive Principles of State Policy each state has undertaken women's welfare programmes. The Central and state governments have shown keen interest in betterment of the legal, social, educational and cultural status of women. In a nutshell, it can be said that education and women's participation in all fields of economy, science and culture will help them in achieving real equality.

We find lots of positive and concerted efforts being done by the Government to improve the socio-economic status of women after Independence. After independence, attainment of equal status for women in every sphere of life was enshrined as one of the main objectives of the Indian Constitution. We can see the efforts being done right from the First five year Plan.

In the First Five Year Plan the issue of providing equal status to women has been sharply focused in the development process. It was considered under the social welfare programme. The first four plans focused on organizing various welfare activities and giving priority to women's education, whereas the Fifth and Sixth Plans witnessed a shift in approach from welfare to the over all development of women. Accordingly, the Sixth Plan adopted a multi-disciplinary approach with a special thrust on the three core sectors of health, education and employment of women. The seventh plan (1985-90) laid stress on efforts to identify and promote beneficiary oriented programme with the major objective of raising their economic and social status and bringing them into the mainstream of national development. A significant step in this direction was to identify/promote the 'Beneficiary- Oriented Schemes' (BOS) in various developmental sectors which extended direct benefits to women. The thrust on generation of both skilled and unskilled employment through proper education and vocational training continued.

The Eighth Plan (1992-97), with human development as its major focus, played a very important role in the development of women. It promised to ensure that benefits of development from different sectors do not by-pass women, implement special

programmes to complement the general development programmes and to monitor the flow of benefits to women from other development sectors and enable women to function as equal partners and participants in the development process. The eight plan made significant shift from 'development' to women's empowerment. It recommended 30 percent reservation for all women at all level of government.

The Ninth Plan (1997-2002) made two significant changes in the conceptual strategy of planning for women. Firstly, Empowerment of Women became one of the nine primary objectives of the Ninth Plan. To this effect, the Approach of the Plan was to create an enabling environment where women could freely exercise their rights both within and outside home, as Equal partners along with men. Secondly, the Plan attempted `convergence of existing services' available in both women-specific and women related sectors. To this effect, it directed both the centre and the states to adopt a special strategy of 'Women's Component Plan' (WCP) through which not less than thirty per cent of funds/benefits flow to women from all the general development sectors. The Mahila Samakhya scheme was launched in 1989 to translate the goals of the National Policy on Education into a concrete programme for education and empowerment of women in rural areas, particularly women in socially and economically marginalized groups.

The Tenth Plan recognizes the need to initiate affirmative action to ensure at least thirty percent reservations for women in services in the Public Sector as against the existing representation of 14.5 per cent in 1999. Efforts therefore, were suggested to be made to increase the representation of women in Services through providing coaching facilities, encouraging women to compete along with men in the competitive examinations on the one hand, and on the other, providing support services for working women to ensure mobility in the employment market. During the Tenth Plan period, some important legislation have been passed and amended. For Example, besides the Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act 2005 and PWDVA 2005 mentioned earlier, the Dowry Prohibition Act was reviewed. A very active civil society has been relentlessly campaigning on these issues. Their experiences and recommendations will be taken on board to ascertain that the rights of every woman are enshrined in laws.

In the Eleventh Plan, for the first time, women are recognized not just as equal citizens but as agents of economic and social growth. It has been stressed here that we should ensure the participation and adequate representation of women at the highest policy levels, particularly in Parliament and State assemblies. It also suggested to strengthen existing institutional mechanisms and create new ones for gender main-streaming and effective policy implementation.

While the impact of various developmental policies, plans and programmes implemented over the last few decades have brought forth a perceptible improvement in the socio-economic status of women, problems like illiteracy, ignorance; discrimination and violence continue to persist even today.

It is observed from the above that the status of women in India have changed over a period in terms of social, economical and cultural aspects. Women Education has now been given importance and the government has taken various steps to promote women education as now it has been understood that for the development of any nation the development of its human resource is very imperative and one cannot afford to neglect the fifty percent of its human resource which is women. In spite of so many efforts, even now the female infanticide is seen in the states like Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan. In the present scenario of inflation, recession, spiraling prices, people are forced to restrict the family size. In such a situation the pressure for male child has increased and hence people are keen on sex determination, ultra sound and hence they justify their abortion. The dislike towards female child has linkage with our prevalent social evils like dowry. Dowry deaths are a part of India's social reality despite the strong anti-dowry laws.

1.2 WOMEN'S EDUCATION AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

For the national development, human development is very important irrespective of gender. India is among the few developing countries where gender equality and improvement in the status of women are specifically stated to be central goals of development and social policy. Education is the key that can empower women. Education undoubtedly contributes to the development. It is universally accepted that

female literacy rates have a positive impact on health, and other social issues. It raises income, improves health and increases productivity. Education helps women to gain access to knowledge, skills, jobs and participation in society. According to Seth (2001), "the productive and creative energies of the women of India have to be released through creative and sound education to which they must have access at all cost. This would be the key to their empowerment". The programme of Action (1992) also states that the National Education System will play a positive, interventionist role in empowerment of women. It will foster the development of new values through redesigned curricula, textbooks, training and orientation of teachers, decision makers and administrators with active involvement of educational institutions.

Since 1951 there has been a steady growth in universities/university level institutions and colleges in India. The growth of student enrolment and percentage of women in Higher Education is shown in table 1. While over the years there is a steady rise in the proportion of women entering university, the wide gap between women and men entering university still persists (Table 1).

Table 1. Decadal growth in women's enrolment at Higher Education level

Year	Total Enrolment	% age of women
1950-51	3,96,745	10.9
1960-61	10,49,864	16.2
1970-71	19,53,700	22.0
1980-81	27,52,437	27.2
1990-91	49,24,868	29.2
2000-01	83,99,443	39.4

Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05, MHRD. New Delhi 2007

If we further see the enrolment of women in different field of education, it is seen from the table below (table 2) that the highest representation of women is in 'Education'. During 2000-01 more than 50% students in the field of education were women which indicated that women are more inclined towards teaching profession. This is followed by disciplines like Arts and Medicine. In 2000-01, 44% of Medical

admissions were of women. Contrary to these fields, very few women seem to opt for fields like Engineering, Agriculture and Veterinary Science. Over the five-year period, (1995-96 to 2000-01) overall preference of students for different subjects has not shown much change (Table 2, values in parenthesis). Slight reduction in preference for Arts and increase in preference for Science and Engineering followed by Commerce seems to be there.

Table 2. Enrolment of women students in different faculties at Higher Education level.

Faculty/Year	1995-96		2000-01	
	Total enrolment	% Women	Total enrolment	% Women
Arts	31,62,582 (48.1)	40.6	38,75,102 (46.1)	44.2
Science	12,27,359 (18.6)	37.0	16,70,263 (19.8)	39.4
Medicine	1,88,117 (2.9)	39.8	2,62,753 (2.9)	44.0
Agriculture	40,505 (0.6)	14.3	50,308 (0.6)	17.4
Commerce/management	11,23,633 (17.1)	32.5	15,00,609 (17.8)	36.5
Law	2,61,130 (4.0)	16.8	2,67,043 (4.0)	20.0
Education	1,00,602 (1.5)	46.5	1,09,196 (1.3)	51.2
Others	70,788 (1.1)	35.0	.0 73,932 (0.9)	37.7
Total	65,74,005 (100)	36.0	83,99,443 (100.5)	39.4

Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05, MHRD. New Delhi 2007

GRADUATION TO POST GRADUATION

Below table (table:3) gives information on proportion of women persisting with education as one moves from graduation to post graduation and Ph D. During index year 2000-01 there was increase in the proportion of women studying science at PG level compared to graduation level but some decline occurred at the level of Ph.D. It would therefore appear that relatively more women tend to persist with studies after graduation though some attrition occurs at the level of Ph.D.

Table : 3 Percentage of women enrolled at various levels in various faculties in the year 2000-01.

Faculty	Percentage of women		
	Graduation	Post-graduation	Ph.D
Arts	44.2	44.7	38.6
Science	39.0	42.5	37.2
Engineering/Technology	21.8	15.8	16.5
Medicine	45.5	34.4	29.3
Agriculture	17.2	18.8	14.6
Veterinary Science	21.6	18.6	14.5

Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05, MHRD. New Delhi, 2007

WOMEN IN WORK FORCE

Lots of women are now trying to be self-dependent and have entered the labor force. In the Indian society school teaching and nursing were the occupations first permitted to middle and upper class women. The below table 4 shows that the highest number of women is in teaching profession, which comes around approximately eighty percent. The next preferred profession is Medical & Para-Medical occupations, such as nurses, mid-wives and health visitors and also in small number as Physicians and Surgeons (allopathic). Other workers category in this field consists of personnel such as Dietician, Physician & other Surgeon, Pharmacists, Physiotherapists, Medical and Health Technicians.

Table : 4 Women employees in professional & technical occupations

Sr. No.	Occupational category	No. of women employees	Percentage to total (women)
1.	Engineering personnel	5862	1.8
2.	Medical personnel	39230	12.2
3.	Physical scientists & physical science technicians	1507	0.5
4.	Social scientists	3855	1.2
5.	Teachers	254769	79.5
6.	Others	15289	4.8
Total		320512	100.0

Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05. MHRD. New Delhi, 2007

1.3 WOMEN IN TEACHING PROFESSION

By nature, women are educators. Usually, it is woman's role to educate her children. The womb is the initial phase of a person's life. The development and intelligence of a fetus is substantially influenced by its mother, so teaching comes naturally to her. School teaching is particularly preferred by women as shown in Table 4. This profession has been traditionally accorded a special respect in Indian society as it involves knowledge and teaching. When a woman enters University teaching, there status is significantly higher than that of school teachers. In today's era women have access to almost all professions which are even more lucrative and highly prestigious but still there are many who prefer academic profession. Many women join the academic profession as they find it more suitable in balancing their work and home responsibilities. Schools and colleges have long vacations and they are able to use these vacations to catch up with pending home making tasks. Even the working hours are convenient for women to mange the children along with work. As a far greater percentage of women employees were accounted for teachers in professional workers division (table 5), it would be interesting to identify their teaching levels:

Table : 5 Women teachers by teaching levels

Sr. No.	Teaching level	No. of women teachers	Percentage distribution
1.	Craft teachers	4404	1.7
2.	Pre-primary school teachers	2333	0.9
3.	Primary & middle school teachers	87017	34.2
4.	Higher secondary/secondary school teachers	128553	50.5
5.	University & college teachers	28868	11.3
6.	Others	3594	1.4
7.	Total	254769	100.0

Source: Selected Educational Statistics 2004-05. MHRD. New Delhi, 2007

Data in above table reveals that 50.5 percent were higher secondary and secondary school teachers followed by 34.2 percent women who were engaged in the primary

and middle schools, and 11.3 percent were engaged in Universities and Colleges. In other category of teachers women shared places but not in substantial numbers.

The teaching profession both in this country and internationally is, with few exceptions, predominated by women. Women in education possess immense potentialities as they have entered in this profession in a big way. Women who enter academic profession are well qualified, often better qualified than their male colleagues, at the point at which they enter the profession. But very few are able to do research, or writing, acquire doctoral or post doctoral degrees or other academic distinctions required to be elevated to positions of management. (Chitins 1992). However, a look at the statistics reveals that despite the large numbers of women in the profession, they are greatly under represented in positions of administration. The reason which is quoted by Chitins S, 1992 was that women even though acquiring additional qualifications are not always willing to move from a purely teaching or research position to one involving administrative responsibilities because these involve more time on job. Purely administrative and managerial positions are even less popular, since these are often non vacational posts. However, their number at top levels is very less compared to their intellectual attainments. But now all this is rapidly changing. Many woman now accord equal importance to their responsibilities as career women and home makers and some even consider their career more important.

1.4 WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION

In an attempt to find the data of Women in Higher education administration it was found that although we have bodies such as University Grants Commission and the Association of Indian Universities who has put a variety of statistics on Higher Education in India, but there are hardly any data on the gender composition of the different academic and administrative positions in the system. This is a serious shortcoming, particularly in view of the national commitment to advance the participation of women in development (Chitins S 1992). An attempt is made here to give the statistics of women at different administrative positions in Higher education with the help of Universities Handbook (as the name represents gender and verifying from other sources) whether it is male or female.

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India has a vast Higher Education system with a total of 496 universities. Out of these 496 Univeristies only 341 Universities are members of Association of Indian Univerisity (AIU) as per Universities Handbook, 2010. All these universities and institutions have different category of administrators at various levels such as Vice-Chancellors, Pro-Vice-Chancellors, Registrars, Deans, Directors, Librarians, Co-coordinators, etc. The data of women administrators at these positions is given in table 6.

Out of 290 institutions in the year 2000 there were eleven women Vice-Chancellors which is just 3.8 percent representation, the highest number is seen in Deans position which is sixty six in 290 universities but one should not forget that deans position are many in an institution whereas Vice Chancellors' post is single.

Table : 6 Women Administrators in Higher Education

Positions	Number of women administrators				
	1995	2000	2003	2006	2010
Vice Chancellors	09	11	06	10	22
Pro- Vice Chancellors	02	01	01	00	02
Registrars	06	03	03	06*	06
Deans	66	66	50	57	99
Directors	06	13	04	04	05
Total	89	94	64	67	134

** out of six Registrars, one is in-charge and one officiating*

The data available on the number of women in higher education administration and in influential and decision-making positions clearly indicates that women are very few. They are severely under-represented at senior academic management positions. The above table shows the number of women administrators in Indian Universities and other higher educational institutions in the years 1995, 2000, 2003, 2006 and 2010 (Universities Handbook of A.I.U., 1995, 2000, 2003, 2010)

The number of women Vice-Chancellors has increased recently in the year 2010 to 22 women Vice-Chancellors but the number of Universities has also increased to 341 (only members of AIU included). This comes to 6.4 percent which shows increase though not a major difference but an improvement is noted. Even the number of Deans has also increased to 99.

It is also observed that as we move above the ladder the number of women at administrative position decreases. More women are seen in the Deans position but very few for the Registrar, Vice-Chancellor and Pro-Vice-Chancellor. The statistics show that women are missing at senior management positions. The number of women educational administrators is insignificant and demystify the equality among sexes.

Women have held practically every position in the hierarchy of higher education administration, except that of visitor. There has been no women visitor till Honorable Pratibha Patil became President of India, for the simple reason that before her India did not had any woman President. Interestingly, none of the Central Universities yet have been headed by a woman Vice-Chancellor. In the upcoming Central Universities, two women Vice-Chancellors names have been declared for the post of Vice-Chancellors. Honorable President Pratibha Patil has appointed Prof. Jancy James as the Vice-Chancellor of the Central University to be set in Kasaragod in Kerala who was also former Vice-Chancellor of Mahatma Gandhi University. Prof. Surabhee Banerjee has been appointed as Vice-Chancellor of Central University of Orissa proposed to be in Koraput. She also was earlier Vice-Chancellor of Netaji Subhas Chandra Open University in Kolkotta, and formerly Pro-Vice-Chancellor, University of Calcutta.

This shows that management in higher education has basically become a masculine activity. Women have not occupied positions that can enable them to influence the policies and direction of their institutions, both at the departmental and at institutional levels. Thus, we can say that the leadership and management structure of higher education is still male-dominated as shown above. This is not only the picture observed in India but studies conducted on the position of women in higher education in most other countries also reveal that women still occupy junior ranks in spite of

their increased participation in higher education in the recent years (Hansard Report, 1990, Lund, 1998; UNESCO, 1993; Nzomo, 1995; Kanake, 1997; Lodiaga and Mbevi ,1995). Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service survey report (Lund 1998) also revealed that there was no discernable difference between the developed countries of the Commonwealth and their counterparts in developing countries. In management, women were found to be invisible in senior management positions. Most women were found to be more likely to occupy such positions as Registrar, Librarians or Heads of personnel rather than Vice-Chancellors. This trend of decreasing women administrators as we move up the ladder can be explained by looking into the process of appointments being made at different administrative positions and even by examining the rights and duties associated with these positions.

The Chief Executive administrative positions in any University are: The Chancellor, The Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor and the Registrar and the Chief Academic administrative positions are: the Faculty Dean and the Department Head.
The **Chancellor** is the head of the university (called 'visitor' in the case of Central Universities). The Governor is the Chancellor in the State Universities; The Chancellor or 'visitor' in case of Central Universities is the President of India. The Chancellor is also chairman of Senate. All statutes and ordinances of the university must receive his approval. He has the power to ask any papers or information. All appointments and promotions must receive his approval. Formally he/she appoints the Vice-Chancellor. Usually he/she follows the wishes of the State Government in this appointment, but sometimes can play a deciding role. The Chancellor presides over all the official functions of the University, especially its yearly convocations. The role of Chancellor is largely ceremonial. Chancellor has a constant but remote presence in the life of the University.

The **Vice-Chancellor** is the Chief Executive and academic officer of the University. He/she is the kingpin of the University Administration. Following the principle of centralization, all academic influence and administrative powers seems to be concentrated in him/her. But for a few exceptions, Vice-Chancellorship is a full-time paid position. Vice-Chancellor is selected by the Chancellor from the list of names submitted by the search/selection committee. The committee usually consists of three

members nominated by members of the Senate, Syndicate, State Governments, High Court, or some combination of these. In a few cases, the Vice-Chancellor is elected by the Senate or Syndicate. The term of appointment of Vice-Chancellor is normally three to five years and may be renewable by another term. The Vice-Chancellor's duties are many. He/she is Ex-officio Chairman of the Senate, the Syndicate and the Academic Council, and numerous committees, including very important faculty selection committees. Vice-Chancellor presides over the Senate in the absence of the Chancellor. Vice-Chancellor convenes their meetings, prepares their agendas, monitors their deliberations, and directs their proceedings. He is responsible for executing their decisions. He has direct access to all University bodies, authorities and their meetings. He has the power of inquiry and inspection. He has the right to ask for an explanation of the behaviour of any and all employees of the University. He must see to it that the act, the statutes, the ordinances, and the regulations of the university are effectively administered and complied with. He sets the conditions of work, including granting of leave; he evaluates performance, allocates office and living space, adjudicates complaints, and settles disputes. He controls, with the syndicate, 'the hiring, the firing, the punishment, and the suspension of employees.....He is responsible for discipline among all personnel... (Including) the discipline and good behaviour of students' (Gaudino, 1965). The Vice-Chancellor is at the centre of University affairs. He/She is at the centre of the university's internal governance and external relationships. He is, without a doubt, the key player in the University administration. Decisions revolve around him/her. Competing pushes and pulls are balanced here. The Vice-Chancellor is not only the centre of the University's internal affairs; he/she is also the public persona of the University. He is the University's representative, the point man, to the State or Central Government. He must have cordial working relationships with officials and ministers in the State and Central Governments, since they control his University's life blood, the purse strings. He must secure their benevolence for operating the University and for expanding and strengthening it. He represents the University to the larger community, to the national and international academic and professional organizations.

The **Pro-Vice-Chancellor** is a recent phenomenon. It leads often to political interference in the University's affairs and undermines the University's autonomy. In

a University, an assistant to a Vice-Chancellor is called a Pro-Vice-Chancellor (also Rector or deputy Vice-Chancellor). These are sometimes teaching academics who take on additional responsibilities. Some of these responsibilities are in-charge of Administration, Research and Development, Academic and Education affairs. In some Universities, there are several deputies Vice-Chancellor subordinate to the Vice-Chancellor, with Pro-Vice-Chancellor being a position at an executive level ranking below Deputy Vice-Chancellor. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor is normally appointed by the Executive Council on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor. If the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor is not accepted by the Executive Council, the matter shall be referred to the Visitor who may either appoint the person recommended by the Vice-Chancellor or ask the Vice-Chancellor to recommend another person to the Executive Council. The Executive Council may, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor, appoint a Professor to discharge the duties of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor in addition to his own duties as a Professor. The term of office of a Pro-Vice-Chancellor may be decided by the Executive Council but it shall not in any case exceed five years or until the expiration of the term of office of the Vice-Chancellor, whichever is earlier. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor whose term of office has expired shall be eligible for reappointment. A Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall assist the Vice-Chancellor in respect of such matters as may be specified by the Vice-Chancellor in this behalf, from time to time, and shall also exercise such powers and perform such duties as may be assigned or delegated to him by the Vice-Chancellor.

The **Registrar** is the custodian of the University seal, of all its buildings, properties and records. He is also the secretary of the Senate, Syndicate and other University authorities and committees. He keeps minutes of their meetings and records of their deliberations. The Registrar is not a public man. He is the bureaucrat, the man behind the scenes, the man always on hand. His cooperation is highly valued, his opposition not lightly dismissed.

Looking to the way the above administrative positions are filled, we can understand that as the power and position increases the chances of women being selected becomes low. The top level positions require more of socialization and networking and a position of Vice-Chancellor is more political in nature as the State Government

has a role to play in selection. The female half of our population has often been ignored, ridiculed, thwarted, or prevented from considering administrative roles. To begin changing this precedent, we have to consider what barriers are there which prevents the women to move forward as administrators. With an understanding of theses barriers, the strategies can be evolved which will help them in taking up administrative positions. According to societal trend there is a general assumption that it is difficult for women to reach up to managerial positions due to their so-called inherent inability and the traditional upbringing at home. Women have to face various constraints in their career advancement. In a male dominated society like ours, there may be several personal, social, political, and economic problems, which may hinder the access of women to the managerial positions in the profession of education.

In spite of promising demographical statistics, equal opportunities for women to secure positions in educational administration are still hampered by some historical myths and contemporary barriers. As a necessary step to achieve success, the constraints that women face must be examined to find individual and gender specific ways to progress.

1.5 CONSTRAINTS IN CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Women administrators have certain barriers which inhibits their career progression. Below are discussed some of the barriers which a women administrator faces.

a) SEX ROLES STEREOTYPING

Here, a stereotype is being used to indicate fixed attitudes that influence how women are perceived- for example as being soft, loving, attending, and intuitive. They are perceived as being afraid of achievement, poor at quantitative analysis, and unable to make tough decisions. Discriminatory practices at the professional front are also responsible for preventing many capable aspiring women administrators from assuming positions of responsibility (Castro, 1990; Asthana, 1992). Gender stereotypes and the patriarchal ethos possibly govern the thinking of women (Asthana, 1992; Pyke, 2001). Whisker, (1996) cited that that sex role stereotyping which privileges the male is fundamental barrier to women's opportunities in management. Management is mostly being associated "with being male". For long the management

and leadership positions were predominantly male domains. The administrative position is grounded in masculine attributes which may influence the women's' career choices. There is an assumption that women lack the qualities of successful administrators. Hammound (1993) argues that stereotyped notions about women constitute major barriers to the advancement of women to administrative position in higher education. A myth exists in society that women are too emotional and too illogical for administrative positions and are best suited for the domestic maintenance of administration. Sex role stereotyping has made institutions resist the appointment of women to administrative positions. In a survey conducted at The M.S. University by Pradhan. S & et al (2003), one of the male respondents said that if he is in the selection committee and there is male and female candidate equally competent in front of him to be selected for an administrative position he will prefer a male candidate.

a) GLASS CEILING

Glass ceiling refers to the artificial barriers existing, which are based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in the organization (Onsongo, 2002). A glass ceiling exists for many qualified women which blocks their aspirations allowing them to see where they might go, but stops them from reaching there. In most of the positions though merit guides the selection process, but the highest and the most prestigious positions are filled on the basis of "trust", "rapport" patronage etc, and women miss out on this not because they fail to meet these overt criteria's which guides the selection process, but because male administrators think that women will not fit the administrative structure (Dines 1993). So various excuses like "we need someone to fit into the team", "it is a hard job", "we need someone who understands culture", are given for not appointing a women in the administrative position.

b) FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

The women administrators in Higher education face cultural barriers as they are expected to perform a traditional role of mothers and wives along with the professional roles. Women are expected to shoulder a majority of responsibilities at

home and the overall welfare of the family takes precedence over personal interests and desires (Varghese, 1990, Singh, 1992, Grewal, 2002). The uneven burden of child care and household responsibilities that women shoulder has been a major barrier to their advancement to administrative positions (Edson, 1981; Parkway & Curie, 1992). In a survey conducted by Singh (1992) on women administrators in higher education also it was evident that the physical presence of women administrators at home is great necessity for a women who is married and has dual responsibilities of being an administrator at the institution and a responsible person at home. The pressure of these two roles creates work family conflict These women administrators face difficulties in creating a balance between their traditional roles and professional roles.. Inmost of the cases the careers of women are dependent on their spouses after marriage and on father before marriage. Family responsibility is seen as one of the common barrier in many of the research studies conducted on women administrators in higher education. The women administrators reported stress as they were not able to cope up with the dual responsibilities (Varghese, 1990). Though it is generally accepted for women to work outside the home, it is evident in the study conducted by Freeman (1992), Rouse (1999) that the responsibilities of home bear heavily on women. Newman (1978) suggested that women frequently have had to compromise their career aspirations because of inner conflict created by family responsibilities and role identification.

c) INTERNAL BARRIERS

In most of the studies it was found that the internal factors like lack of self confidence, lack of motivation, low self image etc contribute a lot to lack of achievement in administration. Internal barriers are seen more prevalent for women than for men and for this the social structure of the society is the root cause of such inequities. Schmuck(1976), Hawkins (1991), Asthana (1992) reported lack of confidence and low self image as internal barrier which prevent them from considering top administrative positions in higher education. The socialization process presumes certain sex-linked differences where assumptions about male and female roles are made. Thus men are supposed to be stronger, more aggressive and more independent than women. On the other hand women are assumed to be weaker, more passive, more people oriented and more dependent. It is because of these role

prescriptions, feels Asthana (1992) that women become trapped into the psychological barrier of lack of confidence in her.

d) LACK OF ROLE MODELS/MENTORS

According to Connie (1988), Hawkins (1991) one of the obstacles faced by women administrators is lack of role model. As there are very few women who has achieved to the top administrative positions, the aspiring women administrators didn't had enough role model for them. The role models available to them were male administrators and they tried to adopt the masculine qualities as they thought, that is the only reason they are there. Women administrators faced the problem of lack of mentors who can guide them with group norms, work activities, role behaviors and developing relationships with networks of colleagues and other professionals.

Mentors can assist women by increasing their professional visibility and helping them to clarify career aspirations. Mentors can be key for women to advance their careers. Mentoring received my women can lead them to experience less discrimination and speed up women's careers. Noe (1988) suggests that mentors are important in helping women to understand realities of the male dominated society.

e) LACK OF NETWORKING

Research findings have pointed out that the male academicians have greater access to broad national as well as international network as compared to women. This networking helps them in their career growth in terms of their publication rate. As a result of these networks there is likelihood of them to be quoted, or be invited to national and international conferences and hence to build national and international reputation. Networks provide a critical support for the career advancements and capability of an administrator (Angles 1990). Men have support networks such as clubs and other groups. However, women do not have such networks outside traditional areas (Connie, 1988). These networks of men bar women from accessing positions of leadership.

f) LACK OF SUPPORT

Women traditionally have not had the support & encouragement needed to attempt a career. Lack of support is identified as common barrier by Connie (1988), Pyke (2001) in their research studies. Women receive less support from friends, family, and university professors. Women as seen earlier have dual responsibilities of family and work. They need a support system at home, but our traditional culture does not allow that, as women are expected to do household work. Even at organization it is found from various researches that they lack support from their colleagues, not only male colleague but also female. Majority of the administrators have reported the lack of support systems (Cahalan, 2007; Cook, 2007; Santee, 2006; Wilbanks, 2005) and those women who could mobilize support systems could sustain administrative positions and were successful.

g) LACK OF CLEAR PROFESSIONAL GOALS

An important aspect affecting women's aspirations to leadership positions frequently is a lack of clear professional goals. Studies (eg., Bonuso and Shakeshaft, 1983; Thomas, 1986; Weber, Feldman, and Poling, 1981) often show a strong correlation between women's lack of career advancement and their lower professional goals. In a research conducted by Gupton, S.L and Slick, G.A 1996 on highly successful women administrators, the respondents frequently reported that they had not carefully planned their ascent to the top. It seemed that often opportunities had simply emerged and they pursued their options in an unplanned manner. Sometimes, a mentor or a boss suggested that they apply for a position. To many of the women their acquisition of a position was by default, tenure in the district, and/or because they had completed an advanced degree and were available.

These barriers and many others like Socialization process, prejudices, gender bias etc. block the women to reach top administrative positions in spite of being competent. These barriers are seen existing in both developed as well as developing countries. They have been reported in Arab States, India, West Africa, Malaysia, Indonesia, South Pacific, Peru, United States, Caribbean, Finland & France (Dine 1993), Botswana, jibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Mauritius, Namibia, Swaziland,

Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe (Laketch 1991). It is seen that the past is not very encouraging and there is a need to have new perspectives for the future. The author of the paper suggests some of the strategies that can be used to enhance women's participation in higher education management. Empowerment is all about overcoming barriers in management of higher education.

If the women want to enter into the system as educational administrators then they have to overcome these barriers. It is generally accepted that these barriers restrict the full development of women in administrative positions.

1.6 STRATEGIES FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION MANAGEMENT

Below are discussed some of the strategies which can help the women administrators to overcome the discussed barriers.

a) NETWORKING

There is a need to foster the creation of female administrator's networks in different fields including education at local, regional and national levels to share their views, which can strengthen the process of empowerment. Networking will play an important role in helping women to learn about job availability and about how other women administrators handle similar administrative situations. Women administrators gets a platform here to share problems and issues, and helps them to resolve those issues & problems through sharing experiences and information which may lead to improvement of competency at work.

b) MENTORING

Mentoring is a sustained relationship between the mentor and the mentee. Mentors are generally defined as "higher ranking, influential, senior organizational members with advanced experience and knowledge who are committed to providing upward mobility and support to protégé's professional career" (Ragins, 1989).In mentoring, a

more experienced person assists with the professional development of a less experienced colleague, identifying both strengths and weaknesses. Women in Indian context have stereotype ways of working, so they need to be brought out of their current mind set and require a shift in the thinking paradigm which can be made possible through mentoring. It is being asserted by Hale (1992) that "mentoring is known to influence strongly one's professional career development and upward mobility". Institutions of higher education should establish and practice mentorship programs for women administrators. Women administrators need mentors to understand the realities of the male-dominated culture and to be identified for promotion (Powell et al., 1992). The essence of mentorship here is that experienced women administrators direct and advise younger women administrators or aspiring women administrators how to behave, what to learn, what is important to know about the organizational culture and organizational values, etc., so they can prosper and advance in the organization.

c) TRAINING PROGRAMMES

Training programmes for women administrators can be conducted which are designed to meet the specific needs of the women. The components which can be focused herein can be, time management, production of support group at home, management skills. Courses and workshops can be offered to give the individual women administrators, skills to survive in a sexist world. Women should be targeted and taught assertiveness, taught strategies to balance home and office.

d) SUPPORT SYSTEM

Women administrators should have proper support system at home as well as at work place. Women administrators can develop their own support systems at home like use of modern gadgets in kitchen; they can go for hired help. The women administrator can resolve the problem of lack of support at home through convincing, persuasion and love to share responsibilities. A support from institution is also important. The colleagues should help them. The institution should be flexible to women administrators in deviant conditions like child rearing. Institution should understand that some of the social demands needs more presence of women than men, so a

flexible work schedule should be provided to women administrators. Accordingly there is a need to bring changes in the organizational policies & programs.

1.7 NEED OF WOMEN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATORS

Teaching as all know is perceived as a very suitable profession for women as nurturing and caring comes naturally to them, hence there is a need of more and more women in the field of education. Women play an important role of decision-making at home, then why can't she play an important role in educational institutions too. Women managers have a sort of cold and indifferent professionalism, which had crept in education, is now being replaced with a more human and nurturing sort of educator-educand relationship in the family model of education. Specifically, there is a need of women educational administrators in the institutions for proper and smooth management. Women administrators can formulate a rare combination of concern for 'tasks' and concern for 'people' and the management of education is considered as a synchronized blend of task and people because education is a blend of arts of education and science of learning. Their imagination and gut feeling can be effectively used in situations that defy or boggle rational thinking. Creating an environment conducive to women's success in positions of educational managers will require committed efforts on the part of individual women, the family and the organization in which she works.

The present management pattern of educational institutions perceives dysfunctional aspects for the creation of future organization with prevailing male leadership style. The modern organization calls for features like flexibility, higher empathy, collective and shared responsibilities in the administration, which demands proper emotional quotient and a proper balance of feminine quotient. This suggests a shift from system and style focusing on control to those, which mobilize and empower which, needs a shift to more involvement of women educational managers. Thus women managers ought to develop their unique leadership style, which would encompass their womanly attributes.

Women need to be encouraged to take part in policy formulation and implementation in higher education. The virtual implications of women's absence from management activities in higher education institution are indeed enormous. Mullei (1995) rightly observes that; since women are never present when decisions affecting them are taken (e.g. promotions, university recruitment of students and staff), their problems are ascribed a position of secondary importance. Second, administrators (Principals, deans, chairmen) are generally responsible for the distribution of research projects and grants; they are naturally prone to allot most projects to men (Mullei, 1995). Feminine perspective includes the preference for democratic rather than autocratic organizations, and cultures that are inclusive and collaborative (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992; Irby & Brown, 1995). In addition, there is support for the premise that feminine leaders are more attuned to instruction, teachers, and children (Frasher, 1979). Finally, there is evidence that because women develop differently, they are more likely to demonstrate an ethic of care that is grounded in relationships rather than laws (Gilligan, 1982).

1.8 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

The under representation of women at senior higher education management should be a concern for everybody because women are about fifty percent of all nationalities and a significant part of any nations' work force. Being half of the population, and half of the human resources, if women have to contribute significantly towards the development, they too need to be in higher administrative positions to influence policy and decision-making. To make any decision balanced and complete, there is a need to consider women's viewpoint in every activity of decision-making. We must ensure that policies are drawn up through `women's eyes' also, which is not the case now.

The women who are already in management and leadership positions should be enriched, encouraged and motivated. Any country serious about fully utilizing all its human resources' potential cannot leave the task to the very small number of women in leadership positions. Without equal access and opportunities for women with higher education, a major section of the work force is underutilized and the

achievements of the next generation underdeveloped. Women have particular skills, knowledge and attitudes that they can bring into higher education management. Research studies have tried to identify the barriers but the researcher in this study will make an effort to examine these barriers in much detail and an effort will be made to understand how these barriers originated and overcome.

Higher education management is where high-level technical, professional and managerial personnel are trained to work in various sectors of our economy. Higher education is the one, which provides the teachers, scholars, managers and administrators for the whole education system. It generates knowledge and innovation through scientific research that is needed for development. If we have more women in administrative positions then it is most likely that they will act as role models for other young girls who will aspire for higher education. Again women will be able to play an important role in national development. Today the number of women has increased in the field of higher education as professionals. However, it needs to be noted that number of women administrators over years is far from satisfactory. Though the proportion of women teachers at university and college level is increasing, number of women administrators at this level is still very low. It is interesting to note that when one looks at the entire system of education, as one moves up on the ladders, number of women administrators goes down. Therefore, number of women administrators is more at primary school level and it gets reduced at secondary and higher education level. Even when one makes a further analysis of the situation at higher education level, number of women occupying positions as Heads & Deans is more than that as University Registrars, Pro-Vice Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors. Very few women are found at the top positions in Indian higher education like that of Pro-Vice Chancellor, Vice-Chancellor, Registrars, Directors. This is a matter of great concern and needs a reflection as to how these few women could make up to reach to these positions and what process they followed and how they could maintain and sustain that position.

In this context the researcher is undertaking an intensive, in-depth study of female administrators in the position of Vice-Chancellor. The researcher seeks to get an insight into the journey of these Women Administrators from childhood till being a

Vice-Chancellor. This will help to understand how they reached to top most position and what were the strategies adopted by them to sustain at that position. This will give an insight to other aspiring women administrators and help them to understand the problems in the perspective of their own problems.

Majority of the studies conducted on women administrators were survey studies wherein questionnaires were used to collect data. These studies on women administrators can be seen as one small step in the journey to fill the theoretical gap identified. The survey studies have its limitations and cannot go in-depth into the lives of these women administrators. The views shared by these women administrators will provide an insight into the experiences of these women administrators and the information gathered through this can be helpful to the aspiring and practicing women administrators who may get practical solutions for career related issues. Most of the studies were conducted in the United States and very few studies are conducted in India.

The case studies in the form of narratives of women administrators who attained the top-level position and made a remarkable contribution in the field of Education will be presented. They will reveal exactly what's necessary and how they did it. They will give us the kind of inside information newer administrators' needs to jump-start their careers and keep on track. The researcher will probe into the lives and the experiences of the women educational administrators, which will help the aspiring women administrators. Even in the capacity building programme by UGC, it was suggested that NAAC should prepare case studies in the same area of leadership for women Vice-Chancellors and men Vice-Chancellors. This would provide both positive and negative points particularly faced on account of being women.

The higher education management continues to be the most gender-stratified executive position in the country with men more likely to advance from teaching to top administrative role than are women. Therefore it should be clearly evident that research based understanding of this inequitable situation from the perspectives of the relatively few women who inhabit the role is needed. There is need to focus on developing a better understanding of women administrator's experiences, the

challenges they have faced and the factors that have led to their promotion or success. The main purpose of research here is to identify women administrator's experiences since childhood, their barriers, bottlenecks and general inhibitors or equal outcomes of women administrators in college or university administration and to document the experiences of these women who have served as administrators at college or university level by doing their case studies. The qualitative details of the lives of these women administrators may suggest an alternative way of viewing issues in educational administration. Their case study will give texture and color to the quantitative data most often relied in other studies. More research of this kind is necessary to learn in-depth about the women administrator's experiences at higher education. Such studies in the field of women educational administration will also help in the theory building in the field of educational administration as till now the theories were built on the assumptions that the experiences of male and female are the same and thus research on males is appropriate for generalizing the female experiences.

1.9 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

From the rational of the study the following research question emerges:

1. How women administrators in higher education reached to the top administrative position?

2. What efforts are being made by these women administrators in higher education to sustain their top position?

1.10 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Case Studies of Women Administrators in Higher Education System of India.

1.11 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives formulated for the study are as follows:

1. To understand the process followed by women administrators in Indian higher education to reach the top administrative position.

2. To study the procedure adopted by the women administrators in Indian higher education to sustain their position.

1.12 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Women Administrators: Those women who reached to the positions of Vice-chancellors, Pro-vice chancellors, Registrars, Deans, Heads of large institutions like Directors, principal.

Process: Whatever means adopted the women administrators have adopted to reach the top administrative positions from childhood days till they occupied the administrative positions.

1.13 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study is delimited to top most administrative positions in higher education system of India, which is Vice-Chancellor.