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Working Women in 21st Century: A Sociological Study of Nurses of Agra City

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The task of identifying and describing the status of women in India is truly monumental because women in India have seen many ups and downs. The 20th century has seen many changes in the global arena, economic, scientific, social and political. We have made noteworthy strides in all aspects of living, of which the most exemplary one would be in social sphere. Women have been given equal opportunities to compete with men and one another. In the last centuries and the early 20th century, women were mostly limited to the home and there place was the kitchen. The 20th century has witnessed a great deal of independence and autonomy for women in many countries including India. Women have been equal fighters for freedom. They have demanded for and received equality in education and there lies the secret of their success. Awareness that comes with it has enabled this gender to fight against their causes. They have emerged out of their kitchens and taken their places along with men in all sphere of life. Now they are 'Managers' of their home and family as well as part of the work force. They have penetrated almost all spheres of activity and figure prominently in all walks of life, be it health, education, corporate sector, politics, science, social work or law. Today's women are joint partners in the world scheme.

India has always accorded respect to its women, as can be seen in history. We have had some great women such as Razia Begum, Rani of Jhansi, Meerabai, Mumtaj Mahal,Ani Besent, Indira Gandhi etc., who have been acknowledged as leaders and thinkers of our society. In spite of these great women, the larger parts of the female species were not accorded their basic rights. It was only the pioneering effects of Mahatma Gandhi that lead to the emancipation of Indian women. As of today there are still, a large percentage of women, especially in the rural areas who need to understand their rights and advantages. India is striving to provide women equal status in society. Today, woman can be proud that she is a home maker and an equal partner to the progress of our society.

Indian society is undergoing a process of social change. Increasing social awareness due to the liberal opportunities and facilities in the field of health, education, social legislations, social work and active participation in a democratic political system have changed the socio-cultural values in general. This is aptly observed by Jain (1988) who traces the relative change in the socio-cultural values between pre-independence and post independence periods.

The observation of Jain that the change is a basic metamorphosis is relevant, valid and significant in the sense that it throws a good deal of light on the changes that are taking place in

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India. The twentieth century has gone into the change of the history of human civilization as one of the great epochs of human progress. The British regime and the post-independence have brought in many social changes, yielding place to the new, thus bringing a perceptible transformation in society. The transformation has brought both prospects and problems. With the advancement of science and technology, new technologies have come into our daily routine and new wants have increased. Gone are the days when people thought that outside work was meant for men folk, while the women were simply contented with their household chores. Women's emancipation gained momentum and they were considered equal if not superior to men. But when all is said and done, the status of women in India has been a fluctuating one sometimes encouraging and sometimes discouraging. However, the present status of women in society is quite encouraging and deserves careful study. While it is true that the known present cannot always be explained in terms of historical origins, it is almost certain that it is impossible to study the present without reference to the past. For this reason, a discussion of the historical background of the Indian women will be rewarding and helpful.

The Indian women today are no longer contented to worship their home as their only abode. Nor do they wish to confine themselves to the four walls, rather aspire to go in for never climbs and nurture a zest to prove their worth in varied fields on par with their male counterparts. This paves the way to one important factor namely, women's employment. Rapid industrialization, and globalization undue importance to material wealth and the economic necessity attracted women to take employment, which, in turn, has given rise to changes in their status and role in India. This transition of women's status, no doubt brings about many healthy and positive changes for them. However, one cannot ignore or underestimate the inherent psychological, sociological and sexual problems of working women in general. Working women, especially nurses, though relatively financially sound, their dual roles at home and working environment seen to remain undisturbed. They have to perform both the domestic (child-rearing, taking care of husband if married and home management) as well as occupational roles simultaneously which needs adequate adjustment within themselves. In addition to the demographic factors, certain psychological, sociological, economic and sexual factors influence the behavior of working women in cultural context. Such factors remain unexplored and hence one has to make an attempt to study Indian working women with special reference to nurses. Moreover, the research studies in the above said areas are inadequate and restricted. Therefore, an attempt has been made in the present study, to study the socio-economic status, adjustment problems, insecurity feelings, job satisfaction, attitudes and decision making with a view to prepare a profile of nurses who are employed in three different hospitals such as Government, institutional (charitable) and Private hospitals in Agra city and to analyze the socio-economic factors influencing them.

Balraj K. Ahluwalia (1971) in an empirical study 'Socio-economic Background of army Nurses' detected the socio-economic status of working women with special reference to nurses. Srivstava Deepmala (1996) in her research work 'A Study in Medical Sociology' deeply analyzed the rise and development of nursing profession with special reference to Indian social context. Ramanamma, A. and Bambaywala, U. (1980) in a survey 'Socio-Economic Background of Nurses' discussed and analyzed the socio-economic and cultural background of nurses in India. Jayalaxmi, D., (1980) in her research paper 'Nursing- Role Performance' focused on the role performance, job satisfaction and identity obstacles. Mohan, N. Santa (1985) in her research work 'Status of Nurses in India' showed the socio-economic and political problems of nurses in their services. Oomman, T.K. (1978) in his study 'Doctors and Nurses: A Study of Occupation Role Structure' focused on the role performance, role conflict and job satisfaction of doctors and nurses & Sharma, D.S. (1986) in 'Health, Hospital and Community' detected that most of the senior nurses are doing

private practice and in hospital they used their junior nurses for the treatment of the patients, they had neither experience nor sufficient knowledge.

Madan, T.N.(1980) 'Doctors and Society; Indu Mathur (1975) Interrelation in an Organization: A Study in Sociology of Medicine; R. Venkatratanam in Medical Sociology in an Indian Setting; M. Marriod (1955) Western Medicine in a Village of Northern India; Raghavchari K. Ranjana (1990) Conflict and Adjustment: Indian Nurses in an Urban Milieu; S.Chatarjee (1980) The Changing Role of Indian Nurses; Plakkotam J.L. (1973) A Study of Nurses and their Work-With Special Reference to Occupational Selection; N.Kapoor (1966) Interpersonal Relations in Hospital; Kasturi Sunder Rao (1980) Arogya Vigyan Aur Samudaik Nursing; ect. are also made an analysis, discussion and interpretation of nursing services, job satisfaction, status and role of nurses in India.

Objectives of the Study

The following are the specific objectives of the study.

1. To find out the socio-economic status of the Nurses.
2. To study the working conditions of nurses and their problems.
3. To know the attitudes of the nurses towards their work.
4. To analyze the level of Job satisfaction of Nurses with their level of education; and.
5. To suggest and evolve suitable recommendations for the better condition of nurses.

Methodology and Data Collection

The study explains the status and role of nurses. Further the researcher wanted to find out the relationship between the significant variables. Hence to carry out the research problem with seriousness the researcher has used the Descriptive cum Diagnostic Research Design. The researcher made a number of visits to the selected hospitals in Agra city to find out the feasibility of conducting the study. The researcher also had discussions with the concerns authorities and explained the purpose and the nature of instruments to be used for present study. This enabled the researcher to establish a good rapport with the nurses and later helped me to collect the required data in time.

This study focused on the socio economic status of nurses in different hospitals such as the Government, Institutional (charitable) and Private. There were 255 nurses selected through stratified random sampling method for the study working in Government, Institutional (charitable) and Private Hospital in Agra city.

The researcher used interview-schedule method as tool for collecting data from respondents. The respondents were well educated and competent enough to answer the questions in their day activities. Before finalizing the tools of data collection to be used, the researcher had discussion with concerned authority such as C.M.O. & the principal of S.N. Medical College, nurses and other experts. The researcher discussed the relevant questions and the areas to be studied in the given study with them. A survey of existing literature on working women (nurses) also helped the researcher to finalize the relevant tools of data collection.

The interview schedule was divided into three main parts. The first part of it was related with the questions pertaining to personal and socio-economic background of the respondents and the second one was with the working conditions, problems, decision making and the last part was related with the job satisfaction and sexual harassment. The secondary data were also used to complete the study, collected from available literature in books and journals, research reports and other published materials pertaining to the working women in India, particularly meant for the nurses.

Frame Work of Analysis

Completed Interview Schedule were checked for consistency. Responses to the interview schedule were transferred to master charts. Subsequently frequency and mean tables were developed. In these tables, distribution and statistical values were examined and a number of cross table were taken out with a view to ascertain inter-linkage between variables. The Chi-square test is an important test amongst the several tests of significance developed by statisticians. T-test in based on t- distribution and is considered an appropriate test for finding the significance of a sample mean or for judging the significance of difference between the means of two sample in case of small sample as estimate of the population variance is not known in which case we use variance of the sample as an estimate of the population variance. In cases where two samples are related, paired't' – test is used for judging the significance of the mean of difference between the two related samples. Karl Pearson's Method is the most widely used method in Practice and known as Pearson Coefficient of Correlation. Most frequently used summated scales in the study of social attitudes follow the pattern by Likert. For this reason they are often referred as to Likert-Type scale. In this given study Likert,s three point scale is used for finding out the level of job satisfaction.

Age Group and Level of Job Satisfaction

The results of the collected data are presented in table 1 below:

Table 1

Age Group and Level of Job Satisfaction

Sl. No.	Age Group	Level of Job Satisfaction			Total	x^2 Value
		High	Moderate	Low		
1	20 – 30 Year	20	20	15	**55**	8.9848
2	31 – 40 Year	60	50	16	**126**	
3	41 – 50 Year	20	20	14	**54**	
4	51 – 58 Year	10	5	5	**20**	
Total		**110**	**95**	**50**	**255**	

Table 1 shows the association between job satisfaction and the age of the respondents. This was tested by Chi-square test. From the table, it could be inferred that there is an association ($P<0.05$) between the age and the job satisfaction of the respondents. In other words, age influences on their job satisfaction. Because, when they are young, they are more active and have more interest to do their work. But, when they grow older, due to physical problems and family responsibilities, they are not to do their work with full interest. This shows that age influences their job satisfaction. So the younger nurses have more job satisfaction than that of the older nurses.

Job Satisfaction and Type of the Hospital

The results of the collected data are presented in table 2 below :

TABLE 2: Association Between Job Satisfaction and Type of the Hospital

S. N.	Type of Hospital	Level of Job Satisfaction			Total	x^2 Value
		High	Moderate	Low		
1	Government	48	35	25	**108**	4.4746
2	Institutional	32	26	15	**73**	
3	Private	30	34	10	**74**	
	Total	**110**	**95**	**50**	**255**	

The calculated value is less than the table value and hence it is insignificant. The result, thus, supports the hypothesis and it can be said that the hospital type influence on job satisfaction of the respondents. Hence, the nature of work in any hospital influences the job satisfaction of the respondents. The work environment, number of working days, leisure time activities, facilities in the hospitals, relationship with coworkers and their freedom to work affects the respondent's job satisfaction. So if, all the above said points are properly and correctly provided to the respondents, then all the respondents will have full job satisfaction on their job. So, it is proved that the hospital type influences on job satisfaction because each hospital has its own way of fulfilling their needs.

Job satisfaction and Experience of the Respondents

The results of the collected data are presented in table 3 below :

TABLE 3: Association Between Job satisfaction and Experience of the Respondents

S. N.	Experience in Years	Level of Job Satisfaction			Total	x^2 Value
		High	Moderate	Low		
1	Below 5	40	40	5	**85**	27.2684
2	5 – 10	35	20	21	**76**	
3	10 – 15	15	20	5	**40**	
4	Above 15	20	15	19	**54**	
	Total	**110**	**95**	**50**	**255**	

Table 3 shows the association between job satisfaction of and experience of the respondents. From the table, it can be inferred that the calculated value is much higher than that of the table value which means that the calculated value cannot be said to have arisen because of channel. It is significant; hence, the Hypothesis is rejected. This means that there is no association between job satisfaction and experience of the respondents. Without getting any facilities from the hospitals, experience alone does not do anything with their job satisfaction. Instead, they will be frustrated throughout their services. So, there is no association between job satisfaction and experience of the respondents.

Job satisfaction and Income of the Respondents

The results of the collected data are presented in table 4 below :

TABLE 4: Association Between Job satisfaction and Income of the Respondents (Before 6th Pay Commission)

S.N.	Income	Level of Job Satisfaction			Total	x^2 Value
		High	Moderate	Low		
1	Below Rs.5,000	50	40	28	**118**	3.0164
2	Rs. 5001- Rs. 10,000	33	33	12	**78**	
3	Rs. 10,001- Rs. 15,000	25	20	9	**54**	
4	Above Rs. 15,000	2	2	1	**5**	
	Total	**110**	**95**	**50**	**255**	

From the above table, it is inferent that the calculated value in much less than the table value and hence it is insignificant. The result, thus, supports the hypothesis and it can be said that income influences job satisfaction of the respondents. Because, Government and institutional hospital respondents are paid more when compared to private hospital respondents. The private hospital respondents are not satisfied economically, so, they are not having job satisfaction. Hence, when they get better chance, they shift to the Government and Institutional hospitals. So, income of the respondents plays a vital role and very much influences on their job satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction and Family Type of the Respondents

The results of the collected data are presented in table 5 below :

TABLE 5: Association Between Job Satisfaction and Family Type of the Respondents

S.N.	Income	Level of Job Satisfaction			Total	x^2 Value
		High	Moderate	Low		
1	Joint Family	75	65	35	**175**	0.0554
2	Nuclear Family	35	30	15	**80**	
	Total	**110**	**95**	**50**	**255**	

From the above table, it is inferrent that the calculated value is much less than the table value and hence it is insignificant. The result, thus, supports the hypothesis and it can be said that the family type does not influence on job satisfaction of the respondents.

Idea that Modern Things Improve Status

The results of the collected data are presented in table 6 below :

TABLE 6: Distribution of the Respondents by their Idea that Modern Things Improve Status

S.N.	Modern things	Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Yes	199	78.04
2.	No	56	21.96
	Total	**255**	**100.00**

It is found from table 6 that slightly more than 3/4th (78.04%) of the total respondents say that modern things improve their status and slightly more than 1/5th (21.96%) of them say that modern things do not improve their status.

Attitude Toward Work and Designation of the Respondents

Hypothesis: There is a relationship between attitude towards nursing and the designation of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 7 below :

TABLE 7: Relationship Between Attitude Toward Work and Designation of the respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars		Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Attitude	Yes	243	
		No	12	•
2.	Designation	Staff	152	
		Sister	103	1

Table 7 shows that there is a positive as well as perfect relationship between attitude towards nursing and designation of the respondents.

From the above table, it is inferred that the calculated value is less and more for less equal than the table value and hence it is insignificant. The result, thus, supports the hypothesis and we may say that the designation of the respondents influence their job satisfaction. When staffs are compared with sisters staffs are more satisfied than sister even though staffs' scale of pay is less.

Attitude Towards Work and Marital Status of the Respondents

Hypothesis: There is a relationship between attitude towards nursing and marital status of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 8 below :

TABLE: 8 Relationship Between Attitude Towards Work and Marital Status of the Respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars		Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Attitude	Yes	243	
		No	12	•
2.	Marital status	Married	201	
		Un married	54	1

There is a positive as well as perfect relationship between attitude towards work and marital status of the respondents.

Sexual Harassments and Marital Status of the Respondents

Hypothesis: There is a relationship between sexual harassments and marital status of the respondents.The results of the collected data are presented in table 9 below :

TABLE 9 : Relationship Between Sexual Harassments and Marital Status of the Respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars		Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Sexual Harassments	Yes	4	
		No	251	•
2.	Marital status	Married	201	
		Un married	54	1

There is a positive as well as perfect relationship between sexual harassment and marital status of the respondents.

Sexual Harassment and Designation of the Respondents

Hypothesis: There is a relationship between sexual harassments and designation of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 10 below :

TABLE 10

Relationship Between Sexual Harassment and Designation of the Respondents

Sl. No.	Particulars		Frequencies	Percentage
1.	Sexual Harassments	Yes No	4 251	 e
2.	Designation	Staff Sister	103 152	 1

There is a positive as well as perfect relationship between sexual harassment and designation of the respondents.

Marital Status and Job Satisfaction of the Respondents

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between marital status and job satisfaction of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: there is no significant difference between marital status and job satisfaction of the respondents.The results of the collected data are presented in table 11 below :

TABLE 11

Significant Difference Between Marital Status and Job Satisfaction of the Respondents

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Marital status	127.5	6.5220	96.3937	1.960	P>0.05
2.	Job Satisfaction	85	2.7707			

The table 11 shows that the calculated value of 96.3937 which is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 levels of degrees of freedom brings in level of significance for two failed test. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (Calculate Value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected which means that there is influence on it. In other words, the research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between marital status and job satisfaction of the respondents.

Attitude Towards Nursing and the Age of the Respondents

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between attitude towards nursing and age of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between attitude towards nursing and age of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 12 below :

TABLE 12

Significant Difference Between Attitude Towards Nursing and the Age of the Respondents

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Age	127.5	10.248	89.4862	1.960	P>0.05
2.	Job Satisfaction	63.75	5.1051			

The table 12 shows that the calculated value of 89.4862 is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (Calculate Value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected. In other words, the research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between attitude and age of the respondents. Hence, attitude towards nursing does not influence on their age.

Attitude Towards Work and Hospital Type of the Respondents

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between attitude towards work and hospital type of the respondents.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between attitude towards work and hospital types of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 13 below :

TABLE 13

Significant Difference Between Attitude Towards Work and Hospital Type of the Respondents

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Attitude	127.5	10.248	65.677	1.960	P>0.05
2.	Hospital Type	85	1.768			

Table 13 shows that the calculated value of 65.677 is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (Calculate Value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected which means that there is influence on it. In other words, the research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between attitude towards nursing and hospital type of the respondents.

Attitude Towards Work and Income of the Respondents

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between attitude towards work and income of the respondents. Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between attitude towards work and income of the respondents. The results of the collected data are presented in table 14 below :

TABLE 14

Significant Difference Between Attitude Towards Work and Income of the Respondents

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Attitude	127.5	10.248	91.8852	1.962	P>0.05
2.	Income	63.75	4.3919			

Table 14 shows that the calculated value of 91.8852 is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (Calculate Value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected which means that there is influence on it. In other words, the research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between attitude towards nursing and income of the respondents. This shows that when the respondents are economically sound, their income does not influence on their attitude towards nursing

Sexual Harassment and the Age of the Respondents

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between sexual harassment and age of the respondents. Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between sexual harassment and age of the respondents.The results of the collected data are presented in table 2 below :

TABLE 15

Significant Difference Between Sexual Harassment and the Age of the Respondents

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Sexual Harassment	127.5	10.9588	91.8852	1.960	P>0.05
2.	Age	63.75	5.1051			

Table 15 shows that the calculated value of 91.8852 is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (calculated value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected which means that there is influence on it. In other words, the research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between sexual harassment and age of the respondents.

Sexual Harassment and Type of the Hospital

Testing Hypothesis: There is a significant difference between sexual harassment and hospital type of the respondents. Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between sexual harassment and age of the respondents.The results of the collected data are presented in table 2 below :

TABLE 16: Significant Difference Between Sexual Harassment and Type of the Hospital

S.N.	Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	Calculated Value	Table Value	Result
1.	Sexual Harassment	127.5	10.9588	61.531	1.960	P>0.05
2.	Type of hospital	85	1.768			

Table 19 shows that the calculated value of 61.531 is higher than the table value of 1.960 at 0.05 level. As the calculated value is higher than the table value (Calculated Value > Table Value), the Null hypothesis is rejected which means that there is influence on it. In other words, the

research hypothesis is accepted and implies that there is significant difference between sexual harassment and hospital type of the respondents.

Suggestions

Strong efforts should be taken to avoid further crisis in the family management and in the hospital management. To overcome this,

1. The services of the existing family counseling centers sponsored by Centre Social Welfare Board or by Voluntary organizations could be availed to the nurses.
2. To educate and prepare husbands to help and share the so called traditional role of women which was considered and labeled as feminine role, courses on 'Family Life Education' and 'Family Management' may be organized both for the husbands and wives. This will enable them to gain an insight in their mutual understanding and their family mental health may minimize the level of adjustment problems of the women nurses.
3. In the working environment, the management and hospital authorities may empathize with the nurses who have adjustment problems and they may introduce the principle of counseling directly try to introduce referral system. Such an attempt will help the nurses to get rid of their problems in a realistic manner and perform their roles in the hospital.
4. Moreover, in the existing Indian context, grievance redressal forum is not in operation in hospitals. Hence, it could be suggested, such an arrangement could be made, when the nurses could ventilate their grievances or problems and seek remedial measures.
5. The experience and exposure they get from their education should be properly canalized and utilized in creative way. It should be recognized for financial advancement and for promotional avenues.

Conclusion

The summary of the important findings and meaningful conclusion drawn on the basis of the statistical tests have been precisely presented in the study. This study is proved to be a valuable and worthwhile one as the inferences drawn throw a good deal of light in understanding and gain meaningful insights in the selected components and aspects of the nurses. Accepting that the universe of the fact that the study is limited to selected variables, areas and components and finally realizing the need and scope for further research of areas not covered in this study, a few suggestions have been listed out for further research. However, it must be admitted that a comprehensive attempt – extensive and intensive research covering all the aspects of career women in general and nurses in particular is necessary for not only to draw up a comprehensive and complete profile of nurses but also to enable policy makers in designing suitable welfare programmers for women folk, which, in turn, will promote family and mental health at length.

Due to the transition in the role performance of nurses, they face practically many adjustment problems when they play a dual role at their hospital as well as at their homes. This indicated that most of the nurses have moderate level of job satisfaction. Younger nurses have more job satisfaction than senior nurses The senior nurses suffered from adjustment problems in the family, whereas younger nurses are very active to do their work. So, their age influence on their job satisfaction. Though majority of nurses live in nuclear family, they prefer joint family system, because their family work will be shared and they could concentrate on their hospital work. Hence, they have more positive attitude towards nursing.

The efficiency of the nurses depends on the organizational climate of the hospital. Nurses work under different managements as Government, Institutional and Private Hospitals. So, their working conditions differ and they face some adjustment problems. When they have some stress and strain face certain emotional and psychological problems. A careful examination of the factual data of the present study indicates that the nurse work under private hospital get minimum salary when compared to the Government hospitals. This shows their moderate level of job satisfaction. So, income of the nurses play a vital role and it very much influence on their job satisfaction.

Changes in life and position of women have been greatly accelerated by the spread of education. As a result, the nurses also have good recognition in the society. Well educated girls are making their career in nursing. Above all, their living conditions and their status also have been improved a lot. This change is an inspiration to thousands of women as a guide to improve their status. So, education and employment is considered as the most effective weapon for the women to cure all evils of the society. Higher the education among all women classes, provided decorum life styles in the society. So, women's development and recognition is inevitable to the developing nation like India.

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