CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The value of any research study would much depend on a review of the earlier literature related to that study. It would enlighten the researcher on the various types of research dimensions and problems pertaining to his study. It would help the researcher to frame the right type of objectives for the study with a high level of research motivation. It would be most fitting to review some of the studies that have already been made on the subject. Though voluminous literature is available in these areas, only a few important related works are reviewed here. Such a review would facilitate the research to have a comprehensive knowledge on the concepts used in earlier studies and enable to adopt, modify and formulate an improved conceptual framework, for the use of the present study and draw meaningful conclusions.

2.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE OF PAST STUDIES

A review of earlier studies on issues relevant to the research problem undertaken is attempted here.
A large number of women workers in the region are engaged in the Informal Sector, although limited information is found on their proportion in the female worker force or their work status. In India estimates of female workers in the informal sector varied from 93-97 percent of all female workers in 1989. An estimated 108 million women workers in the Urban Informal Sector worked in one person enterprises, engaged in small scale production activities such as dairying and preparation of food products, vending or trading. Most of the vendors and traders moved from place to place with their wares or operated from pavements. In the two intensive studies carried out in 1985 and 1988 it is reported that about 10 percent of women working in the Urban Informal Sector were below the poverty line.

Amindita Mukheriji and Neelam Verma (1987) identify the factors determining, “socio-economic backwardness in women” with the sample survey conducted at Bhagalpur Town among the age group of women 15-35 years. The schedule consisted of the indicators of social, educational, economic and other categories of women. The findings of the study are that the lower class of urban women are not so lagging behind in social status when compared

---

to rural women and the economic status of lower class women considerably go
down due to their lack of training and skill. The business class women received
more government financial aid. The suggestion offered is to start various
training centers and intensification of adult education programmes.

Neera Burra (1989)² conducted a survey on the conditions of workers in
a glass factory in Firozabad. In his study, the working conditions of the glass
factories are notably unsafe. The industry is technologically very primitive and
pressure on the workers is tremendous. No minimum wages were fixed to these
workers.

The heat, noise and dust obviously have serious negative effects on the
health of the workers. The net effect is that tuberculosis (TB) is widespread and
the life of a worker is cut short by 10-15 years.

Sudha Kumari (1989)³, in her study, “Women Workers in Unorganized
Sector in India”, examines that the unorganized sector provides employment to
a very high proportion of working women in India. Women workers are not

² Neera Burra, Workers of Glass Factories of Firozabad, Economic and Political

³ Sudhakumari, Women Workers in Unorganized Sector in India, Yojana, July 1-15,
only concentrated in low paying jobs but their pay is also lower than that of men working in equal capacity. Most of the women workers in the unorganized sector have never heard of a trade union. They never fight for equality of pay or occupational justice.

According to shranshakthi’s report Women in the Informal Sector and global restructuring (1989)\(^4\). The two sector models unorganized versus organized was adopted by the CSWI (1974) to explain the trends in women’s work roles and the impact of transition to a modern economy and structural changes on, women’s productive roles rights and opportunities. They sparked off a debate and a considerable research on their situation in the informal sector of economy where overwhelming majorities (94%) are working. Despite such efforts 14 years later shramshakthi, the report of the national commission (NCSW 1989) observed that the conceptual and data base pertaining to the economic profit on the “socially unprotected workers” reminded the weakest link in the labour statistics. Recent studies indicate (Singh and Vitamen) 1987 the onset of these women are in subsistence agriculture, forestry, dairying, small animal husbandry, spinners, artisans, vendors and hawkers, construction

workers, domestic workers etc. The most common characteristics of women in the informal sector are casual and intermittent work, low wages low economic returning, no job security or social security benefits, long hours of work, occupational health hazards and high exploitation. In developing countries increasing the use of female workers in the informal sector marks economic restructuring.

Informal Sector Street Foods, (Pune, India) 1990, is a study on the urban food security, supply and nutrition by centre of studies in social sciences. The findings are that selling street foods is an important economic activities for the urban poor in many cities in developing countries. The importance of this activity is increasingly being recognized by the urban officials and the banking sector. Urban officials in Pune where this study was conducted are planning to licence the street food vending. Commercial banks are extending financial assistance through various credit schemes. The study examines the socio economic regulator environment within which street food vendors operate. The industrial city of Pune had the population of 1.6 million in 1991. It did not have a long tradition of street food vending and eating. Therefore although street food vending was expanding it involved a relatively small portion of the city’s population (less than 1percent). A lengthy urban experience was needed for the
successful running of food vending enterprises. Most vendors made reasonable income and a few were very successful. Women tended to cater to the clients with lower incomes and the food they cooked was prepared more hygienically than the food sold by male vendors.

Saran and Sandhwar (1990)\textsuperscript{5} study the problems of the women workers engaged in informal sectors of brick kilns, quarries and mines of Bihar and West Bengal. It was revealed that the women working here are exploited, low paid, work for long hours i.e, 14-16 hours in case of migrants and 8-10 hours in case of local workers. There prevails mass illiteracy and the women workers belong to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward classes. Indebtedness is common. Further, rebuking, cheating, threatening, beating and sexual abuses are very common features reported by women working in informal sector.

\textsuperscript{5} Saran and Sandhwar, \textbf{Problems of Women Workers in Informal Sector} (Brick kilns, Quarries and Mines of Bihar and West Bengal), Northern Book Centre, 1990.
Phyllis (1991)\(^6\) in his study on women labourers in salt pans at Tuticorin has identified, that apart from the national holidays, the workers have no chance of availing leave. Insufficient leave conditions, lack of maternity leave with pay tell upon the health of women. The life of women labourers salt pans has affected the quality of life of women and the health of the entire family. The women labourers suffer from burning sensation in the eyes, blurring of vision, leg cramps, bodyache, stomachache and chest pain.

B.Aghilan and P.Selvaraj (1991)\(^7\) in their study stated that the fisher women were generally found to play an important role in household and social decision making. As only for financial decision making, the earning women had active participation.

“Pest Project Summary” by Meera Bapat (1991)\(^8\), research activities included an examination of the legislation governing hawkers and vendors in the city of Pune. A survey of a cross section food vendors covering about


\(^8\) Meera Bapat, Post Project Summary on Informal Sector, 1991.
10 percent of the total number was conducted. Microbiological testing of samples of the various types of food served by the vendors and by the restaurants and nutritional testing of various types of food sold revealed that the samples collected from street vendors were largely unsatisfactory in terms of their biological quality but no worse than the food served in licensed restaurants. The project findings highlighted the legitimacy of street food vending, generally viewed by authorities as an obstacle, in terms of fulfilling a need and providing employments. They resulted in a plan for regulating, supervising and facilitating street food vending in Pune that was discussed with city officials. It results in overall improvement.

Banerjee, Nirmala (1991) attempted to analyze the impact of new export-oriented industries on women workers in India. She has covered main industries like leather, garment, silk spinning, etc. The focus was on the relationship between technologies, market conditions and services of women workers. The conclusions drawn are that these women did unskilled work, worked for long erratic hours and under miserable working conditions and terms of work.

---

Reddy, A. (1992)\textsuperscript{10} analyzes the socio-economic reasons of female migration through a study of construction workers of Hyderabad city of Andhra Pradesh. The study found that, frequently the total earning of the female adults per day or month has excluded those of their male counterparts. Unless the socio-economic conditions of villages are substantially improved the migration of workers to the cities in India may not come down in the near future.

Shanthi, K. (1992)\textsuperscript{11} focussed on the migration of the female workers and their trend. It was a comparative study of different zones viz. North, South, East and central India. It was observed that female mobility was maximum in the southern followed by eastern and northern and central regions. The conclusion drawn was that, female migration and economic in purview was short distance and seasonal. The proportion of female migrants to male migrants was higher for the illiterates than for the literates, and this ratio was also higher among the marginal than the main workers. Further, the female


migration is linked with gender specific patterns for labour demands in the cities.

Desai, V. (1994)\textsuperscript{12} examines the evidence of unique urban patterns of living arrangements and division of family labour and highlights the dynamic underlying the search by the migrants and the urban poor for itches in the informal sector in the city of Mumbai. The issue relating to gender and the family migration is that men are often the first to move and to view mobility as a wayout from the greater family related to social and economic constraints. However, the recent demand for women workers in unskilled service occupations like domestic service, informal commerce, the sex trade, and so on, has been extremely important in drawing young women to cities like Mumbai.

Sultania, Madhu (1994)\textsuperscript{13} conducted a study at micro-level in the major parts of Jaipur city on the women workers engaged as contract labourers. The main analysis was based on the causes of inequality of women as contract


labourers and its impact. The characteristics, profile and recruitment were also dealt with. It was projected that construction was the main industry employing labour on contract basis. The women workers there, experienced sexual and socio-economic exploitation. They were illiterate, earning less wages, experienced male dominance, worked for 10-12 hours daily, no medical or other leave facilities and were under pitiable state of affairs.

“Equal Pay Policies; International Review of Selected Developing and Developed Countries by Paulae Maata (1995)\textsuperscript{14} studies about Women Labour Market. Increased women’s participations in the labour force has not been accompanied by an improvement of their position in the labour market. Women earn less than men in average, even in countries, which have equal, pay provisions. This is because women held lower positions and work in lower paying female dominated fields. Another reason is that in some countries a high percentage of women work as part time labourers only. In the European Union, for example women are much more likely to work for part time than men. The third reason for women’s lower wages is the female dominated

occupations (The World’s Women 1995). The gender based wage gap also exists in agriculture.

Karlekar, Malavika (1995)\textsuperscript{15} introduced the theoretical aspect of the migration with special reference to females, over viewing both published and unpublished studies on the gender dimensions. There had been a focus on the issues related to women socio-economic problems, migration, exploitation, etc. Further it had been categorically stated that the women migrants had to face socio-psychological costs viz., sexual exploitation, insecurity of job, lack of facilities for child care and themselves, increased work load difficulty in sustenance. According to her, even the concept of autonomous migration need critical examination.

Chandola, L.M. (1995)\textsuperscript{16} studied the nature of garment industry and women workers in informal sector of this industry situation in Lucknow, Kanpur, Varanasi and Delhi. The emphasis was that there was wage

\footnote{\textsuperscript{15} Karlekar, Malavika, \textit{Gender Dimensions in Labour Migration An Overview, in Sandbergen, Leos Schenk, Women and Seasonal labour migration}, Sage Publication, New Delhi, 1995.}

exploitation and the production process was fragmented and decentralized. The decentralization of informal sector was done with a view to have cheap labour and escape government regulations. The women worked as piece rate workers. Easy entry into the labour market attracts them to seek employment as unrecognized labour leading to exploitation and work under miserable conditions.

David Nancy (1996)\textsuperscript{17} discovered the structure and composition of urban informal sector. It was concluded that the informal sector faced two major problems. They are increasing large segment of work population, which is forced to live at the margin of survival and the availability of cheap labour in urban informal sector where employers are likely to divert activities to such organizations. Further, informal sector has been classified as institutionalized and non-institutionalized informal sectors. The components of institutionalized informal sector are, construction work, small industrial units like beedi-making, domestic match stick, making food processing units and other registered units where employing workers for low wages. The non-

institutionalized informal sector comprises of workers doing casual work like the domestic servants, sweepers, scavengers, vendors, hawksers and those who are self-employed. The urban women working here face insecurity, without legal protection, long working hours and are easily exploitable etc.

Padma Seth (1998)\textsuperscript{18} conducted studies about, “Women and Work”. Women’s work still remains in unrecognized both in the unorganized and organized sectors and they are treated as inferior in all economic decision making.

Even though women’s participation in formal and informal labour market has increased significantly they are underestimated and face innumerable barriers. Women in this unorganized sector are not governed by any policies to protect them.

Snehal D.Barai (1999)\textsuperscript{19} in her paper, “International Labour Standards” narrated the concluding features of THE THIRD WTO Ministerial Conference


held in Seattle in 1999. This paper explains that ILO conventions constitute International labour stands which are not ratified as relevant by members of ILO like freedom of association, abolition of forced or compulsory labour and child labour, discrimination of wages and the fact that 92 percent of work force in informal sector is hardly covered by labour laws and this liberalization and globalization do not have any effect. The suggestions are not that informal sector labours may come by core conversations of ILO and NGO can play a vital role to create an awareness.

M.S. Balakrishnan (1999) brought out an experimental study on “Women Workers in Textile Mill” with the objectives of analyzing the extent and categories of women’s employment, and their impact on production. While facing their socio economic problems in textile mills he identifies the inhibitory factors affecting women’s employment.

The findings of the study reveal an increase of female workers upto 50 per cent after 1990 in most of the spinning mills in Tamil Nadu. Maternity benefit, crech and mortality problem are the major factors affecting women’s

\textsuperscript{20} M.S. Balakrishnan, \textit{Women Workers in Textile Mills}, 40\textsuperscript{th} Joint Technological Conference, March 1999, Sitra.
employment. Night shift for women is on the basis of choice and not compulsory.

The study conducted that job performance, attendance and discipline of the female workers are generally superior to that of the male workers. This will lead to the fulfillment of the demands of women to a certain extent by the management.

“Informal Sector; Women in the Emerging Labour Market” by Unni Jeemol (1999) With the steady decline in the formal sector in India following the introduction of structural adjustment programmes a large section of the growing labour force is being absorbed in agriculture and in the unorganized informal sector resulting in a progressive increase in employment in the informal sector. This paper attempts to define the concept of the Informal Sector. Based on the depth survey of the Informal Sector in Ahemadabad city in 1998-99 the paper observes that a majority of the Informal Sector workers are self-employed operating with a very low level of capital. The paper concludes that there are imperative needs for improving access to capital and

that the level of productivity in the Informal Sector poses daunting challenges to our policy makers.

Anuradha Sharma (2000)\textsuperscript{22} presents an interesting study on “Women and Work, in the Indian Scenario” to ascertain the status and the role of women and their influences on social and cultural changes in India. Harassment by dowry and marriage will conspicuously hamper the participation of women in human resources. Eventhough male superiority exists, female workers tend to be competitive with male workers with the dual responsibilities of working as earners and housewives, where women encounter stupendous challenges.

Rajeev Sharma and R.K. Sharma (2000)\textsuperscript{23} made a socio-economic analysis on women and work in Urban India. The objectives of the study are to explore the socio-economic correlation of the female labour force participation rate and the regional variation and the analysis of the trend and pattern of female employment in Urban areas. As compared to Men, the rate of women participation is quite low in India. There is a significant increase in the casual

\footnotesize


female labours than male. Share of self-employment has declined for Urban females. Female participation is higher in informal sector while male domination continues in formal sector.

Chaitalpal (2000)\textsuperscript{24}, conducted a study on the Informal Sector and records that the economy as primarily labour intensive but less rewarding to the workers in comparison to their efforts put in production. Unorganized sector includes wage employment, self-employment, household activities and domestic work. The findings of the women construction workers indicate that they work more and receive low remuneration. Their children remain uncared for while mothers work and this led to family disintegration. To improve the socio-economic conditions of these women labourers the minimum wages legislation must be implemented. Guidelines to commercial banks to make provisions of certain amount of loan for women workers should be assured at the earliest.

Gumber Anil (2000)\textsuperscript{25} presented a paper on “Health Security for Workers in the Informal Sector” based on a study of 1200 households in the rural and urban areas of Ahamadabad. The study calls for the educating rural and the urban households on the aspects of Insurance.

Metha Asha Kapur (2000)\textsuperscript{26} in “The Invisible Workers”, registers women’s unorganized contribution to the economy thus: “In the recording of the work done by women serious in accuracies and measurement failures occur”. As a result their participation in the economy is undermined. In census after census women’s contribution has been remained invisible by failing to quantity their work input especially in agriculture and the unorganized sector. There are basically two kinds of work. Work for which payment is received and work for which no payment is made. Women are known to work for longer hours than men and to participate in the work force to a far greater extent than measured by the data gathered in the census. But a lot of the work they do is unrecognized. The continued unreliability and inaccuracy of data pertaining to

\begin{flushendnotes}
\item\textsuperscript{25} Households in the Informal Sector, \textit{Indian Journal of Labour Economics}, Vol.43, No.2, April-June 2000, pp.277-291.
\item\textsuperscript{26} Metha Masha Kapur, The Invisible Workers, \textit{Women’s Link}, Vol.4, No.2, pp.16-17.
\end{flushendnotes}
work force participation of women denies their contribution to the currently accepted definition of economic activity by making it statistically invisible.

Shobana Warrier’s (2000) outline review of “Work and Women Identity” documented about the conditions of work, culture of work place, the consciousness of women and social limitations of cashew industrial workers of Kerala. Women are secondary workers, less skilled and are predominant in the work force. Caste complexity at work prevails. The dominance of a labour leader of a particular caste plays a vital role in the recruitment of workers. Caste at the work place is realized but this does not mean the fundamental changes at the social level. Women are not strong participants in union activities due to their financial and social responsibilities.

“Moopan System” of middle agents who got commission from the wages of workers in organized sector is eradicated by the implementation of Minimum Wages Act. But in unorganized sectors wages are meager, and the rights of the workers are unprotected.

---

Safia Mehadi (2001)\textsuperscript{28} presents a paper on “Shrinking Avenues for Women Under the Influence of New Global Force”. A large number of female workers in informal sector are affected by Globalization. Women are paid low wages and returns. Meanwhile the formal sector has provided opportunities for women who are educated and skilled. The wrong macro economic policies adopted by the Government have made them unpopular among the poor. Anyhow undimensional mode of economic development concerned only with production and productivity and not the poor women.

Ambrose Pinto (2001)\textsuperscript{29} illustrates in “Exploitation of Indigenous women”, writers that women workers in non-formal and informal sectors are mostly exploited. There is discriminations of indigenous women, mostly dalits and tribal’s. They were exploited by the Government, in the name of development projects. They have been displaced from their original names due to modernization and marketization of societies with dominant patriarchal cultures which eradicate tradition and indigenous culture, leading to female suppression by male in all social activities. Globalization forced indigenous


women for seeking work with in the competitive industrial world with hurdles. Anyhow they have a little hope for presenting traditional culture by the integration of indigenous women with their organization.

The case study of the Beedi Industry by Reka Pande (2001)\(^{30}\) suggests the health issues of women and children. The beedi industry is the biggest among the unorganized sectors spread all over India employing a large number of women and girls helping the owner make huge profits at low cost, risk and liabilities. Being a home based industry, children in general and girls in particular are easy prey as workers. Like vending which is women dominated, beedi making is also a women dominated unorganized sector.

Kiran Bedi (2001)\(^{31}\) the first woman in India to join the elite Indian police service shares her perceptions on gender injustice against the background of her experiences. The main reason for the gender injustice is the dependence of women, her economic dependence, social dependence, mental


and emotional dependence. A woman is never independent as a person. The solution to this problem is to change the mind set of parents, teachers, society, education and the introduction to non-formal education.

Elizabeth Hill (2001)\(^{32}\) explains the strategies for work reforms among IS workers in developing countries, which are currently dominated by resource based approaches such as micro-credit-movement. The policy framework is predicted upon certain liberal assumptions about individual human action and the relationship between human behaviour and economic development. This article establishes that these assumptions are inappropriate when applied to IS workers and their economic activities. A focus on the inter subjective conditions of work and economic development based on the work of Asel Honneth (1995) provides an alternative way of conceptualizing the work life experience of marginalized workers and appropriate interventions for economic and social security. An example of collective strategy implemented by myself employed women’s association (SEWA) in India demonstrates the important role that inter personal recognition plays in activating workers to identify and to act as agency to achieve development.

Renaha Jhabvala, Ratna M. Sudarshan & Jeemol Unni (2003) observe that is a welcome addition to the literature of informal sector and will be of direct relevance to the work of many national and international institutions engaged in policy making. The study is the outcome of careful research work. The attempt to define the informal economy and distinguish it from the informal sector and worker concept is a bold attempt.

Sumi Krishna (2004) critically examines the complex and many layered process of mainstreaming gender in natural resource management. The contributors build a richly textured ‘genderscape’ of community resource rights in varied contexts unravel the gender barriers in traditional practices, community institutions and modern systems of governance documents. He also diverse approaches to livelihood and present a strong case for gender equity in sustainable resource management.

33 Rehana Jhabvala, RM Sundarshan and Jeemol Unni, Informal Economy Centre Stage; New Structure of Employment, Sage India, New Delhi, 2003.

Suresh Pathare, (2004)\textsuperscript{35} illustrates that domestic work is one of the major spheres of work for employing women in unorganized and informal sector. This is one of the most exploitive areas of work for women workers in India. The system of the domestic labour shows prevalence of low wages, long hours of work, in secure living, difficult working conditions and the like. The main reason why women are desirable as employees is that they are willing to work even longer without complaints and accept low wages.

Kalpana Roy (2005)\textsuperscript{36} contains well documented papers on various aspects of women such as women and their environment, women in nature, Indian women, higher education of women, political status of women, society towards women, women’s organizations, women and population, women in India; law and reality, role of women in agriculture, women against women, extensive benefits to women etc. The topics have been analyzed elaborately and critically and some of them go into various problems of unorganized sector women.


\textsuperscript{36} Kalpana Roy, \textbf{Women and their Environment}, Rajat Publications, New Delhi, 2005.
Santhosh Nandal (2006)\textsuperscript{37} presented a paper on construction industry in India. Construction Industry in India is a significant industry in the unorganized sector. Nearly half of the workers in this industry are women. They usually suffer from low wage rates, job discrimination and underemployment and are over-burdened with their family duties. The economic conditions of the migrant construction workers is not better than the other poor women in the unorganized sector, with ignorance and illiteracy compounding their social and economic suffering. These women workers contribute to the family income, but they do not receive independent income, and they depend upon the male members of the family.

K. Manohari (2010)\textsuperscript{38} pointed out the wage structure of women agriculture labourers is deployably poor. Transplanting and weeding are specialized works for women agriculture labourers and there is no possibility for substitution for males for these works. the cattle shed maintenance and allied works are undertaken by female agricultural labourers without any other

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
alternative for a bare minimum of Rs.10/-. The duration of work may extend even for 12 hours in some peak seasons. Leaving out the working condition for wages, the women labourers have to look after the household duties, childrearing and maintenance of cattle. In addition to 8 hours of domestic work spoil the health of the female agricultural workers. Ill – health, frequent deliveries, tension and other works make most of the women workers invalid even at the age of 40.

2.3 RESEARCH GAP FILLED UP IN THE STUDY

Review of earlier studies on women in female sectors has helped the researcher to identify the research gap. Studies relating to female construction workers in Tirunelveli district are found to be inadequate. The previous studies covered mainly on the status and role of women at a macro level in India. Socio-economic status, their contribution towards their family income, pattern of expenditure, savings, investment, debt and decision making empowerment remain incomplete. Therefore, a deep and comprehensive study on female construction workers in this respect attempts to evaluate the changes in the standard of living, income, assets, savings, indebtedness and decision making empowerment. Therefore, the present study in some aspects is a follow up work and also claims improvement over the other studies.