CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
2.0 Introduction:

This chapter reviews literature on women workers in the agriculture sector. Emphasis has been laid on workers in the agricultural sector in the context of globalization/liberalization. The work is structured to incorporate major studies relating to their working conditions, health and socio-economic profile, marginalization and economic empowerment. It also looks into various policies adopted and their impact on social security. The brief revive of earlier related studies are broadly presented in five different sections. In the first section (2.1), Studies on Status of Women in the Unorganized Sector are discussed. In the next section (2.2), studies on Role of Women in Farm Decision-Making are analyzed. In the third section (2.3) the general Studies on Role of Women in the Agriculture Sector are discussed. In the fourth section (2.4), the Studies advocated the need for Social Security measures for agriculture Women Workers are analyzed. The need for the present study is presented at the end.

2.1 Studies on Status of Women in the Unorganized Sector:

Chowdary and Sharma (1961) conducted a study through which they found that women participated in menuring, weeding, and harvesting, threshing and sugar cane production along with men folk. The study further revealed that production of the labour participation was greater than male. Singh (1968) studied the participation of rural women in agricultural operations and revealed that a comprehensively large proportion of women participation in the operations such as seed storage, winnowing, harvesting and care of animals. The study found that the middle age women of lower castes having frequent urban contacts and they participated in agricultural operations large along with others.

The role of women in agricultural operations has carried out by Devadas (1972) reported that women participation in the operations of sowing, harvesting, threshing transplanting seedlings, storing the grains, winnowing, preparing seed-beds, picking the cotton pods, selling the pods, scaring the birds caring cattle, milking and application of fertilizers were notable level along with male.

Chakravarty (1975) studied women participation in agriculture development in Haryana and found that the women of this state participate in most of the agricultural work. Their contribution in terms of agricultural operations is between 50-60 percent
of the total operations. He concludes that although the women in Haryana have contributed significantly but their situations seem to be marginal as most of them are either agricultural labourer of small marginal farmer’s households. The situation of the scheduled castes and the back ward castes is even worse because of illiteracy and low income⁴.

C.H. Hanumanth Rao’s (1975) work analyses the economics of technological change in India agricultural in recent period. Training to assess the contribution of technological change to the growth of output, the study shows that only 27% to 40% growth is achieved after mid 60’s and despite these gains, the growth agricultural output slowed down in 1960’s when compared to 1950’s. One reason could be the socially high cost agricultural growth through private investment. This could be cut down effectively only when public investment in irrigation projects could be increased which in turn puts demand on public resources again which cuts into elitist consumption⁵.

According to Ursula Sharma (1980) landless and poverty is the reason for high participation rates of female in agriculture. She also observed that the women of the land owning classes had largely withdrawn from most kinds of outdoor agricultural work well before coming of green revolution in Punjab⁶. Saikia and Gogoi (1981) reported that women agricultural workers were higher than the other employment against estimates of census report in villages of Assam state⁷.

Kaur (1982) conducted a study and found that majority of female were entered into labour force and it was higher in backward areas. He also found that education has a vital role in participation of woman in various activities. They consumed more time 2-6 hours for food preparation, care of animals, clothing, childcare, grains processing and flour grinding. Average working day for woman came out to be 13.2 hours⁸.

Rajmohini Sethi (1982) in her study explains that the dependency ratio for agricultural labour and farm owners indicate that the number of dependents was higher for the farm owning families i.e. 1.29 per earner while for the agricultural labour household it was only 0.71 depends per earner. The reason for this is the encouragement of land owning families to educate their children and having a tradition of not letting their women to work on the farm. Whereas, the economic necessity of landless households compels every able bodied individual to work⁹.
N. Parameshwara and Abdual Aziz’s (1982) study in Karnataka shows that a shift from local seeds to high yielding new variety seeds has resulted in the increase in total labour use. A second point is that, by and large, the proportion of mail labour input has declined and that of female labour input has increased with the adoption of high yielding variety seeds. Third observation is that the proportion of family female labour has declined and the proportion of hired female labour input has shown a rise after the adoption of High Yielding variety seeds.10

Agnihotri (1983) studied the contribution of female workers in the farm sector in Una district of Himachal Pradesh and noticed that 63 percent of women were participating in work force and 90 percent were associated in agricultural activities.11

Mencher (1983) identified the role of women labour has varies region. In Tamilnadu, men uproot rice seeding in rice farming and women were transplant. While in Kerala, both operations primarily and substantially performed by women. In West Bengal women applied cow dung to the fields, a practice now being replaced by chemical fertilizers applied by men.12

The study conducted by Erragattuswamy (1984) shows that the duration of employment of female labourers is longer in irrigated areas then in unirrigated areas, for instance, between 210 and 265 days per annum in the villages of West Godavari District as against 130 to 220 days in Khammam Dirstict it is also pointed out that the duration of employment is relatively longer in cases of cultivation by modern methods. Another significant finding of the study is that female agricultural labourers, irrespective of the cast of region, are at a disadvantages compared position compared to their male counterparts in terms of wages.13

Devi and Reddy (1984) studied the role expectations and performance of farms women in selected villages of Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh. As regards expected role of the rural women, harvest and post-harvest role emerged as the first rank, followed by pre-sowing and sowing allied agriculture and inter-cultivation. Performance in all the agricultural activities was higher in case of economically low category women and high and medium economic categories mostly performed allied agriculture activities. Women belonging to small farm holdings, lower caste with low socio-economic status, less education, less material possession and having less urban contact were participating more in agricultural activities.14
Mies (1984) in her study of three villages in Andhra Pradesh observed that women did more field work than men did. In one of these villages, 96 percent of women were engaged in agricultural work. Ramesh, Sidhu and Kaul (1985) in their study on impact of agricultural modernization on labour being used in Punjab with special reference to women labour found that modernization has resulted in an increase in employment per hectare of cultivated land for all kinds of female labour. The study further finds that the wider application of new agricultural strategies has resulted in women in state agriculture has increase due to modernization of agriculture, and reducing the differences in the wage rate of men and women. The share of women in state agriculture has increase due to modernization of agriculture.

S.V.L.N. Row states that technological change has adverse effect on women’s work participation. Mechanisation displaces both men and women of the laboring class, through, probably more women than men. Shoba, V (1985) has undertaken the research problem “Rural Women and Development: A study of Female Agricultural Labour in Telegana”. She studied about women and nature of Indian Agriculture, Socio- Economic, conditions, domestic situations, work culture, women organizations and their movement etc. The researcher also highlighted the profiles of the female agricultural labourers and their personal and domestic problems and other related issues.

Sisodia (1985) has examined the role of farm women in Chambal command area of Madhya Pradesh and noted that the women participate in harvesting, threshing, weeding and other activities which together constitute for 66.83 percent of their total participation in the field. Women also participate in supportive activities like cattle rearing, cake making, and ghee making, milking and feeding of animals. He found out that more than 30 percent of the farm housewife’s are consulted in choice of crops to be grown, seeds and fertilizers to be used and the grain to be marketed pesticides should be increased in order to produce higher yield.

Patnaik and Sailabala (1986) conducted a study on the contribution of farm women to the farm sector in Satyabad block of Puri district in Orrisa which revealed that landholdings size and working hours of females were inversely related. Females did not go for employment outside their own farm when farm size was larger. In the case of small sized farm, females tended to seek wage employment outside their own farm since it did not offer adequate employment and earning throughout the year. The contribution of females towards family income from non family activities was
significant. Besides, the contribution of female labour towards agricultural production was always more than the male labour, which tends to decrease with increase on land holding size. In the regression model, land emerged as the most significant variable. It was observed that one percent increase in female labour would lead to 0.68 percent increase in total output when other variables, i.e., land, irrigation and male labour were constant. When the households were landless, one percent increases in female earning led to the increase of 0.58 percent of the total family income while one percent increase in male earning would increase the family income by 0.42 percent\(^\text{20}\).

Pandey (1986) examined the crop-wise and operation-wise participation of women in agriculture in Hissar district and found that cotton, paddy, wheat and Rabi fodder were the major crops to absorb the female labour. The female labour was more employed for operations such as weeding and hoeing, harvesting, threshing and winnowing. Size of operational holdings and percentage of cash crops to the total cropped area were positively significant related with the rural women’s employment\(^\text{21}\).

Krishna Ahooja Patel (1987) also stresses that in order to improve the position of women as food producers, their customary rights to land need to be linked to agrarian structures, policies and legislation. The poorest among the low and lower income groups in all countries happens to be women. Time and again the question of what is the place of women in the discussion on national development plans, policies and programmes is raised. Though women contribute to the world economy in a substantial manner, why economy does not channel economic rewards to women\(^\text{22}\).

Kalamati (1988) based on his study on labour force participation of women in agriculture concluded that women participation in all the agricultural operations remained the same over a long period. In the past, they were either labourer or they assisted their husbands in some agricultural operations. Today, in contrast, in addition to performing various agricultural operations, women are managing large farms of many acres by themselves and now they are consulted on many aspects of agricultural marketing. Ignorance, traditional attitude, illiteracy, lack of skill, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work and long hours of work with limited payment, discrimination in wage structure, lack of job security, lack of comprehensive legislation, competition in employment and resultant deprivation of real wages, lack of minimum facilities at work place, bondage or alienation were the main problems faced by the farm women workers in agriculture\(^\text{23}\).
Kaur (1988) studied the impact of technological advancement in the areas of agriculture, communication and health on the status of rural women in Haryana. The data based on a comparative analysis of the most developed and least developed regions of Haryana, revealed that partial mechanization in agriculture had favorable influence on income and employment pattern of farm women from all socio-economic groups, while full mechanization had exerted an adverse influence on poorer women. The conclusion that emerged from the analysis was that level of regional development, caste system, class position and gender emerged as significant factors in determining access to technology and thereby consequent gains with respect to income and employment.

Punia (1991) conducted a study in three districts of Haryana and observed that involvement of women in decision making was found to be more in age group of 36-45 years as compared to younger women who were considered inexperienced and did not have the status as the middle aged mother had. About 60 percent of the farm women were engaged in the activities related to agriculture, but their participation in decisions regarding farm affairs was much less as only 18.75 percent.

Sutra (Social Upliftment through Rural Action), an NGO, along with R.M. Sethi (1991) has jointly studied the work participation of women in livestock care, home and farm work, and their status with power in the hilly state of Himachal Pradesh. It is clear from their study “Women in Agriculture that women toil and sweat in agriculture, animal husbandry and other related units in addition to their household burden but their work is accounted as nothing. The women present in the household are responsible for cattle care, the care of a flock of sheep or hens whose produce is marketed for the subsistent need of the family. Self-cultivation of land is their major source of sustenance and their responsibility lies in household chores too. But in all such situations their work is not considered as major economic acts and their contributions to the production process making ignored. In the case of their status the abundant decision making power in all dimensions lies with men alone rather than with women. Hence, the whole services rendered by women in the study area are treated as non accountable.

In “Some aspects of women participation in the Agrarian Economy”, S.K.Goyal and Mahipal (1991) examined initially the women participation in economic activities as revealed by the census data and later on turns to the case study of the Meerut region of U.P. They made a detailed analysis of the employment...
experience of women on the various sized farms in the region. They find that women’s contribution to economic development was far more in the primary sector than in other sectors.

Devendra Kumar Nayak (1991) concludes that social change resulted in a decline in the women participation in economic activities as well as there is increasing tendency to push them to the backward sector of the economy. While such effects may be uncalled for it is very likely that only some areas have experienced such adverse consequences on women’s economic status because of recent development, which as a matter of fact should have promoted women status.

Sailahala Devi has stated (1991) that contribution of women in agricultural operations is higher than male contribution their contribution towards agricultural production in terms of output is very significant and for higher than of men and their relative share in consumption is much less than males, This shows that whole women make higher contribution to the state’s agricultural economy than male member, they consumes at the same time far less.

Crystal David (1991) finds that there was wise variation in female participation rate within the state women from the hill areas participated in economic activities than women from plain areas and while making comparison with other states, U.P. ranks very low as female work participation was concerned. This is quite significant and shows that despite low per capital income compared to states like Punjab and Haryana, there was a lower participation rate by women in U.P.(mainly from non hill areas ) who were by and large confined to their households, possible for social and caste reasons.

Narayan Srivastava’s has expressed (1991) that the work participation by women in Madhya Pradesh is higher than the Indian average, rural women play greater role in economic activities than urban women and women constituted higher percentage of agricultural labourers than males. K.Alam examined (1991) the nature and changes in the role of women in rural economy of Assam. The experience of Assam, which is true of all the North-East and other tribal areas and even of non tribal areas especially in the eastern and central parts of the country, shows that they work more than men. Further, there has occurred considerable change in the jobs performed by ladies as with economic development they participated actively along with men on job like construction of roads, buildings of enhancements, earth cutting, and filling work as well as clerks, school teachers and soon.
K.P. Singh stated (1991) that as a consequence of mechanization of farm sector and emphasis on limited crops (wheat and rice), more and more women in Punjab have been withdrawn from agriculture and further because of lack of agro-based opportunities there are no alternative employment opportunities for these women. Kanthimathi (1992) conducted a study of the economic and socio-cultural variables associated with the participation of women in the labour force in selected agricultural communities of Mayiladuthurai Block, Thanjavur District, Tamil Nadu State. In the study area 50 percent of the women labour force was absorbed in agricultural work, around 40 percent fully in household work and less than 10 percent in other occupations. About 80 percent of the agricultural labour families were below the poverty line. The contribution of the women labourers to the family income was significant though 40 percent of the women labourers remained unemployed during off season. There were differences in wage and working hours between male and female workers and female workers were paid fewer wages than men though they had to work for longer hours than the males. Comparatively non agricultural work was more remunerative for women and 73 percent of them went for work out of economic compulsion.

Shirokar (1993) conducted a study of 97 farm women engaged in dairy occupation from Pune district of Maharashtra state regarding extent of participation of farm women in decision making about the important aspects of dairy occupation. She concluded that our of eleven socio- economic parameters, six parameters, namely age of farm women, size of family, social rank, experience, knowledge and participation in work were positively and significantly influenced the decision making of farm women. The farm women of 30 years age, belonged to small family size (up to 5 members), more the experience in dairy occupation (21 years and above), higher knowledge in dairy occupation (score above 35), higher participation in work (Score 91 and above) had highly statistically significant influence on decision making. The another five parameters, namely higher education of farm women, higher size of holding (5 ha. And above), exposure to more sources of information, extension contacts and size of livestock had no bearing a decision making of farm women. The farm women had participated in decision making irrespective of source of information, either more or less extension contacts and irrespective of size of livestock maintained by them.
Revathi, E (1994) research work on “Women work and Technology in Indian Agriculture in Andhra Pradesh” had thrown light on work pattern, employment status and earnings of women workers, emerging regional disparities among Telangana, Rayalaseema, and Andhra regions of the state of Andhra Pradesh. She has clearly explained about the impact of modern Technology on labour utilization, income and its negative impact on women employment and development. She has also made some suggestions based on her micro level field study and observation, for the improvement of economic status of agricultural women workers and so on.

Kaldlag (1994) conducted a study on “Role of farm women in decision making in farming in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra”. She concluded that a majority of farm women had actively participated in decision making belonging to major age group (35 years and above), small size of family, low economic status and low annual gross income. The study further revealed that there was positive impact of participation of farm women in the decision making process on productivity of crops. Major reasons for low participation of farm women in decision making were dominance of men in the family, illiteracy of farm women, less exposure to the outside world, lack of confidence, shyness, and lack of knowledge regarding improved agricultural technologies.

Sri Sankari and Uma, k (1995) explained the position of women in agricultural activities, unemployment efficiency of women workers. They identified the over work and lowest wages and some other problems in the agricultural activities like over time etc.

Thakor (1996) conducted a study in kheda district of Gujarat state which revealed that more than 50 percent of farm women having small farm holdings never participated in decision making regarding choice of crop, type of weeding to be adopted, type of labour to be taken to field and distribution of work to labour. More than 60 percent of farm women who belonged to medium categories of farms could take decision about time of sowing transplanting and type of weeding to be adopted. In case of large farm’s women, it was observed that majority of women (60 percent ) always took decisions regarding storage of produce, number of animals to be maintained and type of feed to be given to animals. In the absence of male partner of her family, she sometimes took a decision related to distribution of work to the hired labour. Women who belong to the large families because of their socio- economic status in the society felt that doing work with hired labour in the farm was a way to
lose their dignity. Therefore, their direct involvement in various agricultural operations such as sowing, weeding, working with labourers and the extent of their decision making such issues was very low.

Mishra (1999) examined the extent and proportion of women labour participation in paddy cultivation and the gaps in wages between men and women labour in Kymore plateau and Sapura hill region of Madhya Pradesh. It was observed that the participation of farm women was higher in the transplanting of paddy, intercultural operation and harvesting while operations like preparatory tillage, sowing, menuring and fertilizer application, irrigation and threshing operations were performed jointly with me. The use of women labour (both family and hired labour) in paddy cultivation constituted 53 percent of the total human labour employment. The participation of family women decreased as the size of farm increased but the total employment hours of women increased as the size of farm but the total employment hours of women increased as the size of farm increased. The hiring of female labour was highly associated with the increased in the size of farm. The results of the study also showed that lower wages were paid to women for all the operations as compared to men and the wage gap was more than 71 percent. It was suggested that diversified farming such as dairy, poultry etc. could help to increase the employment opportunities of farm women.

Rai (1999) examined the impact of central sector scheme “women in Agriculture “in Hissar district of Haryana on different aspects of farm women. The study brought out that the scheme was found to be very effective with respect to increase in knowledge regarding various agricultural technologies, their adoption and resources used by the farm women. On an average, about 60 percent of farm women had adopted improved varieties of seeds. All the farm women adopted improved varieties of seeds. All the farm women had adopted improved varieties of seeds. All the farm women adopted improved varieties of seeds. All the farm women adopted seed treatment, weed control, use of fumigants, rat control measures and kitchen gardening. The use of correct seed rate and Rhizobium culture was reported by 97 percent. The adoption of plant protection measure, balance use of fertilizers and soil and water testing was reported by 78 percent, 65 percent and 55 percent of the selected women farmers. The overall use of farm inputs was increased due to the implementation of the scheme.

Chandravathi (1999) conducted a study to assess the impact of ANTWA (Andhra Pradesh Training of Women in Agriculture) on agriculture development. The
study revealed the per hectare productivity of rice increased by 7.5 quintals, sugarcane by 60.46 quintals, ground nut by 1.17 quintals and that of sesame by 0.47 quintals. The increase in net income per hectare ranged between Rs.1,027 and Rs.6,537 in the above crops. The total income from all crops increased from Rs.18,235 to 30,359 per hectare. Thus, the programme had a positive influence on the crop production.

M.Jeyamala (2000) conducted a study among agricultural women labourers in Thopundamuthur Block, Coimbatore District, and Tamil Nadu State. The findings indicated that the empowerment of rural agricultural labour women was very much limited because of their illiteracy and ignorance. Tradition and customs also placed restrictions on their independent decision making. Further, in some cases, husbands would spend their earnings on liquor and sexual deviance. In this situation very little of the women’s earnings be used for children and family.

Sobha (2001) on the basis of her study in Chittor district of Andhra Pradesh reported that women belonging to lower socio-economic groups being landless had to perform labour intensive activities. Women performed sowing (55 percent), winnowing (90 percent), transplanting (85 percent) and poultry care (75 percent). Caring of mulch animal was not a major activity for farm women of lower socio-economic strata. However, poultry care was undertaken by 46 percent of women.

Boreth (2002) carried out an investigation in Rajasthan state with a view to study the role of farm women in decision making related to various agricultural aspects. The data collected from 743 farm women highlighted that in 72.80 percent cases, women were consulted by their counterparts in decisions related to the harvesting of crops, selection of crops and crop rotation. In more than 50 percent cases, women were not involved in decision making activities requiring technical competence viz. seed rate, soil treatment and seed treatment, use of rhizobium culture, method of sowing and fertilizers application. This was due to lack of technical knowledge on the part of women and their limited exposure to training and other information sources. Decisions regarding agricultural marketing were taken predominantly by male members. This might be because of unawareness of women about marketing practices. Male took decision related to farm credit. Besides, it was generally thought by men that women did not understand much about money matter as they were confined to the home, hence women could not take such decisions.
According to Swaminathan (2005), the famous agricultural scientist “Some historians believe that it was woman who first domesticated crop plants and there by initiated the art and science of farming. While men went out hunting in search of food, women started gathering seeds from the native flora and began cultivating those of interest from the point of view if food, feed, fiber and fuel. Sukhadeo Thorat (2006) worked on caste, social exclusion and poverty linkages. He provide considerable empirical evidence of lower access of agricultural and non land capital assets, higher unemployment, lower daily wages particularly in nonfarm activities compared with non SC/ST group in Indian societies.

2.2 Studies on Role of Women in Farm Decision-Making:

Dr. Vandana Dave (2012) made an attempt to understand the socioeconomic condition of women laborers, nature of their work, their working conditions, wage pattern, wage discrimination and other difficulties faced by them at their work place. It was carried out with 350 respondents including women construction workers, agriculture labourers and domestic helpers working in the unorganized sector. The results showed that majority of the migrant women were engaged in the construction industry and were only employed in unskilled and low paying jobs as coolies, labourers and helpers and women were exploited to a greater degree as they were paid less compared to men for similar nature of work and hours spent on work. The conditions of work in the unorganized sector were unsatisfactory and the problems confronted by them were acute. Their illiteracy, poverty and indebtedness forced them to work for lower wages and under unjust conditions.

Vasudev and Romica(2012) conducted a study amongst working women of the organized and unorganized sector for understanding their status within the family by looking at their involvement in key decision making areas including distribution of household duties and money related decisions.

Anthony P.D’souza (2013) focused the status and contribution of unorganized sector focused more on the challenges and problems faced by the youth in selecting job as self-employment. It is found that larger number of workers was getting their livelihood from this sector and entrepreneur plays a vital role in bringing up unorganized sector at the better position in the country. Usha P.E (2014) brought out the consequences and determinants of women’s work in the unorganized sector. It is revealed that women in the textile sales sector are working with very lower wages.
than minimum wage fixed. They are not getting any service benefits such as increment, leave, pension, P.F and insurance. They are all coming from the lower class family and are exploited in many ways\textsuperscript{51}

Craven (1963) found that home decisions were likely to be made jointly at all economic levels than farm decisions. Farm families of low and medium income were more likely to make decisions jointly than the families of high income and those who lived on highly specialized farms\textsuperscript{52}. Arya (1964) found that family size, size of land holding, and age of the farmer affects the participation of women in farm decision making. Their participation was more when the family was nuclear, holding was small and the farmer belonged to younger age group. Women were found to be playing dominant role in matters of home improvement, agricultural marketing and sale and purchase of land\textsuperscript{53}.

Kahlon and Brar (1967) conducted a study in pakhowal block of Ludhiana district and revealed that about one - fourth of the decisions were made jointly by farmer and his wife. This study was repeated in the same area and it was found that her participation in joint decision maker at 7 percent of the total decision\textsuperscript{54}.

Sharma and Singh (1970) found that in issues concerning seed storage, care of animals. Selection of seed and at the time of selling decides jointly. Husband alone decided about application of fertilizers and manures, and use of pesticides. They also concluded the age, education, cast, type of family and urban contact did not affect extent of participation in decision making while social participation and size of holding significantly affected extent of participation in decision-making\textsuperscript{55}.

Puri (1971) conducted a study in Mehrauli block of Delhi and found that the rural women were associated with decision making in the number of areas but the role of head of the family was decisive decision making pattern regarding the education of children was significantly associated with age, type of family, occupation and urban contact. Further, they take an important role in areas of decision making regarding marriage of children, payment of dowry, education of children, selection of occupation and expenditure pattern\textsuperscript{56}.

Sawar (1973) collected data from 67 married couples living on farms in the lower Fraser Valley of British Columbia, Canada and found that in general decision making, joint involvement was common which can be seen as relatively important such as borrowing money for the farms, buying or rent more land etc. The husband’s influence in adoption decision was particularly noticeable at awareness and interest
stages while wives participation becomes more an apparent at the evaluation stage and increased through trial and adoption. It was revealed that family size, income and farm size seen to restrict or encourage the wife in farm decision\textsuperscript{57}.

Sandhu and Dhesi (1977) reported that women were mainly consulted for selling the produce, the area to be sown under various crops, the change in the cropping pattern, the hiring of farm services and the purchase of seeds. They were rarely consulted in the supervision of the servants and the least consultation was made while purchasing tractors and other machinery\textsuperscript{58}.

Findings of the study of Badgers and Rao (1980) revealed that women were involved in decision making in the home over religious practices, health, hygiene and home equipment but less in saving plans and occupation of children. On the farms, women’s decision was frequent in the care of animals and storage of grains but less in matters concerning fertilizer\textsuperscript{59}. Sajogyo (1980) identified that in Indonesia decision are usually shared with men in domestic matters and women in agriculture and economic fields. Decisions on purchase of land, moving to new house, education of children and their marriage were discussed together but husband’s decisions was the final\textsuperscript{60}.

2.3 Studies on Role of Women in the Agriculture Sector:

The second half of the 19th century saw the emergence of a new class in the Indian society- industrial working class inter-alia including women workers. The first attempt at interpreting the economic history of ancient Indian woman was made by A. N. Bose\textsuperscript{61} in his book. According to him, female slaves were often kept for enjoyment. So far as treatment is concerned, he opined that their masters meted out horrible and inhuman treatment to women slaves. The nature of their work - manual and physical nature of jobs, encountering hardships in sun and rain - in the unorganized sector has become burdensome.

S.A. Dange\textsuperscript{62}’s work is a useful attempt to analyze the role of women and their participation and control of productive processes. R.S.Sharma well-known historian undertook the study of the socio economic and political aspects of ancient Indian history from the materialist point of view. Romila Thapar, another outstanding historian of early India has given some important information regarding slavery and women workers in her various works. S.Jaiswal’s\textsuperscript{63} paper have thrown light on slavery and discusses the possible connections between women’s status and their
involvement in production within the framework of what she perceives as an emerging class divided society and postulates links between the kinship structure and the modes of production.

Informalisation of labor force in South Asian countries seem to be increasing-Jeemol Unni [2001]64. The study identified two broad components of the informal economy - non-wage employment and wage employment - and they show an increasing participation of women. Though low quality of employment thus obtained are disturbing, the chances are that the informal employment is what that helps many households reduce the intensity of poverty. Declining opportunities for formal sector work has contributed to increasing number of women seeking informal sector work.

Coming to the Indian scenario, A Kundu and Alaka N Sharma [2001]65 used secondary data to look into the trends and patterns in the informal sector at the macro level. Arup Mitra cites an inverse relation between the size of the informal sector and urbanization and industrialization. This implies that developing backward and forward linkages between formal and informal sector may help their inter linkages. Looking into the trends and patterns of informal sector in the manufacturing arena - Kundu, Lalitha and Arora [2001]66 - notes that there is increasing employment without increase in productivity or efficiency. In the study it has been observed that the situation of women exposed more miserably than earlier.

Deshpande, Sudha (1996)67 conducted a study by pointing out that the country points to the awful conditions of women workers in the informal sector. Ignorance, traditional bound attitudes, illiteracy, lack of skills, seasonal nature of employment, heavy physical work of different types, long hours of work with limited payment, sex discrimination in wage structures, lack of guarantee of minimum wages/ comprehensive legislation/ minimum facilities; migration and disintegration of families, bondage and alienation etc are some characteristics of employment of women in this sector. But these unattractive sectors still involve many women because they search these jobs for their livelihood.

Significant changes in the world economy such as rapid globalization, fast paced technological progress and growing informalisation of work in a study by ILO (2003)68 greatly altered women’s labour market status. While providing new opportunities for economic growth in global and national economies, these changes have generated major challenges - meeting the greater demand for skilled jobs,
maintaining the employability of a large segment of national labour force and containing the potential instability arising from such changes.

Developments in recent years have rekindled concerns about the unfavorable employment situation. Among the groups most affected are the young, the old and the less skilled and as ILO report 2003 states there is a bias against women in all these categories. Also they are being disproportionately engaged in non standard forms of work such as temporary casual employment and part time jobs.

The general features of women informal sector employment highlights low wages, no benefits, no organization. They differ in methods of recruitment, payment, ease of entry and hours of work, piece rate or daily/ weekly wage rate, extent and nature of supervision. These disadvantages exist for men informal sector workers also. But hierarchy inherent in gender relations put extra obstacles for women.

Globalization has had a two-fold impact on the working women- growing informalisation and fragmentation of work on the one hand and expansion of opportunities on the other (Rohini Hensman, 2001). Halting and reversing this along with obtaining basic worker’s reproductive and parental rights were seen as crucial for improving women’s condition. The Government policy can play a major role in securing and supporting the rights and livelihood of all citizens. The women’s movement creates a nominal commitment on the part of the Government to women’s participation in organizational decision making in State recognized organizations. These organizations would provide organizational space to solve problems and may provide chance for some women to develop leadership skills. [Jana Everett and Mira Savera]

Women’s employment has been and still is characterized by high levels of occupational and sectoral segregation by sex. Hakim (1976) elucidates this through the distinction between vertical and horizontal occupational segregation. The usual trend in the employment of women is downward, gaining proportionately less than male employment in the upswings of business cycles (Banerjee, 1985). Differences in wages due to a variety of discriminatory practices are designed to perpetuate the vertical as well as horizontal division of labour markets leading to gender based segregation and stereotyping of jobs resulting in women being concentrated in a few occupations.
Examining the strengths and status of informal sector women workers in the context of globalization, Kalpagam observes a process of casualisation of women labor force, feminization of agriculture and growth of rigidities in getting non agriculture organized sector jobs for women. Gabriel Dietrich (1995) is of the view that insecurity and lack of safety are the hallmark of the employment of women in the informal sector. Majority of the women workers are classified as marginal workers because of the irregular nature of their employment. Since they are marginal workers, they are devoid of several social security benefits such as maternity benefits, pension etc. Work security is nil as even work records are mostly non-existing.

The existence of female occupations is cited in the study of 41 countries by Anker pointed out the principal reason for women’s wages being less than that of men. This implies lesser opportunities for upward mobility and greater financial pressure to survive. The same is the finding by Rubbery, Smith and Fagan of the European Union. It points out that women’s jobs are low paid, precarious status with poor working conditions, inadequate social coverage and limited scope for promotion and upward mobility.

Studies by Rani Bang and others point out that more than 50% of women are suffering from illnesses which they have learnt to ignore because of various social factors. This worsens the situation of women, ultimately taking its toll on their health. Micro level studies on specific sectors and specific industries has shown that women’s employment has increased mainly in the unorganized and informal sector activities and that they are concentrated in the lower rungs of employment. (Nirmala Banerjee; 1985).

The macro trends of urban women workers in the 1990’s are looked into by Jayati Gosh. Unemployment and underemployment are its salient features-also unpaid unrecognized work done at home. A case study of three slums in Mumbai showed positive impact on women workers in the post reform period in terms of better employment opportunities- Sudha Deshpande [2001]. A study of sales girls of Ernakulam in Kerala indicates the gap between the working conditions of men and women as well as their wages.

Fawcett (1918) and Edgeworth (1922) argue that discrimination is manifested not as unequal pay for equal work but rather as unequal job assignments. The overcrowding model explains why women concentrate in certain jobs due to cultural or conspiratorial factors and the reasons for the low wage rate. It is also
identified that they compete among themselves for the relatively few positions and which in turn push down their wages.

Ofreneo [2000]\(^{83}\) viewed that profit is made by minimizing labor costs, particularly that of women. The labor market segmentation, which means women being concentrated heavily on certain segments is linked to social norms and patriarchal ideology, which propagates that woman, are suited to such low paid jobs. These activities in conventional economic reckoning do not constitute value production. This when carried over to paid employment results in the maintenance of division of labor and low valuation of women’s labor and a low status within the hierarchy? Dholaki (1990)\(^{84}\) proves that wage discrimination is not due to difference in human capital or marginal productivity but due to the monophony practices in wage elasticity of labour supply.

The form of women’s involvement in the urban construction sector exhibits facets of both continuity and change. The recognition of economic spheres in which women’s domination remains unchallenged, links the Johannesburg experience of Beavon and Rogerson to previous findings and interpretations of their informal construction participation. In the final analysis it appears impossible to fully interpret the question of the function and special forms of women’s roles in any social formation.

Ghothoskar [2003]\(^{85}\) points out that construction work is the product of a combination of historical, economic and social factors and processes, which may change with time and circumstances. It is argued that women are found to be not over represented in the construction sector due the flexibilities of work. Much employment in this sector is based on the “male bread winner” model, which does not give adequate space or freedom to women who also have other domestic responsibilities. The employer’s to ensure more work for less pay exploits this situation.

Retrenchment and Casualisation of employment has been taking place in this sector as a result of which they are forced to be accepted by this sector thus reducing the opportunities of the unskilled and semi skilled workers. Chakrabarti\(^{86}\) has noted that very insignificant proportion of the work force enjoys social security benefits and the vast majority is deprived of any social protection. With the progress in globalization, challenges to social security emanates from increasing number of job losses, more and more adoption of wage freezing techniques and increasing
Casualisation of the work force. Disinvestment of public sector also closes entry into the organized sector. The result is increase in the number of casual work.

Alaka Basu studying the slum women in Delhi highlights that cultural factors are responsible for the difference between women of different communities resulting in different levels of education, employment pattern and life styles. These differences are important ramifications for the health of women and children in different places. She concludes that cultural and regional backgrounds of women therefore have a profound influence on the position of women and through this on their fertility and child mortality rates.

In another work, Alaka Basu mentions that the decision making power of women increased with their age, education and number of surviving sons. Three components of women’s position are relevant - (a) extent of exposure to outside world (b) extent of economic interaction and finally (c) level of autonomy in decision making within and outside the household. These criteria seems quite absent in the case of most of the informal sector working women.

A study on the perceptions of slum women in Mumbai by Mulgaonkar and others provides a vivid account of their reasons for refusal to participate in a gynecological health program organized by “Sthreeshikarni”, a women’s welfare organization. On the basis of their study interspersed with the voices of women which painfully and poignantly reveal their poverty, insecurity and fears, the authors conclude that the socio cultural and economic realities that face the women in India, complicates their access to health.

Difference in labour force participation rate of men and women has historically been very small in transition countries and has widened slightly in a few of them. Women’s increased labour force participation has been the result of several social and economic changes. Women have achieved more control over their fertility, thus expanding their opportunities for education and employment. In addition, attitude towards women have changed and public policies on family and child care, part time employment, maternity benefits and paternal and maternal leave are more favourable to the employment of women. Another reason is the economic growth and the expansion of service sector which tends to employ a large number of women. Policies with regard to micro and small enterprises specifically designed to promote women’s entrepreneurship have played a role. Recent age patterns indicate that women are finding ways to combine family responsibilities with market work. Emergence of
private enterprises too has played a key role in the development of market economies and has contributed to the creation of job opportunities.

The construction sector accounts for a significant share of women’s participation in the labour force. In this sector, women can create their own jobs. All over the world, self employment provides some with a means to add to the income of their family and helps ease unemployment. It makes it easier for women to combine family responsibilities and unpaid subsistence work with income earning activities. At the same time, it implies a high level of job insecurity and lack of such protections as maternal and paternal leave. In developing countries, with SAP, decrease in modern sector employment has compelled more women to seek income earning opportunities and finally are being reported categorized as self employed.

The full extent of women’s and men’s participation in the construction sector and the value of their contribution to production are still unknown. Lack of a standard definition and a common methodology for data collection rendered in this sector hampered comparisons. This has been partially rectified in 1993 with the adoption of an International definition of informal sector. However due to its wide ranging activities and diverse mode of operation.

The percentage of women who work in a factory at its inception and the tasks they do differ from country to country. Social customs, age, marital structure etc forming the social background of women determines the sexual division of labour. However John.P.Duran\textsuperscript{89} puts forward clear evidence to show that early marriage is no reason for exclusion of women from labour force. Women’s special needs have often been ignored by health planners and have thus had to bear a disproportionate share of unmet health needs.

Level of women’s health is a major factor in determining their ability to contribute individually and collectively to a nation’s development. Unless their values, views and visions serve as a central focus for our policy making, we cannot achieve our ultimate goals of peace and development. (Peggy Antrobus)\textsuperscript{90}. The adverse impacts on employment in the unorganized sector particularly in the construction sector has to a very extent influenced by the SAP that displace the mainstream of production through processes such as downsizing, outsourcing, contract labor system and feminization of labor-processes rendered possible by what John Harris rightly calls “flexibilisation” [Harris, 2001]\textsuperscript{91}.The declining role of state, less capital and planned expenditure, removal of trade restrictions to align domestic
prices with international prices reduced the scope of labour intensity in production and exports. Due to this handicap, the unorganized sector needs protection in products, input, credit and marketing.

In a survey of women construction workers in nine construction sites in Delhi and two in Bihar; Sinha and Ranade (1978) encounter uniformly low wage rates for women construction workers than for men, but they also note that women are usually assigned to subsidiary operations. Atchi Reddy (1985) studied the socio-economic conditions of women construction workers in Hyderabad by surveying twenty families, compares their working and living conditions with that of their counterparts in villages. She looks at the problems of poor workers in urban slums and analyses living conditions of female construction workers before they came to the city.

Economic and demographic changes accompanying the development process have contributed to worsening the working conditions. Sub contracting has increased due to the positive measures to encourage the establishment of SSI and protective measures to restrict the expansion of large units. Within its structure, women are concentrated in working within the homes at the lowest levels of production - about which no reliable statistics is available. Much home based work is commercialization of tasks which were done at home. Since the work is intermittent, women do not necessarily see themselves as workers and the resulting under counting. The Government too sees sub contracting as a means of industrial decentralization. The process of modernization and capitalist development increase gender segmentation and increases differences in pay, working condition and security associated with it. This brings forth the transformation from household work to work being seen as something done by individuals. These are the result of organization and political visibility of male workforce.

Another focal point of discussions has been the determinants of household structure and its consequences for women. William Goode [1963] and M.S.Gore [1968] discusses the household structure and consequences for women by stating that urbanization and capitalism has led to the nuclearisation of families in which women have more freedom. There is need for a multilevel analysis - examining the construction sector women in the context of their household, role of their occupations, and role of any organization in their occupation and impact of public policy. The heterogeneity in the construction sector work leads Trager [1985] to suggest the
study of specific occupations in the informal sector instead of informal sector as a whole and that the approach be contextual and comparative.

Gote (1986)\textsuperscript{97}, studied women construction workers constitute a major segment of work force, and are the most neglected. Study examines whether these women are getting benefits of democracy and modernization. Constitutional and legislative measures to benefit them have not reached them even after forty years of independence. The work covers women construction workers in Aurangabad city. Mathur (1989)\textsuperscript{98}, points to the appalling working and living conditions of migrant women construction labourers, whose hardships stem from economic disparities, social inequalities, physical limitations, psychological constraints, legal inadequacies, technological ineptitude and administrative shortcomings. He calls for emphasis on programmes for human resource development.

Mitra and Muopadhyay (1989)\textsuperscript{99}, compares the pattern of labour absorption in Class I cites in 1981 with the situation in 1971. They relate these differences to differences in city characteristics in terms of changes in the composition of work force, population growth and so on. Attempt is made to break up percentage changes in gender-specific labour use in construction into component factors contributing to variations in such absorption across cities. The relative importance of male-female substitution within the construction sector is identified. Hema Nair (1988)\textsuperscript{100} studied that the migrant construction worker has no paid leave or compensation for childbirth or injuries sustained in the construction work site. In the study it has been observed that temporary worker are not eligible for any benefits and that in most cases it has been widely acknowledged that Contract Labour Central Rule (1971) are flouted everywhere.

Seeme Qasim (1989)\textsuperscript{101}, in a study on the homeless home-workers, identified that women construction workers in Delhi who do back-breaking labour for low wages camp on work sites with no water, toilets or other basic amenities, work without any breaks till almost the last day of pregnancy, and have to hide and breast feed their children for the fear of the contractor’s wrath. The contractor takes his daily cut from their paltry wages. They have no security of service and hence no bargaining power. Laws governing this industry are also grossly violated.

The marginalisation hypothesis is skeptical about recent trends in female labor force participation rate. The advocates of this school [Banerjee, 1996; Hiraway, 1996] are of the view that economic development has not only affected work participation
rate, but has also pushed them into jobs which are marginal and casual, least remunerative/unpaid/inferior domestic work [Banerjee, Nirmala, 1997]. The major finding in the area of female employment and their distribution has been the argument of casualisation of female workers engaged in casual works arising over time. [Kalpagam Uma, 1994; Banerjee, 1997; Unni Jeemol, 1997].

The desperate pressure to work is reflected in the migration of poorer women to the informal sector with poor working conditions outside the state. The most intriguing factor is the sex discrimination in wages. The condition of women in the unorganised sector is more depressing, since they stand at the lowest ebb of the society (Sapru, Sushma, 1991). Women in the unorganized sector work as agricultural labourers, servant maids, construction workers, sanitary workers, beedi workers, petty traders etc.

Like in most other developing countries across the globe, the period since 1980 has been notable for increasing participation of women in recognized paid employment and this trend has further intensified since 1990. This widespread pattern of feminization of work is essentially related to certain macro economic trends in operation in different ways in these countries. The extent and trend of female labour force participation indicate greater involvement of women in recognized and remunerative employment. (Jayati Ghosh). The studies on construction and similar informal sector work have largely come to the conclusion that there have been large-scale feminisation and casualisation during the recent years. [Varghese, 1993; Parthasarathy and Nirmala, 1997; Visaria, 1995].

The nutritional needs of girls increase in adolescence because of the growth spurt associated with puberty and the onset of menstruation. Inadequate diet during this period can jeopardize girl’s health and physical development with lifelong consequences. Iron deficiency anemia is particularly common among adolescent girls. In this context it has been found that the women workers in the construction sector have been enjoying grossly inadequate nutritional levels.

Notwithstanding the various shortcomings in existing secondary estimates, patterns of falling female workforce participation rates in Kerala persists and may well be a reflection of the real situation. Rachael Kumar examines various factors that may have contributed to this trend. One such is the redistribution of population as a result of changing fertility and mortality that affects structure and estimates of workforce participation. However in construction, male workforce is increasing either
due to the replacement of female workers or because of construction is suited to male members. The changes in the economic structure of Kerala have indeed had a substantial effect on the female labor force utilization. Any increase has been for the skilled and educated female workforce.

Rachael Kumar\textsuperscript{111} brings to light the fact that economic changes have led to loss of employment especially in sectors that are the mainstay of female employment. The new industries have created new job opportunities. But the lack of mobility has led to a fall in the overall participation of women. However, the work participation rate of female workers in the secondary sector, as a proportion to the participation rate of male workers, is on the increase.

A survey on the impact of technological change on rural women reveal that there has been increasing concentration of women in domestic and non market roles and labor intensive activities. The market imperfections could well deny women access to technology that will further accentuate the gender-based inequality. The ILO positively projects the introduction of technology to boost women’s income. The channeling of improved technologies through participatory organizations of rural women contributes significantly to women empowerment. Fostering of linkages with commercial suppliers of technology and training institutes and marketing channels is a key element in the strategy of women’s empowerment.

In the construction sector, even for the same unskilled work compared to men, women are paid less. The strenuous work and physical hardships in this sector has a severe impact on their health. The disabilities of women workers spring mainly from immobility of job caused by various socio-economic factors. The nature and character of employment in this sector although manual to some extent, also requires some special skill for efficient management. Despite the unpredictability, women are attracted to this sector due to the severe absence of alternative employment (Murali Manohar, Sobha and Janardhana Rao)\textsuperscript{112}. Mostly the women workers are classified as contract labor and casual labor. Contract labors are attached to a contractor and they work wherever posted. Casual labors are temporary workers and they cease to be employed after the completion of the work. The nature of work is unskilled and the average age of workers is between 23 and 27. A correlation is found between the social and economic class of the respondents. Their wages differ from place to place and since they are unorganized, they have no bargaining capacity for the revision of wage. All this has deteriorated the conditions of women workers and their family.
Added to this, their workplace does not provide any satisfaction or pride. The labor welfare officers too seldom look into the basic facilities provided to them. The contractors exploit them for political reasons also. So far there has been no comprehensive legislation to cover the unorganized sector in general and the women construction workers in particular, workers in many situations thrown open to exploitation and hardships. All this led to the poor health of workers and they received poor medical treatment. Despite working hard women construction workers thus receive no just treatment.

2.4 Studies advocated the need for Social Security for Agriculture Women Workers:

“A decent provision for the poor is the true test of civilization” (Samuelson Johnson, 1770). It has been recognized that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing not only lack of income but also vulnerability and powerlessness as well. (Chambers). Social security is one of the pillars on which the structure of a welfare society rests on a dollar and it forms the hard core of social policy in most countries. It is through social security measures that the state attempts to maintain every citizen at a prescribed minimum level. India Development Report (UNDP)\(^{113}\) pointed out that one out of every three persons in India earns less the day.

There is little doubt that poverty and insecurity are truly global phenomenon. Global economic integration is creating new threats to human security to both rich and poor countries alike, creating severe challenges in ensuring equitable economic and social outcomes. Social safety net advocated by Subramanya\(^{114}\) is the best source to ameliorate social security problems of the unemployed and partly employed in the industrialized and developing countries. Some developing countries to have them. He looks into the feasibility and possibility of introducing such schemes.

Ron, Smith, Tamburi\(^{115}\) describe the evolution of social security approach to health insurance from the first initiative in Europe to the adaptation of the concept in other parts of the world. It also contains a common profile of the health care programs on several developing countries in Asia. Various aspects of health care for elderly persons in a global perspective are discussed by Kane Robert\(^{116}\). It seeks responses from different disciplines concerned with social and economic aspects of health. An important role is given to family and community in health care for the aged and associated programs.
The experience of social security rights by men and women in equivalent employment situations is examined by ILO\textsuperscript{117}. The extent of the need for specific protection of women as mothers and as workers with family responsibilities is also looked into. It also argues for a move towards personal entitlement to social security for women independent of their family and marital status in line with their growing integration into the world of work.

Dreeze and Sen\textsuperscript{118} argue that developing countries are too poor to replicate the complex and expensive programmes of social insurance that form the backbone of social security system in the rich countries. The study emphasized the protective and promotional aspects of social security and calls for public action for redistribution of growth so as to overcome the massive deprivation. Similar papers by Robin Burgess, Nicholas Stern, Amartya Sen, and Jean Dreeze etc discuss the general issues related to the subject.

Another topic of concern is the denial of social security protection to rural agriculture and informal sector workers - one that is enjoyed by other sectors of population especially in the developing countries. The lack of coverage to these sectors is disturbing, since it constitutes a large proportion of the labor force. Jenkins Michael\textsuperscript{119} analyses these issues and makes some suggestions for a strategy relating to the extension of coverage. Protective social security in the unorganized sector is emphasized by Jha\textsuperscript{120} and so also is the need to integrate various schemes to improve their operational efficiency.

The impact of social protection policies in the unorganized sector on wages and employment is looked into by Jeemol Unni\textsuperscript{121}. Informal sector activities in the sectors of construction, scrap collection, handicrafts, tourism and IT reveal that but for the IT sector, workers elsewhere suffer from low educational skills, low wages, poor working conditions and high exploitation by middle men - Harjit Anand\textsuperscript{122}. The worker's plight in these sectors can be improved by improving labor skills, increasing access to credit, labor laws and social protection.

PDS in India is one of the most popular social security programs covering a large chunk of the population. By PDS is meant a system in which the whole or part is controlled by public authorities on behalf of general public for their well being. Chakraborty\textsuperscript{123} in his paper highlights the objective of existing PDS. Its main social objective is enhancing the developmental and welfare impact of commercial activity.
Swaminathan\textsuperscript{124} [1996] focuses on the changes in the public distribution system during the period of structural adjustment. It discusses the major policy changes in India since 1991 and their effect on food security. It observes that in majority of states the population coverage under the system is inadequate and that a large number of poor persons are excluded from the system.

Housing is yet another important social security program which is but affected by financial problems. In the context of housing, purpose of Mahadeva’s\textsuperscript{125} writing is to draw a few lessons for the Indian situation in which case, resource crunch has aggravated the problem. Interestingly financial facilitation and incentives by private institutions have prompted the market to produce housing surplus. Since the National Housing and Habitat policy is intended to create a conducive environment to various players in the market to alleviate housing deprivation, the Canadian experience of market supported housing success could be one direction for the Indian context. It also offers few policy options for financial facilitation for housing development.

Anil Gumber and Veena Kulkarni\textsuperscript{126} explore the availability of health insurance coverage for the poor- especially women- their needs and expectations and the likely constraints in extending the current health insurance benefits to workers in the construction sector. The survey suggested that the poor prefers public sector management of health care facilities. Developing and marketing a unique and affordable health insurance package for low-income people is a great challenge. The concept being now calls for effective information, education and communication activities to make the people understand and develop health insurance market.

Dilip Kumar\textsuperscript{127} attempted critically to evaluate the various social security schemes initiated in India for providing protection to women. The paper pointed out that protection of women has improved particularly with the reinforcement of maternity protections and development of derived rights. Mohanan Pillai\textsuperscript{128} studied the effectiveness of the Welfare Funds set up in Kerala for providing social security to the unorganized sector workers through a case study of the Kerala Head Load Workers Welfare Scheme. Social and economic improvement in their living conditions is seen as the result of the implementation of such schemes. The limitation of social security coverage to the organized sector is argued by P.K.Jha\textsuperscript{129}. The social security in poor countries has to be integrated fully with anti poverty policies- S. Guhan\textsuperscript{130}.  

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Swedish Sociologist Gustar Geigor has rightly commented -„the position of women in society provides an exact measure of the development of society „The icon of development is rightly connected with the status of women. Chung B.J\textsuperscript{131} in his annotated bibliography of 548 entries includes materials on the status of women and fertility in six South East and East Asian countries. Starting from the status and fertility of women in the region, it concludes that decision making and role planning in family, the legal status of women and the relationship between fertility and status of women have been relatively neglected.

An economic framework for analyzing the status of women has been suggested by Mangahas. M and Jayme- Ho.T\textsuperscript{132}. It involves the determination of work and wages, conditions for female labour, concept of full family income and its feedback effect on the demand for labour and the manner in which the economic conditions for women can affect future conditions through such demographic variables as fertility and family formation. They come to the conclusion that an economic model becomes meaningful only when it is able to attain equity within the society as a whole.

Modernization and development has been the aim of policy makers ever since independence. It has been identified with the process of opening up of market economy along with new technology. Growth of modern sector has led to the marginalization of women workers. [Boserup; 1983\textsuperscript{133}]. Segmentation too has occurs among women workers, which is used by employers to keep wages low and divide the workers. Development indicators compiled by World Bank, 1994, there are only 25 females in the labour force for every 100 males as against 38 females in developed countries. The low proportion of women in the workforce is partly because less women seek employment and also because of under counting of their work. Due to preoccupations in the household, they take up only low skill/ temporary/ seasonal jobs which make their work marginal to the enterprise. Due to this, whenever industry is rationalized or technology is improved, they are rendered as incompetent to handle new technology and so are the first to be displaced. (Report of National Commission on Labour, 1969- Employment of Women and Children).
Policies to increase women’s wage employment often choose to take the easy way out by facilitating the setting up of industries that are seen to be compatible with women’s household responsibilities. Jayarenjan and Padmini (1999)\textsuperscript{134} attempted to map out the diffused manner in which wage earning women workers experience oppression resulting from patriarchal structures and capitalist relations of production.

Sharit Bowmit and Meena Patel (1996)\textsuperscript{135} described how SEWA was established in 1972 as a trade union of women in the unorganized sector to overcome exploiting, social security, child care, health care and insurance. It shows how SEWA has helped women to develop alternative avenues of employment through savings and to help reduce the feudal nature of the relationship between the rich and the poor. They concluded that the joint strategy of the struggle on the one hand and development on the other has resulted in a considerable increase in the bargaining power and sustained economic gains and social status for women through a strong grassroots women’s organizational union.

Mahendra Dev\textsuperscript{136} examines the poverty and food security problem in Maharashtra and West Bengal mainly using NSS data. It points out that neither the provision of employment nor the public distribution system will solve the problems of poverty and food insecurity. It suggests a policy mix including anti poverty programs, PDS, control of inflation, improving health facilities and above all reform of delivery system.

2.5 Need for the present Study:

The research gaps identified from earlier studies reveal that the development strategies and poverty eradication programmes required an entirely new way of thinking in which the stereo typing of women and men no longer limits their choices, but given way to a new philosophy that regards all people as an essential agents of change, and that views development as a processing enlarging choices of both not just one. Providing equal rights and equal access to resources and opportunities to women, general equality becomes an essential aspect of human development. Especially women have not been treated on par with men in every aspects of life, though their role is crucial for the sustenance of family as well as of society and also for development of economy as a whole. The gender roles can differentiate the position of women inferior as seen in all the countries. But the degree of subordination very according to the development, on the one hand and the ownership of means of
productivity, on the other, the dissemination against women is more pronounced in the third world countries in view of the prevalence of poverty.

Some of the earlier studies on agriculture women workers confined themselves to selected issues connected with the status of rural women, employment of rural women, agricultural women workers, rural development programmes for women, anti poverty alleviation programmes for rural women and rural women illiteracy. But these studies could not give either full information regarding the roots of poverty of agriculture women workers or the strategies, which help to promote the socio-economic status of the agriculture women workers. The present study attempts to analyze new approaches to improve the socio-economic status of agriculture women workers. Some of the research studies confined themselves to an evolution study of rural development programmes or poverty elimination programmes as a whole. No attempt has been made to study separately the experiences or strategies involved in capacity building or promoting socio-economic status of agriculture women workers in Prakasam district of Andhra Pradesh.

The present study, an attempt is made to examine the factors influencing the socio-economic status of the agriculture women workers in Prakasam district. The existing literature on status of women are biased towards economic rather than social up liftment of women, who are weak in capabilities in the existing rural scenario. Enhancement of Capabilities of agriculture women workers is possible only if they are less burdened with child bearing and rearing, better health, less domestic burdens for acquiring water and fuel improving the educational status. The research gap is expected to be filled by the present study which attempts to identify the factors influencing socio-economic status of agriculture women workers households. The present study aims at understanding the factors determine the socio-economic status of selected 220 agriculture women worker households from relatively advanced Inkolлу mandal and another 220 selected agriculture women worker households from the relatively interior Pamuru mandals of Prakasam district in Andhra Pradesh.
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