Chapter 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature in this chapter has been classified as per:

Status of women – Theories of women’s employment - Reasons for the employment of women - Working conditions - Problems of working women - Legislative reforms for women – Summary.

2.1 Status Of Women

Women’s status and position in the Indian society has not been static through the ages. Various studies conducted in India have shown that, the status of women has been fluctuating over the past centuries.

In Raju, R. (1988:4) Sacchidananda is quoted to have believed that, “Women’s role and status all over the world are generally determined by social institutions and norms, religious ideologies, economic systems and class positions.”

Raju, R. (1988) in his book, Status of Women, has conducted the survey in Bhatkal taluka in Karnataka state. Data was collected from 400 households, 200 were from the tribal and 200 were from the various caste Hindus in the rural areas. Besides the interview schedule, the case study method was also used to elicit the required information. The study was carried out for 13 months and some of the conclusions arrived at were:
1) The birth of the female child is considered a burden;
2) Women lag behind in education;
3) Woman has no choice to choose her partner;
4) Women are strictly controlled by men;
5) Economically a woman has no choice in the family;
6) The position of women is ideologically meant to be inferior to men in these societies.

Singhal, T. (2003:2) in her book, *Working Women and Family*, opines, “Role of women has been traditionally confined to family. In most societies of the world women have been largely defined largely in terms of their function as wives and mothers.” She conducted her study in Jaipur where, by random selection, a sample of 300 working women was interviewed, with the help of a structured interview schedule.

Kakar, S. (1988:45) sums up the social realities of a woman’s life into three stages. These are “First, she is a daughter to her parents. Second, she is wife to her husband (and daughter-in-law to his parents.) Third, she is a mother to her sons (and daughters.)” Therefore, he believes that, a woman does not have an independent identity of her own and her identity is wholly defined by her relations to other people.

Chattopadhyay, K. (1987) is of the opinion that, the status of women in India is poor even today. He believes that, few women have gained the benefits of
development while, the rest have been bypassed. For majority of the women, economic, social and political rights have remained on paper only.

Tewari, A. (1988) in his study, *Economic Status and Socio-Religious Attitude of Indian Women*, conducted a study of 50 female respondents in Allahabad. The data was collected through specifically prepared pre-tested questionnaire. He tested two hypotheses: a) economic status influences the social attitude of women in India and b) economic status influences the religious attitude of women in India. He concluded that, while economic status does influence the social attitude of Indian women, it does not affect their religious attitude largely.

While describing the status of women in underdeveloped countries, Emadi, H. (1992:999), finds that, “the situation of women in most underdeveloped countries is deplorable. They are deprived of their basic rights and suffer from both societal injustice and male oppression. Their sufferings range from physical abuse to immolation. Although governments of these countries claim to support the cause of women’s liberation and have involved a limited number of women in the decision making apparatus, no significant changes or improvements have occurred regarding the elimination of women’s oppression.”

But, this has not been the situation of women in India from the ancient times as, has been shown by Jain, S. (1988) in her study titled, *Status And Role Perception Of Middle Class Women*. She studied the Hindu married women spread over four major cities of Uttar Pradesh. A sample of 400 respondents was selected for the study and the interview schedule was the main technique used to get the required
information from the respondents. According to her, the position of women in society during the Rig Vedic era was quite satisfactory. She had the right to education and to choose her own life partner. During the later Vedic age, although the position of women has deteriorated, it improved under Buddhism and Jainism. However, she finds that, during the Smiriti and Pre-Moughal period the position of women had deteriorated completely. Manu, the lawgiver, made women very dependent and subjugated to men all her life. During the Moughal age, the purdah system, which was introduced for women’s protection, only succeeded in pushing, the Indian women, further into the background.

At the time of the British arrival in India, women’s status had reached its lowest ebb. It was only in the 19th century that, for the first time, some reforms were undertaken to improve the position of women in India and, it was only after independence, that, the position of Indian women has improved to a considerable extent due to the efforts made by the government as well as various other agencies.

Even though the reforms for women began in the 19th century, Raka, S. (1985) in her book, Indian Women Today, believes that, these reforms were mainly within the family domain and the education provided to women only gave them respectability but not equality with men. She conducted a study of women working in the industrial and non-industrial organisations in Kanpur city. The sample covered included 200 women workers. 100 were from the manufacturing industries and 100 were employed as nurses, teachers, telephone exchange operators, etc. A structured interview schedule was used to elicit the information and the respondents were interviewed at
the place of work after prior approval was granted by the management. The fieldwork was conducted from March 1977 to October 1977 and some of the major findings were:

1. Most of the respondents were found in the younger age group;
2. Women workers were almost equally distributed between the married and the unmarried categories;
3. Most of the respondents were local residents;
4. Working conditions of the respondents were not very satisfactory;
5. Most of the workers received inadequate wages and benefits, yet the women accept these jobs due to lack of better alternatives.

Supporting the above view, Devi, L.U. (1982:10), in her study, on *The Status and Employment of Women in India*, has concluded that, "The Indian woman was treated as an appendage of men with a distinct and meekly accepted conception of her family duties and obligations." She conducted her study in Trivandrum city in Kerala state and a sample of 300 working women and a control group of 100 non-working women was selected for the study by the method of random sampling. The main method to elicit the data was interviews with a pre-tested questionnaire. The key hypotheses put forward by her was that; employment contributes to increase a woman's status in the society.

Shah, M. (1992), in her study, has carried the above point further, by concluding that, despite women's involvement in various activities, proper recognition has not been given to their work. She has attributed this to the patriarchal
ideology in which gender roles are strictly defined and men are dominant over women at all levels.

Khanna, G. and M.A. Varghese (1978), in their book, *Indian Women Today*, have divided the states, in the country, into five different zones and then selected a sample of 1000 women from all over the country. Two hundred women were randomly selected from each of the zones and the interview schedule was used to elicit the required information.

They, endorsing the views given above, have concluded that, even after social stagnation, due to many factors-social, economic, political--the Indian woman has shown a sudden urge to come back into the mainstream of social life. The impetus given by the freedom movement, according to them, marked the beginning, of a new era for the Indian woman.

Women’s position in the world has always been subordinate to men. Traditionally, women’s status and role has always been considered lower than men. (Agarwal, K. 1988)

Ramu, G.N. (1989:32) believes that, there are at least four conditions, which have combined to keep the women dependent upon the men. “First, the value system extolling the domestic role of women and their dependence on men is legitimised by religious traditions and reinforced by custom and folklore. Second, the benefits of the numerous social and legal reforms aimed at the improvement of the status of women have yet to be universally realised. Although women have become equal to men in law, such equality has a superficial value for most women because most laws are
either irrelevant or not uniformly implemented. Third, the economic and industrial modernisation of India during the post-independence period has proved to be disadvantageous to the working women, especially those in the rural areas. While the employment of married women is now accepted as legitimate (as long as it is meant to supplement man’s income and not for self-fulfilment), the opportunities are dwindling. Finally, the educational system does not provide equal opportunities to women, thus precluding them from successfully competing with men in the labour market.”

Sathy, G. (1991) has opined that, men have always been considered as the breadwinners, which mean that, in terms of cash, training and promotion-employers rarely take women seriously. He has also found that, the jobs accepted by women are generally an extension of domestic work.

In Dak, T. (1988) Patel, V. opines that, women are considered to be secondary citizens and have no independence. They have to perform all the duties without any rights and he concludes that, women are oppressed and exploited to a great extent.

Shah, V. (1997:3), while discussing, the subordinate status of women in society, opines that, “the functions of women have become subsidiary, secondary and at best complementary and only the functions of men are seen as crucial and dominating- for it is they, men, who it is believed, run the houses, sustain it, earn its means of livelihood and it is again men who ordain and order the working of society.”
Lindsay, M. and P. Pattullo (1977:39), also adds that, “men have always been considered the breadwinners, which has meant that, - in terms of cash, training and promotion- employers have rarely taken women's work as seriously as men’s.”

There are two major views, regarding the reasons, for women's lowered status. On one hand, Devi, L. U. (1982), believes that, the ascription of the lowered status to women could have been the result of the grading of social functions. While, on the other hand, authors such as Khanna, G. and M.A. Varghese (1978), and Agarwal, B. (1995), opine that, since men are the breadwinners in the family, they obviously have a higher status.

Debi, B. (1988) considers status to be a composite concept and an indicator of the position of an individual or group in terms of several values in society.

Maurya, S.D. (1988), in her study, *Women in India: An Overview*, stresses the fact that, even though the status and economic position of Indian women have changed to a considerable extent, their conditions are not yet satisfactory. There are still many social and religious customs, taboos and rituals, which come in the way of women’s freedom. But, Debi, B. (1988), in her study on a sample of 424 working women in Calcutta, puts forth a contrasting view, by stating that, women’s status has improved to a certain extent as the women’s contribution to the family purse has helped them in earning both power and authority. Her inference is that, the position of women in the home has improved and elevated in recent years.
2.2 Theories Of Women's Employment

Majority of the theories of women's employment are general theories being equally applicable to blacks and to females. These discrimination models, explain the reason, for the difference in the wage rates of the whites or the blacks or males and females.

Some of the important theories of discrimination examined are: Pre - Becker literature on discrimination, Neo-classical model of discrimination, Human capital model, Labour market segmentation model, Statistical discrimination model and Feminist or gender theories.

Discrimination is an important concept in majority of the theories of women's employment. Discrimination is a social problem, which has been observed in all societies and at all times. (Shah, M. 1992)

Discrimination is a complex, multifaceted and deeply ingrained behaviour, which is very difficult to measure or quantify. McConnell, C.R. and S. L. Brue (1995:402-403) have defined economic discrimination as, “Economic discrimination exists when female or minority workers ---- who have the same ability, education, training and experience as white male workers---- are accorded inferior treatment with respect to hiring, occupational access, promotions wage rates or working conditions.”

According to them, the labour market discrimination can be classified into four general types:
1. 'Wage discrimination' where the female workers are paid less than the male workers for doing the same work;

2. 'Employment discrimination' occurs where other things being equal, women bear the disproportionate share of the burden of unemployment;

3. 'Occupational' or 'job discrimination' where the females have been restricted or prohibited from entering into certain occupations, even though they are equally capable as men to perform these jobs, and so they are "crowded" into other occupations for which they are frequently overqualified;

4. 'Human capital discrimination' is in evidence when the female have less access to productivity increasing opportunities, such as, formal schooling or on-the-job training.

In Shah, M. (1992: 83). Stiglitz, J. has defined wage discrimination as, "there is wage discrimination if individuals with the same economic characteristics receive different wages and the differences are systematically correlated with certain non-economic (racial or religious) characteristics of the individual."

➢ Pre-Becker Debate On Discrimination Of Wages

Prior to Becker, G. there was a debate regarding the reasons for the differences between male and female wages and it was wholly confined to Britain. In 1891, Webb, S. analysed the causes of wage differentials between the male and the female wages for similar work. For this he collected information about the wages, nature of
work etc., and he classified the workers into four categories such as manual, routine mental, artistic and intellectual. (Nalla Gounden, A. M. 1992)

Webb, S. puts forth the following reasons for the discrimination between male and female wages.

1) Customs and public opinion;
2) Lower demands from women (either due to low standards of living, or due to the fact that, they are being economically supported by family or husbands);
3) Lower productivity by women caused by factors such as insufficient training, lack of strength or institutional restrictions;
4) Lack of protective power, through failure to combine want and adaptability, limited number of alternatives and greater immobility. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984:9)

Therefore, Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo (1984) feel that, Webb, S. had gone beyond the labour market, by examining various institutional factors such as legislation, traditions, educational systems, etc.

In Nalla Gounden, A.M. (1992: 52) Rathbone had explained that, women get lower wages due to factors like: a) lack of unions for women workers, b) the belief that, a women's wage is a supplement to the family, c) low standard of living of women, and d) low subsistence requirements of women.

In Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, (1984) Fawcett, M. has put forth the view that, lack of entry for women in the male dominated trade unions have led to
discrimination. This has led to occupational segregation confining women to certain jobs and leading to higher wages in male than female jobs.

The discrimination in wages question was also important, during the First World War period, when, women increasingly entered into the various occupations traditionally reserved for men. Although the “War Cabinet Committee on Women in Industry” recommended the principle of equal pay for equal work, it was never acted upon. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984:10)

In Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo (1984:10), Cannan, also tried to analyse, why women received lower wages for the same work. He believed that, due to different types of restrictions, women were concentrated into few occupations, and as supply of women was large, the wages were low in those occupations where they could get work. Along with Webb and Rathbone, he believed that, it was the low standard of living of women, which resulted in low productivity, as a reason, for the differences in the wages.

In Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, (1984:11) Edgeworth too, supported Fawcett, M. and he believed that, the male trade unions excluded women from certain occupations leaving them fewer job opportunities. He believed that, the wage difference far exceeded productivity differences and he gave the reasons as:

a) Labour market not being in a state of perfect competition;

b) Trade unions being dominated by male workers;

c) Female workers being crowded into low paying occupations; and
d) Women's lesser burden of supporting the family. (Nalla Gounden, A.M. 1992: 53)

Florence, S. explains the wage differences with relevance to:

1) That, the firms have a monopsonistic position in the market;
2) That, women are less mobile in the labour market;
3) That, a certain type of indivisibility exists concerning decisions to employ female labour. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984:12)

The above analyses shows that, prior to Becker, G., there were several explanations given to understand the concept of discrimination in the male and female wages. However, the major explanation was given by Becker, G.

➢ Neo-Classical Model Of Discrimination

This approach was propounded by Edgeworth in 1922, Becker, G. refined it and the most complete statement of the model was formulated by Arrow, K. (Marshall, R. 1974)

Beckerian theory is one of the major theories of discrimination. Becker, G. in his model envisaged discrimination as a preference or a “taste” for which the discriminator is willing to pay. According to Becker, G., “if an individual has a ‘taste for discrimination’, he must act as if he were willing to pay something, either directly or in the form of reduced incomes, to be associated with some persons instead of others.” (Marshall, R. 1974:850)
In order to analyse the effects of the taste of discrimination; Becker, G. uses a concept called discrimination coefficient, to analyse the discrimination of a certain group from other factors of production, the employers or the consumers.

In order to measure the effects of discrimination on wages Becker, G. uses a concept called “market discrimination coefficient,” which can be defined as, the difference in the wage rate between the discriminated and the non-discriminated groups divided by the wage rates of the discriminated groups. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984)

In order to analyse the effects of discrimination Becker, G. works with two different approaches - macro economic and micro economic.

The first is the type commonly used in the international trade theories. In this model, there are two ‘societies’- [N and W], two-production factors- [labour and capital], but only one commodity. These societies do not trade commodities but export the production factor that is abundantly available with it. Society W exports capital and society N exports labour. In a state of equilibrium without discrimination, the reward to a particular production factor is not dependent on whether it is exported in community N or W. Becker, G. believes that, if the members of W then develop a taste for discrimination, this will lead to lower capital exports from W which results in lower labour exports from N. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984:22)

Krueger, A. expands the international trade model to find the optimum level of discrimination. She also, discusses ways in which, exporting white capital to blacks might be curtailed, even if, the white capitalists themselves have no taste for
discrimination. For e.g., if the capitalists were interested in maximising the income of all whites, rather than their own incomes, the resultant welfare function would be very similar to Becker's except that, discrimination would take the form of maximising the white (male) real income rather than, avoiding working with blacks (females). This concept departs from the usual neo-classical assumption of individual decision-making process and assumes that, employer racial or gender interests might modify their profit motives. (Marshall, R. 1974:851)

In Marshall, R. (1974:857) Alexis, M. extends the neo-classical analysis, especially the motivations based on race developed by Krueger, to deal with the problems involved with Becker's assumption that, whites are motivated by a desire to avoid associating with blacks. This assumption makes it difficult for him to explain discrimination by the capitalists, who do not physically associate with blacks. Alexis believes that, envy-malice might prompt discrimination in this case.

While, these models developed by Alexis, M. and A. Krueger, are closer to reality, than the aversion model given by Becker, G., they contain no convincing explanations as to why the white employer should want to maximise the white workers income, and exhibit envy or malice towards the blacks. However, Alexis recognises that, his model could also be formulated in terms of benevolence towards white workers by the white capitalists, which seems even more realistic than the other approach. However, status is an even more convincing explanation for white capitalist motive for discrimination. Discriminators object to discriminates, partly because, the
latter are generally regarded as 'inferior' people, who would lower the status of the
discriminators. (Marshall, R. 1974:859)

Becker, G., in his micro economic model, uses the discrimination coefficient
in order to derive a measure of intensity of the taste of discrimination, and the market
discrimination coefficient to measure the effects of discrimination on wages. First, he
treats the different types of discrimination by employees, employers, consumer's, etc,
separately and then later, merges their effects. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo,
1984:23)

With respect to employer's discrimination, Becker, G. believes that, where all
the employers have the same discrimination coefficient, with perfect substitutability
between discriminated and non- discriminated labour, the market discrimination
coefficient becomes equal to the discrimination coefficient regardless of the
discriminated group and the degree of competition in the commodity market.

However, the situation becomes even more interesting when the
discrimination coefficient varies among different employers. The employers with the
lowest discrimination coefficient will then employ the discriminated group.
Discrimination leads to segregation. The market discrimination coefficient, in this
case, is determined by the distribution of the discrimination coefficient and by the size
of the discrimination group: the larger the group the higher the market discrimination
coefficient.

Becker, G. also stressed on the problem of the stability of this form of
discrimination. According to him, firms with low or no discrimination coefficient will
produce more due to the lower labour costs, and receive higher profits than the firms with high coefficient. This will lead to a further expansion of the firms with the low coefficient and to a gradual elimination of the firms with a strong taste for discrimination.

Economists have attempted to modify Becker’s model to make it conform with the reality, where wage differentials and employment patterns are perceived to be relatively stable.

In Marshall, R. (1974) Freeman, R. suggests that, discriminated employees might survive because of limited supplies of non-discriminated employers or workers with complementary skills. However, these are not convincing arguments for the long run equilibrium. Under competitive conditions, there need be only one non-discriminating employer, who could drive all others out of business in the end. The effects of employee discrimination depend on the extent to which the discriminated and the discriminating groups can be substituted for one another in production. If they are perfect substitutes, segregation will be the result. Each firm that chooses to have a work force consisting of people from both the discriminated and the discriminating groups will have higher costs, than firms whose employees are from a single group. With non-discriminating employers, the wage rate will be the same for both groups and the market discrimination coefficient will be zero.

If the groups are not perfect substitutes, the results will differ. In this case, one group will be paid lower wages than the other group, and the market discrimination coefficient will be greater than zero.
Consumers too, discriminate against commodities and services, which are produced or handled by certain groups. They may refuse to buy commodities where the sales staff belongs to this group [blacks, women]. Sloane, P.J. (1980) believes that, as many females are employed in areas where contact with the public is important, such as retail trading, it is quite unlikely that, women as a group suffer much from consumer discrimination. The size of the market discrimination coefficient is then, determined by the discrimination coefficient, and the relative importance of the discriminated group in the production process.

Becker, G. believes that, all the above types of discrimination are not independent of each other. According to him, the combined effects of all the above, i.e. the market discrimination coefficient will be equal to the sum of the different discrimination coefficient, multiplied by the relative importance of the group in the production process.

The following are the conclusions of Becker's micro economic analysis:

- Discrimination does not only lead to wage discrimination but also to segregation;
- Different types of discrimination can have additive effects; and
- There are forces in the economic system, which tend to reduce wage differential among employers, if the preferences vary between different employers and the commodity markets are competitive. (Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984)
However, this theory is not free from problems as can be seen from the basic problems given below:

1) It fails to present a convincing definition of discrimination;

2) It treats discrimination, (which should be central to a theory of discrimination), as an exogenous factor and therefore not subject to analysis;

3) It produces mechanical results, which follow the way the model is specified and therefore adds little to the understanding of discrimination.

These problems can be elaborated as follows:

1. The concept of discrimination: The definition of discrimination as a ‘taste for discrimination’ itself creates a number of conceptual problems. This definition assumes discrimination to be a ‘physical’ phenomenon – a desire by whites not to associate with blacks, but it does not conform to the reality where the white have been in close physical association with the blacks. Thus, discrimination is more a status or class phenomena, a concept, which ultimately makes the theory more general, as it cannot be applied to gender discrimination.

2. Motives of the economic agents: Any economic theory of discrimination should try to show how the discrimination interacts with the motives of certain economic factors. The neo-classical model partly succeeds in doing this. The model assumes that, employees are motivated mainly by profits but a ‘taste of discrimination’ motivates employers or a ‘perception of reality’ modifies this motive. If the model assumes “physical association” to be the problem, it is difficult to see
why, the employers in the large firms would discriminate against the blue-collar workers with whom the top management would have the least association or in fact no association.

As has been explained above, Alexis, M. and A. Krueger, attempt to overcome this difficulty by assuming that, the employers are motivated by the desire to maximise the incomes of the white workers or by envy-malice towards blacks, both of which are quite unrealistic.

However, in Marshall, R. (1974). Arrow, K. believes that, it is possible that, the discrimination coefficient of the employees could be transmitted to the employer causing him to behave as if he had a discrimination coefficient.

In Marshall, R. (1974: 860) Bergmann, B. R. also implies that, if the employer has a status motive for discrimination there would be no objection in hiring discriminatees for ‘inferior’ jobs, but employers would object in hiring them for higher status jobs.

This model also makes unrealistic assumptions about the white workers, who probably are more responsible than the employers for discrimination in blue-collar jobs. The neo-classicists assume white workers with discrimination coefficient to be mainly motivated by wage rates, but their basic motivation is more likely to be job control rather than wage rates. The wage rate is an important part of the job, but the job status, opportunity for advancement and the extent to which the workers participate in the formation of the job rules are also important considerations.
Discriminators are likely to want to monopolise the better jobs for themselves and will use race, gender, etc. as a means of doing so.

3. Power relations among the agents: A theory of discrimination should also be able to explain what factors give the discriminators the power to exclude the discriminatees. The neo-classical model of discrimination fails to explain this because it does not deal with the bargaining between groups and assumes that, wages are the worker's only objective and wage differential and wage changes are the basic causal forces.

This model is also silent with respect to the motives of the black workers, and the determinants of their power to overcome discrimination by white workers and employers.

Despite the many problems, Becker's work is still very important. According to Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo (1984:26) "there are two elements in Becker's analysis which can be viewed as theoretical innovations. One is the use of the theory of international trade in the analysis of the effects of discrimination. The other is the discrimination coefficient as a measure of the taste of discrimination."

One of the major problems with Becker's theory of discrimination, according to Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo (1984:27) is that, "it cannot explain why wage differences between the discriminated groups remain in the long run, when the commodity and labour markets are characterised by competition. In this case the firms that, have the lowest discrimination coefficient will hire all the members of the
discriminated group." They also believe that, free entry may put an end to
discrimination

Thus, Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo (1984:27) believe that, "Becker’s results
are thus contrary to the empirical picture which shows permanent wage differences in
competitive industries between blacks and whites in United States and between
women in many countries."

Hence, Arrow, K. tried to reconcile the above observation with Becker’s
theoretical point of departure. Arrow, K. started his analysis by assuming that, all
employees belong initially to a single group (e.g. white). A new group (blacks) then,
enter the labour market. The former group prefers discriminating against the later.
(Lundhal, M. and E. Wadensjo, 1984:27)

Becker’s analysis says that, this will lead to a segregated labour market, but
Arrow, K. assumes that, there are adjustment costs, which can be partly of an
administrative character, partly connected with training expenses. He believes that, it
may be extremely costly to substitute quickly one group of workers for another.

Hence, instead of segregation with equal wages, the result is partial
segregation with wage differentials. The newly arrived group will be hired by certain
firms, which will also retain employees from the previous group. Those members of
the discriminating group who are employed in the integrated firms will receive higher
wages and the employees from the new, discriminated groups, will receive less wages
than those paid by the firms that, are still segregated.
Thus, Arrow, K. shows how adjustment costs along with employee discrimination can lead to persistent wage differences for certain time period.

➢ Human Capital Model

There is a large amount of disagreement over the major determinants of the gender wage differentials. While, some researchers such as Bergmann, B. R. argue that, it is primarily demand driven, other economists, more notably Mincer, J. Polacheck, S.W. and Fuchs, V. attribute it to the cultural attitudes, that, influence female market work commitment, through her perceptions of the traditional gender roles. (Vella, F. 1994:191)

The economists who believe in the latter view have developed human capital theory. According to this approach, it is hypothesised that, women prefer certain stereotype occupations and therefore they do not require much investment in acquiring special skills. Hence, they also receive lower wages.

This view argues that, many females anticipate short and interrupted spells of market employment, because of their traditionally greater commitment to home-related activities. Males, on the other hand, expect long-term involvement in the labour market work and, accordingly invest in qualitative and quantitatively different human capital. Furthermore, they believe that, the typical female human capital depreciates relatively quickly to market place absences.

Mincer, J. (1994:112) believes that, "accumulated human work capacity qualifies as a capital asset in the same sense that, physical capital does, even if it
cannot be bought and sold (it is, of course, rented) and even though investment in such capital often involves non market activities, such as education.” Fisher, I. defined capital as an asset that gives rise to an income stream. (Kerr, C and P.O. Staudohar).

Human capital theory is concerned with the extent to which human capital is accumulated, through education, training and work experience and how it is used and rewarded. (Fine, B. 1998)

Thus, according to this theory, an individual makes a conscious or unconscious decision to invest in their productive capacity. First, they invest in the length and the type of schooling and after entering the labour market; they make additional investments in training, health care, and possible additional formal schooling. These human capital investments and their rates of return are important determinants of individual earning profiles.

Consequently, human capital treats education, training, etc. as a stream of costs and provisions, which are to be set against the stream of benefits, which accrue. (Fine, B. 1998) The theory also points out that, men and women are not perfect substitutes for one another although, they may be similarly distributed across the levels of education, women accumulate less human capital through wage experience because, they spend relatively fewer years as compared to men in the labour market. This results in productivity differences between the two.
Various economic theories focus on the different aspects of demand and supply of labour. Labour supply side approaches have been influenced quite heavily by the sociological and economic explanations.

Within the family, women are considered to be the best suited for carrying out 'expressive' roles such as caring, while men focus on 'instrumental' roles such as bread winning. This division of labour was considered functional for both the family and society.

Women, having a comparative advantage in the biological and the traditional roles performed by them, have a different labour force attachment compared to men, and as they spend relatively shorter period in the labour market, their human capital is less.

This analysis calls attention to the traditional division of labour within the family, under which, women can expect shorter and more discontinuous involvement in the labour market work as compared to men. Their returns are low, as they spent a shorter period in the labour market. Similarly, employers are also reluctant to invest in firm specific training for women workers.

As a result of, the shorter job tenure for women, the overhead costs in training sets of persons quite frequently will be higher, and hence, the employers are likely to discount it from the wages of women. Since women are more likely to leave their jobs in the middle, some employers may be reluctant even to employ them in the first place.
Becker, G. has argued that, even when men and women spend the same amount of time on market jobs, women will be offered a lower wage. Women have more of house keeping responsibilities. Becker, G. points out that, housekeeping being more effort intensive, women could therefore, spend more efforts on housekeeping and less on the market job even if they spend the same amount of time on the market jobs as men. This, too, accounts for their lower earnings. He further believes that, men spend their off-the-job hours in rest and recreation and hence as they come to the job fresh and with more energy, they should be paid a higher wage.

Thus, the division of labour has clear ramifications for men and women's relative marketability. As men have more experience in the place of work, they develop a competitive edge. As women concentrate on nurturing and have more time out of the labour market, they amass fewer skills and therefore, the jobs, which they acquire, are poorly paid ones.

According to Bergmann, B.R. (1989), there is a vast difference in the pay between men and women in the American economy. Underlying these large pay differences, are the continuing segregation of work by sex, a scarcity of promotions for women and a difference given to men and women. She also believes that, due to the lack of access to all the jobs on an equal basis, women have a disproportionately small share of the interesting jobs that, allow a person to grow and advance.

Some economists believe that, the inferior labour market position is something women have freely chosen as a normal and generally benign adaptation to "their responsibilities" for housework and child rearing. Thus, they believe in the
specialisation of women in such tasks. However, Owen has argued that, the demands of the economic efficiency at the household levels no longer require specialisation in such tasks. According to him, as, the elements of housework become less complex, due to changing technology, it no longer makes sense for one partner to specialise.

There is also evidence that, widespread severe ongoing discrimination by employers and fellow workers continue to hamper women. Polacheck, S. W. (1998) believes that, the wage gap is due to women’s deliberate choice of certain jobs that are easy to leave and re-enter. The jobs they choose which meet their criteria happen to be low paying. However, this view does not help in explaining the differences in pay between men and women in the same occupation. (Bergmann, B. R. 1989:47)

Fuchs, V. also believes that, unfairness in the labour market has only a minor effect on wages. Rather, according to him, wage difference between the sexes are almost entirely from women’s child care activities which require them to do different kinds of jobs than men, and to do more part-time work. (Bergmann, B. R. 1989:48). However, this also does not explain cases where men and women are full time workers and have the same kinds of jobs. Therefore, an alternative explanation of why men get more pay than women, even when they have similar human capital, and similar jobs, is that, both are not competing in the same market. Here, we come across labour market segmentation by sex, where many jobs are earmarked for one sex or the other. Thus, men and women are selling themselves and their human capital in segregated markets. This segmentation is less than perfect and it diminishes
especially in the lower level managerial and professional jobs. However, segmentation of sexes remains the dominant mode in many establishments.

While, earmarking jobs by sexes causes a wage gap, the existence of such a wage gap strengthens the desire of a firm to keep groups of employees who do the same work all males or all females. Firms are not willing to pay a man's wage to females when they know that, they can get them for less. Yet, paying women lower wages than men doing the same work in the same establishment is likely to cause discontent and create problems.

Occupational segregation within each firm effectively avoids such problems. Mincer, J. (1994:116) believes that, “investment in human capital does not terminate with the completion of schooling. They continue at a diminishing rate between entry in the labour market and retirement.”

Fine, B. (1998) believes that, the main purpose of the human capital theory is to be able to explain why there should be differences in wages for different workers. If the workers have different productive capacities, they should receive different rewards. Fine, B. is of the opinion that, these capacities might arise from the innate abilities or upbringing, or they might have been positively pursued in order to get economic advantage. Thus, all abilities constitute human capital, but education and training build it up deliberately through the use of economic resources. Human capital can also be gained through work experience.

But, this argument does not effectively go beyond a situation in which there is a single job at which some workers are more productive than others. There are two
other issues to address. First, who gets what education and training and, second, who is allocated to which jobs. Considering work experience, these two questions are not necessarily independent of one another. For a perfectly functioning economy, free of market imperfections, individual workers would be allocated to appropriate jobs, and efficient levels and types of education and training would also be distributed across the workforce equating marginal products, costs and benefits in the human capital in the same way as supply and demand are equalized for a general economic equilibrium across goods and services.

This model sets out to explain the skill and occupational distribution of the workforce as well as the corresponding rewards. To this basic model, further angles are added to distinguish it from the market for other commodities. Labour is produced in a very different way from other commodities, and it has a will of its own and can decide whether to work or not.

Whether by virtue, culture, or innate biological differences, men and women have to allocate their time between work and leisure, and between working in the domestic and the commercial sphere. It is, argued that, it makes sense to men and women to specialize in paid and unpaid work, respectively, based on the initial talents that, are consolidated over a lifetime.

These differences will be modified by the shifting productivities of the commercial and domestic spheres and by the rise in real wages, which may induce women to participate more in the labour market. These factors will also influence the quantity and quality of children.
Besides, other variables, such as gender, can be added and these can be interpreted as reflecting differences in productivity due to the innate or acquired capabilities. This interpretation is correct only if the labour market is working perfectly, else a significant coefficient for gender differentials may be interpreted as reflecting sexism in the labour market in one form or the other.

**Labour Market Segmentation Models**

Some economists such as Reich, M., Loveridge, R. and A. K. Mok, define labour market segmentation as, "the historical process whereby political economic forces encourage the division of the labour market into separate sub-markets, or segments, distinguished by different labour market characterises and behavioural rules." (Biswal, K. 1995.25)

In brief, labour market segmentation, has the following characteristics:

1. Labour market segmentation is a ‘process’ in particular, implying that, it is a dynamic concept;

2. This continuous historical ‘process’ groups workers into compartmentalised, non competing labour markets;

3. Each sub-market is then distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioural rules; and

4. Economic opportunities and rewards are different among objectively comparable individuals participating in the different segments of the labour market.
A number of labour market segmentation models have been evolved since the late 1960's. One of them, the Dual Labour Market Theory, will be analysed here, followed by the Segmented Labour Market model.

**A) Dual Labour Market Theory**

One approach, which has specifically challenged the neo-classical model, is the dual labour market hypothesis. The two economists most often associated with the dual labour market theory are Doringer, P. and Piore, M.

According to this theory, the entire labour market can be divided into the primary and secondary sectors or segments. The variables mainly used by the 'dualists' to divide the labour market into primary and secondary segments, are "job contents", "circumstances of employment" "average earnings", level of different groups of workers and the degree of 'mobility' between the segments. The dualists see the primary labour market as a series of internal labour markets in which there are stable employment opportunities and regularised lines of advancement.


1. It is useful to divide the economy into a primary and secondary sector;
2. Wages and working conditions will be determined by different factors in the two sectors;
3. Labour mobility between the two sectors will be highly limited;
4. The secondary sector is marked by poor working conditions and levels of unemployment.

In Marshall, R. (1974) Doringer, P. and M. Piore define a primary labour market as, one composed of jobs in large firms and unionised jobs which tend to be better jobs—high paying more promotion possibilities, better working conditions and more stable work. On the contrary, the secondary segment of the labour market contains low paid jobs that, are held by workers who are discriminated against, and who have unstable working patterns. Thus, the secondary labour market is characterised by bad 'job contents' and poor 'circumstances of employment' relative to that, of the primary segment.

Piore, M. has explained this separation of markets by a number of specific arguments:

1. Secondary market are distinguished from the primary markets by the behaviour patterns especially, unstable unemployment, which they impose on the workers in those markets. Employers and workers adapt to unstable conditions, and labour market institutions contribute to the perpetuation of these conditions.

2. Discrimination perpetuates segmentation by restricting certain workers to the secondary market, not because of their education and skills, but because they have the superficial characteristics resembling most workers in the secondary market. Doringer, P. and M. Piore. have emphasised that, many workers in
the secondary market have stable employment, even though their jobs encourage instability.

3. While, technology influences the allocation of jobs between the primary and secondary segments, many kinds of work can be performed in either segment, but they fall where they are because of historical discussions to locate them there.

4. Class association jobs in the various sectors tend to be filled by people from particular classes reinforces the behavioural traits of workers in the various labour markets. Piore, M. defines ‘mobility chains’ through which people pass. Workers enter these chains from a limited and distinct number of points, which have economic and social significance.

5. A number of institutions and historical forces strengthen the labour market segmentation. The importance of on-the-job training as the means of acquiring skills has increased the employer’s incentives to hold some workers in more stable jobs, whereas other institutions have perpetuated instability. (Marshall, R. 1974).

Various demand side factors affecting inter-segmental mobility have also been specified. Some of them are:

1. Credentials for job access, which are based on some fixed characteristics of the individual such as: gender, race, age, etc.;

2. Credentials for job access, which are based on some obtainable characteristics such as: education, skill, qualifications, mode of dress, etc.;
3. General factors imposing costs or impeding movements such as: distance, information costs, etc.;

4. Social mechanisms for restricting or controlling job access such as: personal networks control over capital and market, etc. (Biswal, K 1995:36)

A 'vicious circle of poverty' in the secondary segment, perpetuates low wages and unfavourable behavioural traits of the worker, which in turn, limit the degree of inter-segmental mobility.

Doringer, P. and M. Piore. argue that, the primary sector jobs are rationed, and that, in particular, women, blacks and other minorities find it difficult to obtain primary employment.

The dual labour market theorists argue that, women mostly fill the secondary slots, which are characterised by low pay and instability. There is also little scope of mobility from the secondary sector jobs to the primary sector jobs. The dualists argue that, women are generally found concentrated in secondary sector jobs primarily due to five characteristics—dispensability, clearly visible social differences, little interest in acquiring training, low economism and lack of solidarity, which they exhibit.

The various characteristics of women can be attributed partly to the labour market experiences of women and partly because of various aspects of social structure existing outside the labour market. Moreover, employers perceive women as different from men in the sense that, they are relatively less committed towards
advancement of work, because of their orientation towards domestic situation and their socialisation.

Women are also reluctant to struggle for their rights in the labour market, and are less interested in seeking high monetary rewards. Perhaps these are the characteristics required from secondary workers.

However, the dual labour market theory mainly emphasises on the description of the characteristics women bring into the labour market and hence fail to explain the structuring process of the labour market in relation to gender. Therefore, Walby, S. believes that, dualism is not the best way to characterise the institutional rigidities of the labour market in relation to gender. (Rees, T. 1992)

B} Segmented Labour Market Theory

These theories were first designed to explain the problem of “ghetto labour markets” in the 1960’s and 1970’s in the USA. (Arputhamurthy, S.1990: 51) They believed that, the racial discrimination perpetuated the segmentation of the labour markets into the primary and the secondary sector by restricting certain workers to the latter. (Arputhamurthy, S. 1990)

The criteria used for discriminating them were the fact that, they were blacks or women and not the lack of education and skill. The segmented labour market suggests that, the labour market has been divided into the primary and the secondary sector in which different values apply.
Arputhamurthy, S. (1990) believes that, the competitive orthodox model concerns mainly with the external labour market i.e. the factors of demand and supply, while the internal labour market concerns itself with the rules made within the firm to fix the wages or to allocate labour among the alternate uses. Thus, “the internal labour market is controlled more by institutional rules that, are not always compatible with the assumption of the competitive labour market.” (Arputhamurthy, S. 1990:52)

In Arputhamurthy, S. (1990), Kerr, C. refers to the process of establishing institutional rules that, structure labour markets as balkanisation. He believes that, institutional rules are one of the factors that cause labour markets to be structured. These rules are an important way of establishing “control over the job territory for the people who are already in the market.” (Arputhamurthy, S. 1990:53)

According to Arputhamurthy, S. (1990:53), “the labour market segmentation is defined as the historical process whereby political and economic forces encourage the division of labour market into separate sub markets, or segments distinguished by different labour market characteristics and behavioural rules.”

He further says, (1990:56) “this segmentation served two purposes. Firstly, the existence of the lower stratum of workers increases the status of those in the higher strata. Secondly, workers are unlikely to identify with the interest of the other race or sex (women) concentrated in the menial occupations, and thus low wages can be paid to those workers without the risk of class opposition.”
The dual labour market theory suffered from many inconsistencies, and this led to a more elaborate and dynamic theory being developed by Edwards, Reich, M and D. Gordon in the early 1970's. This theory was later modified by economists like Rumberger, R. Carnoy, M. Loveridge R. and A.K. Mok, Rosenberg, Rogers, etc. (Biswal, K. 1995)

The radical theory of segmented labour market expresses a more explicit critique of capitalism, acknowledges its ties with Marxian dialectical analysis and emphasises class conflicts.

Although this theory is similar to the dual labour market theory in drawing upon sociological analysis of institutional change, the radicals emphasise the historical rooted class based motivation of behaviour by employers and workers. The radicals view technology, as an endogenous variable that, is manipulated by employers to further class interest rather than profits. There is a lot of similarity between the issues raised by the radical theorists and the dual labour market theorists. Nevertheless, the difference lies in the division of the labour market into various segments and the explanation of the segmentation process.

Radical labour market economists divide the labour market into multiple segments, mainly into three segments – "primary independent", "primary subordinate" and "secondary." (Biswal, K. 1995:43)

Biswal, K. (1995) has examined the three segments as follows:

*Primary creative independent segment*: This segment retains most of the characteristics of the primary segment defined by the dual labour market theory.
However, the terms used are different in defining this segment. According to the radical economists, this segment of the labour market consists of jobs, which require creativity and self-initiating action, on the part of the workers. In this segment, individual motivation and achievements are highly rewarded and work is judged and regulated by professional standards.

**Primary subordinate/routinised segment:** Jobs in this segment are characterised by relative (to secondary jobs) stability, high wages, rising with age (seniority). It is implicit in the radical segmentation literature that, the blue-collar workers constituting the primary subordinate segment have, to a large extent, similar qualifications and skills (productivity) of the secondary segment workers of the Dual labour market theory. The important variable separating them, from the secondary labour market workers are their relative job stability and high wages.

Both these segments together constitute the primary segment. Jobs in the primary segment tend to be full time and full year employment and are marked by promotions and wage patterns, which are set internal to the firm. There are well-defined promotional ladders. Access to entry-level jobs is determined by schooling, race and sex, which are seen as convenient indices of “stability” and other desired workers attributes. Jobs are often unionised and the unions are frequently allowed to determine their relative wage structure in return for the cooperation with management in disciplining and stabilising the workforce.

**Secondary segment:** Jobs in this segment of the labour market require the least on the job training and the minimum of general skills. Jobs in this segment do not lead
to promotional ladders, usually are not unionised and offer low wages and poor “circumstances of employment.” (Biswal, K. 1995:45) Supervision and firing criteria are arbitrary and vary with the whims of the manager or the boss. It is the lack of stability or continuity of work which distinguishes the workers of this segment from that of the other segments.

> **Theory Of Statistical Discrimination**

This theory has been propounded by Thurow, L. in his book, “*Generating Inequality*.” According to him, statistical discrimination, “occurs whenever an individual is judged on the basis of the average characteristics of the group, or groups, to which he or she belongs rather than upon his or her own personal characteristics. The judgements are correct, factual and objective in the sense that, the group actually has the characteristics that, are ascribed to it, but the judgements are incorrect with respect to many individuals within the group.” (McConnell, C.R. and S. L. Brue, 1995: 412-413)

In the labour market, statistical discrimination functions largely. Employers with job vacancies would like to hire the most productive workers available. Therefore, they collect a variety of information concerning each applicant, especially the age, education and the prior work experience. This information is then supplemented with scores on the pre-employment tests, which they feel, are helpful indicators of the potential performance. There are two characteristics that, the employer has to keep in mind: (a) collection of detailed information about all the job
applicants is expensive, hence only limited information is collected; and (b) the limited information available to the employers from the job application form and test scores do not permit the employer to predict with perfect certainty the most productive worker.

Therefore, it is common for the employers to use various subjective considerations such as age, race, or gender in determining who is finally hired. Here the employer is not satisfying a taste for discrimination, but rather is using gender as a proxy for the production-related attributes of the workers, which are not easily discernible. Thus, gender may be used as a proxy for physical strength or job commitment.

For example, the employer may assume that, on an average the young married women are more likely to quit their jobs than the males. Hence, when confronted with a married female or a male applicant, the employer will hire the male. In such types of discrimination, characteristics, which apply to the group, are being applied to the individuals. In the above example, each married woman is expected to behave like the average women. Even if the married woman does not plan to quit the job after a few years, she is still discriminated against.

➢ Feminist Or Gender Theories

Anker, R. (1997) in his article on, Theories of Occupational Segregation by Sex: An Overview, believes that, the feminist or gender theories are basically
concerned with non labour market variables which are taken by the economist as given.

He believes that, (Anker, R. 1997: 324) "a basic premise of gender theories is that, women's disadvantaged position in the labour market is caused by, and is a reflection of, patriarchy and women's subordinate position in society and the family." He further says that, in all societies, breadwinning is the chief occupation of the males while; the women's main responsibility is household work and childcare.

Gender theory makes a valuable contribution in explaining occupational segregation by sex by examining the characteristics of female occupations and showing how closely they mirror the common stereotypes of women and their abilities. (Anker, R. 1997) Anker, R. has examined five positive and five negative stereotypes, which either assist or hinder the women from accepting a particular position.

According to him, (Anker, R. 1997:324) the positive stereotypes are, “a caring nature; skill and experience in household related work; greater manual dexterity; greater honesty; and attractive physical appearance” which helps a woman to take up occupations such as teacher, doctor, social worker, maid, nurse, hairdresser, receptionist, etc. The five negative stereotypes presented by him (1997:327), include, “disinclination to supervise others; lesser physical strength; lesser ability in science and mathematics; lesser willingness to travel; and lesser willingness to face physical danger and to use physical force.” These affect women’s acceptance of jobs leading them to become male dominated occupations.
Feminist perspective: Feminist perspective differs from traditional economics in three ways. (Rees, T. 1992:25)

1) Gender is given a much higher priority in the feminist perspective;
2) Feminists have examined the power relations between men and women;
3) Feminists have been concerned with the practical applications along with theoretical explanations.

The different types of feminism have been examined as follows:

**Liberal feminism:** According to Rees, T. (1992:25), "liberal feminist approaches to work has essentially focused on explaining inequalities through the identification of barriers to women's full access to opportunities in the labour market." They do not advocate fundamental changes but tries to secure equal access for women in the existing system.

**Marxist feminism:** Marx, K. did not specially include women when he developed his theories. However, Engels, F. argued that, women would need to engage fully in the labour market in order to escape domination of men at home. (Rees, T. 1992) Rees, T. (1992:26) believes that, "Marxist feminists see patriarchy, the oppression of women by men, as closely linked to, or indeed a by-product of the capitalist mode of production." She has discussed two aspects: a) reserve army of labour and b) deskilling and the labour process.

a) Reserve army of labour: The reserve army of labour is a devise to suppress wages through the availability of a surplus pool of workers. The reserve army was necessary for capital accumulation. Capital would both discard workers into the
reserve, and then recruit them as and when the need arose. This ensures that, the workers are not successful to demand the high wages in time of high labour demand. The reserve army consists of three main groups i.e. the floating reserve (which includes the recently employed unemployed); the latent reserve (consisting of those workers whose skills have become redundant due to industrial restructuring) and the stagnant (which consist of the unemployed and seasonal workers).

In Rees, T. (1992: 27) Power believes that, women are a part of the latent reserve, while Beechey is of the opinion that, married women can be considered as a flexible reserve army of labour, i.e. they are brought into the workforce when the supply of labour is short and then shed again when their demand dries up. Nevertheless, Bruegel’s study has found that, in the service, sector women are not the first to be laid off during recession, nor do they replace males as cheap labour. (Rees, T. 1992:27)

b) Deskilling and the labour process: Although Marx, K. spoke of the concepts of deskilling and labour process, the writings of Taylor have explained these concepts in detail. Taylor believes that, “the scientific management of the work and reduction of the skill component of the jobs as a mechanism of control over the labour force could increase productivity, keep the wages low, and so maximise profits.” He believed that, by breaking the labour process into smaller unskilled tasks, the workers could be replaced easily and thus, they would lose their bargaining power. (Rees, T. 1992:28)
In Rees, T. (1992:28) Braveman, H. tried to include women in the analysis. He predicts that, women would take up majority of the unskilled work. He also expected that, the private sector would take over the household tasks, leaving women free to enter the labour market.

Radical feminist theory: Radicalists, unlike the Marxist and Marxist feminists, focus on the concept of patriarchy to explain all the aspects of women's lives. They highlight the power relations between men and women. (Rees, T. 1992) In Rees, T. (1992:32) Walby, S. has defined patriarchy as, “a system of social structures and practices in which men dominate, oppress and exploit women.”

Rees, T. (1992:31) believes that, “the main focus of patriarchal relations, however, is the family, which is regarded as the key instrument of oppression and the site of its cultural reproduction.”

This concept has been criticised by many. Walby, S. describes the changing nature of patriarchy and argues that, it has shifted from the private to the public sphere. (Rees, T. 1992) According to Walby, S. “whereas in the nineteenth century women were simply excluded from public life, in the twentieth century they are merely segregated.” (Rees, T. 1992:32)

2.3 Reasons For Employment of Women

The concept of working women is not new to India. For centuries, women have been working alongside men, but, only recently, have they been entering the labour force, in search of waged work, in large numbers.
Singhal, T. (2003:21) has put it very eloquently when she says, "men and women both have always worked. The differences were only in the areas of work, the location of the work, execution and performance, tools, technology and motivating factors for work."

Bullock, S. (1994:1) has emphasised the role played by women, in her book, *Women and Work*, and has opined that, "women have always worked and their labour plays a key role in the survival of millions of families. They work longer hours than men and have a greater range of responsibilities, but the work they do is often neither publicly nor privately acknowledged."

To emphasize the importance of work for a woman, a quote of Jawaharlal Nehru is very important. He believes that, "the habit of looking upon marriage as a profession almost and as the sole economic refuge for women will have to go before we can have any freedom. Freedom depends on economic conditions even more than the political ones and if the woman is not economically free and self earning she will have to depend on her husband or someone else and dependents are never free." (Chatterjee, S. A. 1988:146)

Devi, L.U. (1982) has opined that, throughout the history of mankind, women have been engaged in economic activity alongside men. In fact, the economic functions have been the joint responsibility of both of them. She also believes that, the ranking of jobs, was not done based on importance, since all the functions were considered equally important.
Mamoria, C. B. (1981:627), in his book, *Social Problems and Social Organisation in India*, states, "Ever since the evolution of human species women have been entrusted to certain types of work. In the primitive society men fought, hunted and went to sea, while women engaged in less dangerous and more circumscribed operations." He further, goes on to say that, women have always worked and have been active workers, having distinct economic functions to perform. As they were usually undertaking the household tasks, they were not directly competing with the males.

Thus though the woman worked, she did so within the four walls of her home, as, in the past, it was neither necessary nor advisable for her to leave her home. Desai, N. and A. Sharayu have supported the above statement, by concluding that, the middle class, urban educated, upper caste woman started to work only after 1940's. (Saradamoni, K.1985). Till then, there was no need for her to work outside her home.

Altekar, A. S. (1959) is of the opinion that, although in the past women were not allowed to work or get higher education, in 1942 the high level of inflation in the country made it impossible for the middle classes to manage their budgets with the earnings of a single member. Therefore economic necessity forced the women to take up a job, this has also contributed to increasing the level of education among the women.

Eapen, M. (1992:2179) opines that, “since the burden of the family building activities is by and large accepted as the woman’s primary domain, her participation
in economic activity is largely determined by the nature and degree of domestic obligations.”

Various factors have contributed in pulling the woman out of her home into the labour market. Mathur, D. (1992), in his study, has identified six motivational factors for work, which include: 1) economic necessity; 2) security; 3) improvement in the standard of living; 4) social affiliations; 5) self-esteem and 6) self-fulfilment.

Mehta, A. et al. (1988), have found that, some of the factors responsible for the evolving role of housewives into a dual role of working women and housewives are better education, changing socio-cultural values and the need for supplementary income caused by inflation.

Chauhan, I. (1986:189), in her study, The Dilemma of Working Women Hostellers, has studied the life of the working women living in hostels in Nagpur. In her study, she interviewed 50 women living in eight hostels and she has examined the various advantages of working for women. According to her, “employment offers several advantages to women depending on the education, temperament, upbringing and training of each of them. To the majority of the middle class Indian women in the rural areas, it provides a measure of social freedom and economic independence. For others, it improves the standard of living. Their employment enhances the importance of some women in society and accords them a social status. Employment keeps the talented and skilled women busy and occupied fruitfully.”

Schenk-Sandbergen, L. in his essay titled, Married Women in the Labour Force in the Netherlands: Changing Patterns of Participation, has identified some of
the factors, leading to an increase in the participation of married women in the labour force from 1960-71. He has identified the following factors: “a) decline in the average age of marrying; b) the decline in the number of children in the family; [voluntary childlessness, family planning, etc.]; c) the level of education and the income of the husband; d) part time jobs and the mechanisation of the household work; e) changing patterns towards working mothers” (Saradamoni, K. 1985:189).

Ramu, G. N. (1989) in his book, *Women Work and Marriage in Urban India*, has studied the women workers in Bangalore (Karnataka). The data collection was done in two phases 1979 and 1984. The final sample consisted of 245 single and 245 dual earning couples and these were chosen from the three major public sector industries where there was a heavy concentration of women workers. The interview technique was used to elicit the required information. He believes that, the approach of the Indian society, to women’s employment, throughout history, has been dualistic in nature. Among the lower caste, tribes and under privileged groups, the woman was expected to work and support herself, her dependent children and even, her husband, at times. On the other hand, the upper caste women were discouraged from working outside the home, as, it would cast doubt on the character of the women.

Yet, today, women from all the classes have come out into the labour market and this has been considered a sign of progress and a silent revolution within the industrial sector.

Sengupta, P. (1960) too, believed that, the women were pushed into the labour market and they were not lured by the factory employment. The various factors
facilitating the increase in the female employment are economic necessity (Chauhan, I. 1986; Vohra, R. and A. K. Sen, 1989), independence (Mathur, D. 1992), ambition for a higher standard of living (Mathew, E. 1990), and changing socio-cultural values (Mehta, A. et al., 1988).

Tiwari, K. (1997), in her study, *Structural Changes and the Status of Women*, has specified some, push and pull factors, causing migration of women in search of jobs. Some of the pull factors include good employment opportunities, better facilities of health, housing, high urban life, opportunities to increase income, and availability of employment according to educational qualifications and training.

The push factors, specified by her, include social boycott, religious fundamentalism, and dacoit terror, terror of police, religious and caste disparities, political terrorism, and lack of facilities for a better living.

Singhal, T. (2003:25) opines that, “as more and more devices are invented the work load of a woman has been reduced considerably and the housewife finds some freedom which the educated housewives prefer to utilise by taking up gainful employment to add to her family income.”

Ramanamma, A. (1979) in her book, *Graduate Employed Women in an Urban Setting*, has limited her study to the graduate working women in Poona and its suburbs. She chose a sample of 505 educated women and administered an anonymous questionnaire to them. She has examined the causes, which motivate unmarried women to take up employment. Some of the causes given by her are: 1) to earn money to give dowry; 2) cost of living has increased; 3) as the age of marriage has
increased, work is used to fill time; 4) girls who find it impossible to get husbands, work to occupy themselves advantageously.

Some of the reasons compelling the married women to work are also examined by her. These include: aspirations for better standard of living, spiralling prices of essential goods, education of children, presence of gadgets which reduce drudgery in the home, smaller families, low mortality rate of children, etc.

Patel, V. (1988), in her study, has also specified various factors responsible for the growth of working women, which include the socio-economic changes in the country, western education, use of education, economic self sufficiency, improving the standard of living, etc.

Gupta, M. (2000) in his book, *Economic Participation of Women*, has examined the various determinants of woman's work decisions, and he concludes that, there is a lot of influence of socio-cultural and demographic variables such as literacy, caste, land holdings, household incomes, age, marital status, rural urban residence, technological change, etc. on woman's work participation.

Chatterjee, S. A. (1988), in his study, *The Indian Women's Search for an Identity*, has examined various factors leading to an increase in women's employment. These include: economic necessity, fear of having to face stagnation—either professionally or intellectually - in the event of becoming a full time housewife, personal desire for continuing employment to realise professional ambitions, attainment of status in the family, achieve and maintain total economic independence, etc.
Singhal, T. (2003:2) also believes that, “employment of women belonging to the middle and the upper middle classes in urban areas, is only a twentieth century phenomenon in India. The contemporary position of women’s employment has significantly changed today, not only those women who are under economic pressure but also those who wish to lead a socially useful life and want to add to the family finances have engaged themselves in paid jobs. They are realising that, work gives them separate social identity.”

Nagaich, S. (2001: 152) in her study on 200 working women from Punjab, finds that, “due to the economic strains posed by the present day life, societies attitudes towards married women’s employment is changed. Now even the attitude of men who considered it below their prestige to send his wife to work outside their home, under conditions of rising costs of living do not mind their wives taking up jobs or to continue to be in jobs after marriage mainly because of the economic gains it entails.”

Singh, M.K. (1987:95), has found that, “women’s work participation in the economic activities is increasing faster than the increase in female population
indicating a positivistic attitude of female population towards work, their inclination and attempt for integration, in the economic development of the nation.”

Most of the studies have analysed that, economic necessity is one of the main cause that has pushed and pulled the women in the waged labour market. Jain, S. (1988), in her study, finds that, many of the middle class women work, as their husband’s incomes are insufficient to meet more than the bare necessities. This reason has also been put forth by Chopra, V. (2001) in her study, regarding the employment and the occupational structure of women in India.

Thus, through the various studies, we find that, although in the beginning, it was considered unsuitable and undesirable to have the women working for wages outside the homes, later, many factors combined, to increase their employment, as now, employment of women is not only desirable, but, in many ways it is a necessity.

Mamoria, C.B. (1981:629), has expressed, the above viewpoint, very eloquently in his study. He says that, “during the 19th century it was considered derogatory for a woman to take up outside work as a means of earning even though she had no other means of subsistence. But under the pressure of economic necessity, the rising cost of living and the insufficient income of the family, this contempt for work rampant among some sections of the Indian society has been steadily diminishing.”
2.4 Working Conditions

The conditions, under which, the workers perform their task, have, a great bearing on their general health and efficiency. It has been said that, environment creates a man, and if the environment improves, the man's ability to work improves. It is not possible to carry on hard work under unhealthy surroundings.

In the absence of desirable working condition, the worker feels that, his job is a very tough one. He becomes sluggish and it becomes difficult for him to work well. With good working condition, not only does the worker remain happy, but the employer also gains, because of increased production, owing to greater efficiency.

Singh, B. N. (1989) opines that, woman's role, as an active worker i.e. the producer of goods and services has not been duly recognised by the male dominated society. Saxena, S. (1993:17) has also found that, “women are predominantly employed in consumption linked services and not in production linked industrial occupations.”

Women are, usually found employed in traditionally low paying jobs, which are located at the bottom of the occupational ladder. In part, this is due to the lack of training and educational facilities provided to them. Dahlstrom, E and L. Lilgestrom (1962), also, see technological changes, acting as a constraint on the economic options and opportunities available to women.

Choudhury, R. K. (1989), too, believes that, technological changes are generally biased against women workers, and, he concludes, by stating that, training can lead to an improvement in their employment.
Desai, K. G. (1969:35) has defined the term training as being, "restricted to formalised learning. Learning refers to changes in behaviour as a result of past experiences." He further says that, learning can be intentional or unintentional and according to him, learning can be called as training.

Martin, J. and C. Roberts (1984) in their study, *Women and Employment: A Lifetime Perspective*, conducted in Great Britain included all the women of the working age from 16 to 59 irrespective of their current work status. The sample of 5588 women and 799 husbands were interviewed with the help of a questionnaire. They have distinguished between formal and informal training. By formal training, is meant the courses and on the job training and by informal training is meant showing what is to be done either by the supervisor or other employees.

MacLennan's study of *Women And Work In Britain* shows that, even in Europe, women played a secondary position in the labour market and she concluded that, "women's occupations are still marked by low wages, less security of employment, low levels of skills, reduces opportunities for training and limited chances of advancement." (Saradamoni, K. 1985: 197)

In Kalbagh, C. (1991) Heggade, O. argues that, poverty, ignorance, ill treatment, insecurity of jobs etc., all impose the inevitability of accepting low wages and unhealthy working conditions for women.

Hussain, S. and V. R. Rao (1981), in their study, have found that, the public sector industries are capital intensive and require highly skilled labour. According to them, women are not being able to find employment in such industries due to reasons
such as: Poor access to training; Protective labour legislations, which in fact reduce their employability; Prejudice against women going for work particularly in industries; Reservations of a smaller number of jobs considered suitable for them; and trade unions acting as barriers to women entering into new work areas. Thus, in the long run there has been an overall decline both in the percentage of workers to female population and in their percentage to the total labour force.

Kapur, P. (1974), in her study on, *The Changing Status of Working Women in India*, has specified, many of the factors, contributing to hamper the careers of women, some of which include: lack of specialised education and training, lack of ambition, employers attitudes towards the female employees, working women’s attitudes and prejudices, non-working women’s prejudices, etc.

Raka, S. (1985) has analysed the objective working conditions in the following terms: 1) wages 2) benefits 3) job security 4) promotional prospects 5) physical atmosphere at the work place and 6) social relations with the supervisors or immediate bosses. The following were the main conclusions of her study. According to her, a large number of women receive very low wages and there was a great difference in the wages in the public and private sectors. Although in theory, women were entitled to all the benefits, in reality, they did not receive any tangible benefits. Most of the women felt that, their jobs were insecure and that, they did not have any promotional prospects. Physical conditions of work were also deplorable and the women, very often, did not realise that, they were being exploited.
Stokes, J. *et al.* (1995), in their study, found that, there are five dimensions of work organisation, which contribute, to a supportive or hostile environment for women. These are dual standards and opportunities, sexist attitudes and comments, informal socialisation, balancing work and personal obligations, remediation policy and practices. From the study, they concluded that, in all the five dimensions, women perceived, their work environment, to be more hostile than men did.

Khwaja, R.C. and S.K. Chandra (1999) have concluded that, the working conditions were far from satisfactory. Sitting arrangements, ventilation and light were inadequate. Toilet facilities were not hygienic and canteen and day care facilities were lacking.

Rao, V.R. and S. Hussain (1991:162) in their study conducted in the garment industries in New Delhi, find that, “workers complained of extreme tiredness and spells of nausea, dizziness and headache. Some fainted due to the heat and stress, especially during the summer.”

In contrast, to the above studies, which speaks of woman’s exploitation and miserable conditions of work, Desai, K.G. (1969), in his study, *Human Problems in Indian Industries*, has highlighted the fact that, the working conditions in today’s industries have improved tremendously. The workers have an eight-hour working day. Besides, they get reasonably high wages, decent working conditions and various other benefits.
Martin, J. and C. Roberts, (1984), have also supported the above view, by concluding that, the range of facilities and provisions offered to the employees in the form of ‘fringe benefits’ have increased in the past few years.

The working conditions also affected the roles played by the working women. While, the working conditions, by themselves, are not all-important factors causing role conflicts, they play an important role, as, they are supported by many contributing factors.

Chakrabortty, K. (1978) has stressed the fact that, the congenial working conditions (including hours of work, nature and pressure of work, pay scales, atmosphere at the work place, scope for promotion and recognition) make it easier to achieve reconciliation between the two roles.

Ganjewar, M. C. et al. (1998), in their study, on job satisfaction has found that, satisfaction of the employees is of prime importance for the success of any organisation. They believe that, the job satisfaction of the women is dependent on many intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics such as working hours, overtime, transportation problems and convenience dimensions of the job, which help to facilitate the dual roles. They also concluded that, women face many difficulties in trying to combine home and work roles and, this often leads to frustration, which can have a dangerous effect on the family life of the person.

Antony, M. J. (1989), has discussed, the working conditions in the factories. He has also analysed the role played by the Factories Act in improving the working conditions and in providing facilities for the welfare of the workers. Some of the
provisions of the Factories Act include: standard of cleanliness inside the factory, ventilation, temperature, control of dust and fumes, lighting, overcrowding, drinking water supply, separate toilets, fencing of dangerous machinery, precautions in case of fire, first aid facilities, etc.

Sengupta, P. (1960), in her study, also analysed the Factories Act 1948, and believes that, it covers diverse and pressing problems and insists on better working conditions, canteens, good latrines, welfare centre, crèches, ambulance facilities, dispensaries, etc.

Dhara, S. (1990) has found that, a large number of the Indian labour force remains uncovered by safety regulations. Many factories, use over aged and poorly maintained equipment, and the management are not willing to make even the smallest investment to increase the plant safety.

Thus, there are divergent views, regarding the working conditions in factories. Some studies, show that, the conditions of work are still deplorable and women workers face a lot of hardships and problems especially due to the lack of basic facilities, while others, show that, working conditions have improved to a great extent and today, the workers, have a more decent factory to work in.

The Factories Act 1948 has many provisions; yet, most of them are not implemented in all factories. Some of the provisions relate to the number of women working in the factories for example, crèche facilities. This gives the employer ample scope to escape from providing this benefit, by just limiting the number of women in the factories to less than the minimum number prescribed.
Lim, L.L. (1996:9) in her book, More and Better Jobs for Women: An Action Guide, has concluded, "women are playing increasing indispensable roles in international, national, and household economies, but they still have a disadvantaged economic position relative to men and also face serious discrimination. Although women are no longer a reserve force, equality of opportunity and treatment is still an elusive goal. Women are constrained both from realising their full human potential and from contributing to and benefiting fully from economic growth and development."

2.5 Problems Of Working Women

There are multiple problems faced by working women, including dual roles, physical problems in the work place, discrimination, harassment, etc. Various studies have been conducted, on these problems faced by working women.

In Kalbagh, C. (1991) Heggade, O. has shown that, the problems of the women workers are multi-dimensional, ranging from economic, social environmental to psychological. These problems differ, to a considerable extent, depending in the levels of education, kinds of jobs, social equity, place of work, etc.

Kumari, K.D. and D. R. Ramanna (2001) in their study, have given many problems of the growth of women’s employment. Some of them include: low earnings, sex, job, and wage discrimination, displacement of women due to mechanisation, lack of unionisation, lack of access to resources, non application of industrial and labour laws, lack of job security and training, etc.
Mishra, R. (1989:326), in her study, has found that, “females already in the workforce are also facing grave obstacles in the form of gender discrimination, exploitative working conditions, sexual harassment, etc, which discourage other women to enter the labour market.”

A major problem, faced by working women, is reconciliation of the two roles played by them: one at the home and the other at the place of work. Numerous studies have been conducted highlighting this problem of women’s work.

According to Bullock, S. (1994:30), “the entry of women into the labour market has not yet had the effect of relieving them of a share of housework and childcare—either through an increase in public or company provisions, or through men taking more responsibilities.” Women are found to work longer hours, to fit all their work in, leading to a double shift.

Joshi, A. and N. Sastry (1995) in their study, found that, females spend more time on family work and, equal time as males, on paid work and that, they also experience a higher level of work interference with family. They also found that, the sex role conflicts were more prevalent for females. They have concluded their study, by suggesting that, the organisation must expand their abilities, to assist employers, with such conflicts and understand that, the males and females have different gender role identifications and expectations and require different accommodation.

Deaux, K. and J.C. Villman (1983) in their study, have highlighted this problem, and, they have concluded that, as, women have traditionally been vested with the responsibility of taking care of the house and rearing children, working
women are often faced with the issue of combining the two roles in a manageable way.

Dual roles lead to role conflicts, and Desai, N. and A. Sharayu (1985) in their study, have analysed this problem. They concluded that, whether, the working women, feels overburdened by the multiple demands of the various roles played by her, does not entirely depend, on the objective situations, but, also, to a great extent on her subjective evaluation and interpretation of the situation. (Saradamoni, K.)

Maitra-Sinha, A. (1993) in her book, *Women in a Changing Society*, has very vividly put forth the confusion faced by the working women due to her expectations vis-à-vis her family. She feels that, a working woman has to play manifold roles of cook, accountant, cleaner, teacher and banker—all rolled into one and very often she is looked upon with resentment and misgivings by her kith and kin and neighbours.

Upreti, N. (1988) believes that, role conflict emerges only when the woman puts her other roles above the family role. As long as all the other roles played by the woman are subordinate to the primary family role she does not face any conflict."

Desai, K. G. (1969) opines that, the dual role, overburdens the woman both physically and psychologically. Agarwal, V. (1994), in her study supports the above view and she reviewed the relationship between multiple role conflicts and stress, and she concluded that, the two major stressors for women are marital relationships and work overload. She feels that, these women are driven by guilt to simultaneously fulfil their duties at home while, pursing increasing responsibilities at work.
Gangewar, M. C. et al. (1998) in their study titled, *Job Satisfaction of Working women*, have analysed a sample of 200 women, working in various offices, schools and hospitals of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state, and they found that, all the working women encountered problems due to the dual roles played by them. They found that, the woman is torn between these two commitments, and, she is forced to either sacrifice certain aspects of home or job responsibilities. This has a bad impact on the happiness of the family. From their study, they have concluded that, majority of the women were highly satisfied with the occupational status and work schedules, while moderately satisfied with the work autonomy aspects and least satisfied with the work environment aspects of their job.

Ramanamma, A. (1979:126), in her study, concluded, “The employed women are performing two full time jobs—the house and the office work which are not always complementary but sometimes conflicting.” Thus, women experience stress and strains, and a lower amount of leisure time is available to them, due to the dual roles they have to play.

Pant, S. and P. Kumar (1992) in their paper titled, *Problems of Woman Workers in Public Sector*, had conducted a survey of 168 women working in the Indian Telephone Industries in Allahabad. They have found that, despite the various facilities such as crèche and day shifts being provided, women workers still face many problems at the domestic level and hence they cannot fully concentrate on their work.
Even though, women face conflicting demands, from the home and office, they are not prepared to leave their office, to become full time housewives. Jain, S. (1988) has also examined this aspect in his study.

Khanna, G. and M.A. Varghese (1978:39) in their study, have concluded that, "Nowadays many qualified women want to combine the two roles rather than give up one for the other. A woman's position in and outside the home is so closely linked that, it is very difficult to separate the two."

Soba, I. (1992), in her study, has found that, the result of employment of women has been that, many adjustments have to be made in the family and as a result, society itself has undergone a transformation. She also found that, marriage no longer, puts an end, to the career of the woman but she has to bear a dual role.

Custers, P. (1991) in his article, Women Labour in Japanese Economy, puts forth the dual role played by the women, who besides working in the factory for eight hours, has to put in many hours of work at home too.

Ramu, G.N. (1989:192) has concluded, "Women who work for pay are experiencing competing pressures from cultural prescriptions of gender roles and the changing economic and legal status of women. They are faced with the dilemma of accommodating the old and the new patterns of behaviour. They are called upon to assume new co-provider roles as a part of their duty, while simultaneously pressurised not to abdicate custom and practice."

In conclusion, the study, shows that, woman's education, employment and consequent dual roles as a housewife and career woman, has brought in certain
changes and adjustments in family life, kinship relationships and role interactions, however keeping continuity with the traditional beliefs and practices in certain areas by giving a portrait of continuity in certain aspects and change in many other aspects.

Supporting this view, Shanmugasundaram, Y. (1989), says that, running the home is by itself a career and if the woman chooses another career, then she has to reconcile between the two roles.

Mathew, E. (1990:7) has found that, women perform dual roles and she is constantly torn between the two roles played by her. Thus, it is the working woman's lot to do her duties amidst humiliation and frustrations. He, further concludes, by saying, "the exhausted and frustrated women employees can give very little devotion to the work at hand and more so to the demands or duties as a mother or a wife." Singhal, S. (1995) and Sinha, P. (1987) have also conducted studies supporting the above findings.

Bhoite, A. (1987:114) in her book, Women Employees and Rural Development, has also examined the dual role problem faced by working women. She conducted her study in Parbhani district of Maharashtra state, where from October 1969 to October 1971 she conducted her field survey with the help of a structured questionnaire. 163 respondents were interviewed and among them were nurses, teachers, and gramsevikas.

She has concluded, "The kitchen is not at all modernised as to save time and labour of the employed women. There is no significant attitudinal change in her husband, relatives and the villagers so as to accommodate her as a woman playing
dual roles. The result is that, the Indian working woman, has to bear the entire domestic work load along with the sole responsibility of caring her young ones.

Another major problem, faced by the working women is that, of discrimination. In Bannerji, A. and R. K. Sen (2000:311) Reynolds, L. G. has defined discrimination as, "Discrimination occurs when female worker equal to a male worker in objective measures of ability and experience, receives poorer treatment in regard to training opportunities, recruitment, living, promotion or wage rate. Discrimination appears, not only in different treatment alone but in fact that, this treatment is based on sex rather than ability and productivity."

Visvanathan, A. (1992:935) has defined discrimination, as, "a failure to hire or to discharge or to limit, segregate, or classify employees or applicants for employment in any way which would deprive an individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his or her status as an employee."

In Bannerji, A. and R. K. Sen (2000) Sathe has specified various forms of discrimination. These include unequal opportunities to enrol in training programmes, adverse selection at the point of hiring, adverse treatment regarding on-the-job training and promotions and lower level of compensation for women performing identical work to men.

Sen, R. (1989) believes that, many forms of discrimination, in terms of pay, job turnover, employment rates, etc., persist against women in many countries.

According to Devendra, K. (1985), discrimination can be seen in offices and factories where women are employed in either low paying jobs or are paid fewer
wage. In Kaushik, V. and B. R. Sharma, (1998:193) Cohen has defined wage discrimination as, "the payment of higher wages to men than to equally qualified women holding (or performing) the same job."

In Dahlstrom, E. and L. Dahlstrom (1962) Thorsel, undertook an exploratory study, partly to discover whether, the firms consciously pursue discriminatory recruitment and personnel policies, with respect to male and female employees and partly to clarify the predominant motives prompting such policies, and, he concluded that, when men and women have worked together in the same firm or branch, men almost entirely dominated the highly skilled and supervisory positions while the women were usually relegated to unskilled and low skilled positions.

Swarajyalaxmi, C. (1992), in her study, has found that, compared to their male colleagues, Indian women workers do not enjoy equal status in matters of payment of remuneration, assignment of various tasks and various other matters.

Chandnani, L.R. (1998:57), in her study, opines, "Though things are moving faster, yet, in the service sector and in our society, prejudices against women die hard. They are still considered to be the weaker sex and are not provided with enough opportunities to render the most effective and efficient services."

Another important problem, faced by the working women, is segregation in a narrow range of occupations. Buddhapriya, S. and P. Khandelwal (1995), believe that, women, are generally stereotyped, into certain occupations and they found that, the three main factors for sex stereotyping are biological, environmental and
cognitive. They also believe that, institutions such as family, school and mass media have contributed to this sex role typing.

The type of industries a woman is found working too, is examined by the UNIDO report in 1981 and it found that, “for the most part, women’s participation in industrial production is confined to: a) industries with low technology, low capital requirements and low productivity b) industries that, inspite of high capital requirements and sophisticated technologies, are highly labour intensive. In both these types of industries women derive low wages and have poor working conditions” (Pore, K. 1991:202)

According to Ray, B. and A. Basu (1999:71), “women’s placement generally follows a well defined hierarchical pattern in that, within a given enterprise women are typically found as unskilled production workers with little access to skill up gradation or positions of authority and decision making.”

But, Knights, D. and H. Willmott (1986:117-118), are of the opinion that, “job segregation in the workplace is derived from the organisation of domestic life, job segregation was an expression of the ideology of female domesticity. Women workers were confined to low paid jobs, forced to depend on men and fulfil the role of unpaid domestic workers:”

Bullock, S. (1994:2) also supports the above opinion, when she says that, women’s primary role of reproduction helps to explain why, “women’s jobs corner a small range of occupations than men’s and echoes women’s reproductive responsibilities: service job’s, in particular such as cleaning, caring, teaching and food
processing.” She further says that, “pay tends to be low in occupations dominated by women because of their association with the domestic sphere and because women are still widely considered to be ‘secondary’ wage earners.”

Mathur, D. (1992), in her study, stresses the fact that, women tend to conglomerate at the lower end of the occupational spectrum. Singh, S. (1995), in his study, has also concluded that, women are mostly employed at the secondary levels of organisation and that, they are considered fit to do certain jobs only because of stereotyping.

Lindsay, M. and P. Pattullo (1977) support the above view and opine that, women are generally concentrated in a smaller number of industries. They are usually found holding positions, having lower responsibilities and performing less skilled tasks, especially in industries, where they are employed alongside men.

In Dex, S. (1987:10) Hakim, C. has made a distinction between horizontal and vertical segregations. According to him, “horizontal segregation occurs if women and men are working in different types of occupations, whereas vertical segregation exists if men are mostly working in higher grade occupations and women in lower grade occupations.”

Kaushik, V. and B. R. Sharma (1998), too, have highlighted this problem, in their study, and, they believe that, even today, a large number of jobs still appear to be considered either “men’s work” or “women's work.”

Swaminathan, P. (1987) has found two visible trends in the organised sector:
1) High concentration of women in the professions of teaching and medicine,
especially as nurses; and 2) Recognition of some low prestige jobs in the clerical services as particularly suitable for women and hence a concentration of women in such occupations.

But the UNIDO 1981 report finds that, "irrespective of the state of economic development and the pattern of industrialisation, most women workers in industry are employed within a limited range of low income, low skilled and low-productivity jobs, particularly in sectors that are labour intensive and sensitive to market fluctuations and also have low levels of technology, poor safety measures and little security of employment." (Pore, K. 1991:203)

Some of the major economic problems faced by women are discrimination, lack of opportunity and exploitation.

In Kalbagh, C. (1971:78) Heggade, O. believes that, "the economic problems of women labour range from rising unemployment, low wages, long duration of work hours, stagnant and deteriorating working conditions, sex wise distribution of wages between male and female workers, absence of job security and irregularly implemented protective legislations like social security, minimum wages, social insurance, etc."

In Saradamoni, K. (1985) Kosak, M. has highlighted, some physical problems, faced by women in certain industries. Eye complaints, burns, cancer, stomach problems, nervous disorders and hearing impairments are some of them.

Lim, L.L. (1996) has also put forth the view that, the female workers tend to be exposed to a range of physical, safety and health problems in the work place, along
with psychological stress which are related to exposure to hazardous chemicals and a variety of physical and biological agents used in the place of work, excessive noise, vibration of machines, heat, cold, poor lighting and ventilation, especially in smaller firms, rotating shift work, very long hours of work, tension or stress, etc.

Some of the problems the women industrial workers, are likely to suffer from, are also listed by her. These include: temporary hearing loss which could eventually become permanent, eye strain and irritation, exposure to various types of toxic substances and hazardous chemicals, chronic disorders such as stomach pains, lower back pains, coughs, headache and dizziness among others.

As early as 1926, Hamilton, A. (1926) in her study, on, Women Workers and Industrial Poisons, had discussed, the physical problems, faced by women, while working with chemicals and poisonous materials and has concluded that, problems like anaemia, haemorrhages, blindness, delirium, convulsions and even death can result from exposure to harmful substances.

Raka, S. (1985) has highlighted that, the physical atmosphere at the work place was quite unhealthy and causing physical problems to the working women. According to her, women had to work, for long hours, either standing, or sitting on un-cushioned stools. Besides, stuffy rooms, lack of proper lighting and ventilation made, the conditions worse.

Sengupta, P. (1960), in her study, concluded that, in the factories, there are problems, such as monotony of work, long hours of standing, dust, and noise and lack
of proper restrooms. Not only, do women face problems, at the place of work, but they also face many problems at home.

Patel, V. (1988), in her study, has highlighted some of them, which include, dual roles, unsympathetic husbands, multiple role responsibilities, guilt feelings, neglect of children, lack of control on the pay packet, misunderstanding in the family, etc.

Ramanamma, A. and U. Bambawale (1987: 128) have concluded that, "inspite of considerable handicaps such as lack of time to attend to children, a dull monotonous tedious lifestyle, some compunction about ability to perform dual role efficiently, women continue to work. This is because the salary they earn is all-important. This not only helps the family to lead a better life but to some extent makes women confident in themselves." The hypothesis for the study included:

1) Women's employment is an extension of household work. 2) Women's employment increased in industries where the 'job fit' is of a routine monotonous and repetitive nature. 3) Women take up this type of job due to economic necessity. 4) Women who take up these types of jobs have to perform dual duties at home and the factory. (Ramanamma, A. and U. Bambawale, 1987)

In their book, Women in Indian Industry, they have studied women workers in electronic factories in Pune and Bombay. They elicited the required information both with the help of a scheduled questionnaire and non-participant observation. The sample of industries included two major and twenty-four small-scale industries in
Bombay and two major and eighteen small-scale industries. Nearly twenty-five percent of the women respondents was chosen from each of the factory.

2.6 Legislative Reforms For Women

Many studies have been conducted in India on the pros and cons of legislative measures for the protection of women workers. This situation is not unique for India, as can be seen from the conclusion of Yadav, R. (1999) who, in his article, points out that discrimination against women in terms of employment opportunities, wages, working conditions, and promotion avenues is a common phenomenon worldwide.

As the status of women in India was very low, before independence, the government felt that, unless the legal protection is provided, women’s status will not improve and they will not be able to compete equally in the labour market.

Baud, I. (1992:76) in her book, Forms of Production and Women’s Labour, has shown that, the plans in India, especially the sixth and the seventh plans have included women’s aspects. She finds that, “the sixth five year plan focused not only on education and health for women but also included employment as a separate aspect.” While in the seventh plan, “women’s role as a worker is acknowledged and special attention is focused on protecting this role.”

Nayar, U. (1997:13-14), opines that, “India has one of the most impressive set of laws for women and children / girls and little is known about them either by women themselves or by men.”
Kulshrestha, I. (1993), has opined that, the preamble to the constitution, resolved to secure for all its citizens justice- social, economic and political; liberty for thought, expression, faith and worship, equality of status and opportunity to promote fraternity among all, assuring dignity of the individual and unity of the nation.


Devendra, K. (1985:47-48), opines that, “the constitution guarantees equality of opportunities in employment and directs the state to secure equal rights to an adequate means of livelihood, equal pay for equal work and just and humane conditions of work.” Yet, even though, the constitution provides all these rights, the principle of equality is far from reality. This has been put forth by Chopra, V. (2001:19) who concluded, “Though several laws have been passed for the benefit of women since independence-- there exists a lot of loopholes and ambiguities.” Hence she believes that, women’s empowerment in all fields, socially, politically and economically, is very important as, the lack of this, is an important impediment for the implementation of the laws.

According to Swarajyalaxmi, C. (1992:20), all the effects made by planners, social agencies, women’s organisations, etc., have failed to give women their rightful place in the society. She believes that, “Inspite of some of the constitutional guarantees and directive principles which enshrine the principles of equal
opportunities to women, our women have not been able to secure for themselves all those rights and privileges which legitimately belong to them. They are either denied these opportunities through the bias of the society or because of their lack of awareness of what is due to them as citizens.”

Sengupta, P. (1960), is of the opinion that, many of the special provisions, set up for women, are, actually necessitated, for many reasons, such as, the delicate health which the women possess and their inability to perform the arduous and difficult tasks. They also have to look after their hearths and homes. However, according to her, there is a paradoxical situation as the very laws enacted for the protection of the women labour, have ended up acting against their interests.

Chatterjee, S. A. (1988), has endorsed the above view, as he believes that, today’s modern, aware and enlightened women feel that, the protective legislation is more a means of protecting the male workers from female competition rather than to protect the female workers from the dangerous work.

Dhagamwar, V. (1995), says that, the constitution itself, stresses the need for special protective acts for women, but she finds that, most of the laws are only applicable to women working in the organised sector.

Chattopadhyay, K. (1987:495) believes that, “even though equal wage for equal work is compulsory in India, in the absence of any machinery or agency to enforce this, it tends to be violated with impunity.”

Balasubrahmanyan, V. (1985: 877), in his study, has discussed, the various articles, in the constitution, which are meant to protect women, and confer on them
equality, but he finds that, the reality is quite different. He opines that, even though, the women employees have been victimised, they have not sort legal action, and this suggests two things: 1) very often, women workers, are unaware of the provisions in the constitution, and 2) even, if they are aware, it is very difficult for them to get involved in prolonged court battles. Hence, he believes that, women should be made fully aware of the various provisions relating to them and they must demand appropriate machinery for redressal when their rights are violated. He concluded that, "women must first become fully aware of their legal, constitutional and human rights at the workplace. They must work to get these incorporated into and protected by their service conditions and they must demand an appropriate machinery for redressal when these rights are violated."

Maitra–Sinha, A. (1993) also supports the above view, as she finds that, in spite of, various Acts being passed for women workers benefits, yet, they are full of loopholes and ambiguities, making it easier for employers to take advantage of them. She further believes that, many of the women workers, even in the urban areas, are not aware of their rights under the various Acts.

Many studies have shown that, the most controversial area of protective legislation is the restriction or total prohibition of night work by women.

Prasad, M. (1989), in her study, found that, with regard to wages and earnings, a lot of discrimination exists, and sometimes, the minimum wage legislations and equal pay for equal work, results into retrenchment of women workers.
The Federal Republic of Germany, in its report, in 1972, found that, many of the restrictions imposed on women were outdated and, they believed that, what was deemed as protective was in reality 1) an exclusion of women from certain jobs/responsibilities; 2) an interference with the freedom of women to decide on the type of jobs and the hours of work; and 3) narrowing down the employment opportunities available for women. (Chatterjee, S. A. 1988).

Despite the above defects, protective legislation had been accepted by Chatterjee, S. A. (1988: 77), on the following grounds. According to her: “1) the woman is a reproductive human being and is subject to child bearing and child rearing, so she should be protected from night work; 2) women working outside the home still bear the primary burden of the household chores and the burden of night work would make their lives even more strenuous and their health more susceptible to risks; 3) child care facilities and other social services are neither adequate nor available around the clock to enable women to engage in night shift; 4) the potential adverse effects of night work on the health, welfare, social and family life of both men and women are undesirable and therefore, night work is not recommended for the greater needs of community life.”

Pillai, J. K. (1995) believes that, the various constitutional directives of non-discrimination in employment and specific directives to promote the educational and economic interests of the people had a direct impact on the employment of the middle class women and their employment had increased considerably.
In contrast, to the above view, Devendra, K. (1985) believes that, the declining trend of women's employment in industries can be attributed to the adverse effects of protective legislations for women, the policy of equalising wages and structural changes in the economy and nationalisation of methods of production.

She further says that, despite the fact that, the various acts have been passed; women workers are still exploited by their employers. Tiwari, K. (1997) believes that, the various labour laws enacted for the protection of women make women more expensive from the employer's point of view and this leads to a decline in women's employment.

Sengupta, P. (1960), in her study, too, supports the view that, the legislation pertaining to employment of women from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m. has been disastrous for women's employment.

She, further opines that, "the main causes for the elimination of women are prohibition of women from working in certain places and between certain hours, payment of maternity benefits and other statutory obligations to women, prohibition of women carrying heavy loads and working in night shifts." (Sengupta, P. 1960:41)

However we find that, Rao, V. R. and S. Hussain (1991:148) in their study titled, Invisible Hands- The Women Behind India's Export Earnings, studied a sample of 134 women workers, 19 supervisors and executives in garment industry in Delhi area with the help of the interview schedule. They found that, "companies freely flouted all existing legislations regarding women. In almost all factories, women had worked late in the night wherever necessary in contravention of all existing laws. In
many companies, there were no separate toilets for women which is a statutory requirement. And inspite of large numbers of women being employed not a single company provided a crèche."

Thus, we find that, the very laws, which were meant for, the protection of women workers and to improve the working conditions, have actually worked against them and have succeeded in reducing their employment in most of the fields.

Naidu, K. M. and K.S. Naidu (1999) have concluded that, in India, labour standards are unfavourable to women to overcome market failure and exploitation.

Singh, M.K. (1987), believes that, the violence against women is wide spread throughout the life, be it home, workplace or public life. Today, violence against women has become a common phenomenon. He believes that, the males in India, to keep the women at lower and subordinate levels, are deliberately using violence.

The studies cited above have covered the various aspects of the working women, right from her social conditions, working conditions, problems faced by her at home and the place of work, and the legislative reforms undertaken for women.

2.7 Conclusions

The following are the conclusions drawn from the above review of literature:
The status of women in India is low. Women’s work is largely marginalized. The various theories have not succeeded in giving a clear reason for the discrimination of working women. Economic necessity is an important factor that, leads to women’s employment. Women are employed at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy.
Women are employed in limited number of occupations. Many prejudices against women exist even today. Role conflict is an important problem women face in their lives. The physical conditions of work are not attractive. Technological development has resulted in women's unemployment. Discrimination exists in the Indian society. Occupational segregation exists in the country. The wage rates of women are considerably lower than that of men. Legal protection is inadequate and there are a number of loopholes in the law.