Chapter - 2

Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction:

Like every research study, the present study was commenced with literature survey. The present work began with a review of sociological abstracts. Further, various kinds and forms of literature such as books, research articles published in refereed national and international journals, conference proceedings, etc. were searched to extract relevant information. The full text articles published on the research topics were collected and reviewed. On the basis of the research problem formulated, various kinds of conceptual study and case studies were studied.

2.2 Review of Literature:

It is noted that both Indian as well as foreign studies on the topic of research was undertaken. The articles were reviewed chronologically so that it can be understood what development took place on the topic of study over the year. This has helped the researcher to conceptualize and come out with research lacunae. The literature is reviewed as under.

- **Indian Studies:**

  Besides studies by western researchers, the Indian studies were also revisited to understand the domestic trends and patterns of women desertion.

  Jacob (1950) did a study titled, “A Socio-Legal Approach to Family Desertion: The Nature of Family Desertion”. While, technically, desertion was a legal cause for granting divorces in many states, more often desertion was the method employed to break the marriage relationship—for there were hundreds of thousands of unhappy couples who could not afford to pay for divorce actions. Therefore, any discussion of causes or effects of family desertion must be linked with the total problem of marital instability.

  Kapur (1970) pointed out that women desertion has been in vogue since ages in Hindu society. Husbands and wives have deserted each other for various reasons as the institution of divorce did not exist, especially among caste Hindus. Women in
modern society, regardless of their social status, expect a certain degree of respect, honour and equality.

Kitson (1983) revealed that marital instability is generally used to denote the legal act of dissolving a marriage. Furthermore, the concept was sometimes used to describe marriages that have ended by desertion, those characterized by frequent or long separations, and to refer to couples that were dissatisfied in their relationship. The legal definition was restrictive in that it described the consequences of instability rather than instability itself. The legal definition did not include the numerous individuals who filed for divorce only to reconcile a short time later.

Krishnakumari (1987) revealed that divorced and separated women all experienced psychological, economic, and domestic problems and the vast majority also reported having social problems. Social attitudes and reactions to such women often centred on rejection, which compounded their tendency to isolation and withdrawal. In the family home, divorced/separated women were not immune from the perception that they were without a proper place: it was common that such women were treated as a liability and a burden, even by their own families.

Women desertion is becoming a serious social problem resulting from larger social changing taking place all over the world. Most couples, especially the newly married, are deserting each other, done to impatience, intolerance, and lack of trust and confidence in each other’s role expectation (Choudhary, 1988; Pothen, 1986; Metha, 1970).

Mathew (1998) examined the socio-economic characteristics of deserted women, explored the reasons for desertion, problems faced by them, and the social support available to them. The study was exploratory in nature and was conducted on 56 women headed households in the cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The data was collected through interviews and home visits, which were made to study the home environment. The findings indicated that the reasons for desertion varied and overlapped, 16 women expressed their husband’s inability to financially support the family, 14 women stated alcoholism as the cause, 13 women were not able to satisfy dowry demands, 10 women suspected their husbands had illicit relations, and 3 women were branded by their husbands as mentally disturbed. Some of the emotional
problems noticed in the deserted women were feelings of trauma (39%), feelings of emptiness and loneliness (24%), feelings of fear, uncertainty and insecurity (24%), and intense suicidal tendencies (7%). Almost all of them felt that the deep scar would remain forever, and held themselves solely responsible for their condition.

A large number of women respondents (87%) were the sole earners in their households and their monthly income was below Rs.800, whereas the income of those with another family member working ranged from Rs.800 to Rs.1000 per month. Though almost (75%) respondents received some help and protection from their parents, in-laws, and neighbours at the time of desertion, they however had to manage single-handedly after moving into their own households. They felt that they were overloaded in their multiple roles, and the absence of a father figure had resulted in an atmosphere lacking in discipline, authority, and undermining of their status as a mother. Hence, programmes should be initiated for the enhancement of living standards of deserted women. Also, counselling centres with trained social workers need to be established so that family breakdowns can be averted by timely action, and more short stay centres and homes should be established for women who need shelter during such crisis situations.

Kalpana (1999) found that women considered marriage a sacrament and discharged the duties benefitting her life. Manu had laid down certain injunctions for regulating the relations between husband and wife. The important principle was that a wife should remain obedient to her husband, must never do anything that might displease him, be faithful to his memory after his death, and should not think of any other man,

Moinuddin (2000) found that the employment prospects of divorced or separated Muslim women in India were particularly bleak. Sociological studies on their situation in Uttar Pradesh, for instance, noted that they depended either on familial support or “semi-skilled or unskilled work for survival”. Studies from elsewhere in India also noted, in many cases, that they were simultaneously expected to observe purdah (female seclusion) and exercise modesty (laj/saram). Divorced and separated Muslim women in West Bengal, for instance, 89.84 percent of all respondents’ surveyed favoured the practice of purdah and refrained from going
outdoors. Further, Moinuddin observed that divorced and separated Bengali Muslim women were forced into a limited circle of interaction, which denied them the opportunity to function as mature and confident human beings.

Rajkumar (2000) writing for the ‘Encyclopedia of Women’s Studies’ found that parents and brothers knowing the high risk involved continued to value the marriage above the women’s life and pressurized their daughters to return to their husbands.

The Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change, Kolkata (2000) revealed that in modern society, there was an increase in the disturbance in marital relations leading to a state of conflict, sometimes leading to marital violence, and also, sometimes ending in divorce. The objectives of the study were to identify the various factors behind marital conflict; check the effect of socio-cultural variables like education and employment in maintaining marital bonds; and recognize the extended form of problems faced by a person in case of marital conflict. About 60% respondents got married between the ages of 18-26 years and 20% were married before 18 years. Almost 73.3% respondents negotiated at the time of marriage and 26.7% got married by mutual consent, but they also faced problems or conflicting situations. Most of the respondents were literate (93.3%) and had studied till school level. 93.3% respondents were still in their married status and dealt with their conflicts after wedlock in their bond of marriage. Only 6.7% acquired divorce status to gain respite from the major conflicting situation in their life. In 93.3% cases, the relation worsened from initial stages itself.

The reasons for straining of relationship were interference from in-laws, personality and cultural differences, extra marital relations and alcoholism, etc. The main way of adjustment was making husbands understand that they should work towards their relationship. Some could not bear the pressure of the conflict and left the matrimonial home. The respondents tried to save the relationship as marriage is regarded as a sacrament. Many women were worried about their children. Others made adjustments due to lack of economic activity and security. To cope with their problem, 33.3% respondents tried for some kind of legal help, 13.3% engaged themselves in economic activity, and 6.7% reconciled with the marital disharmony.
Some suggestions which could help reduce atrocities and conflicts were education must be ensured, family should be educated about inter-personal relationship between couples and other members of family, change in attitude of police is needed, and awareness programmes should be organized by Family Counselling Centres (FCC), Panchayats, Government, State Social Welfare Boards (SSWB), and Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB), jointly. Seeking professional help in cases of marital conflict should be popularized and more counselling facilities should be available to help couples in distress.

The Jayaprakash Institute of Social Change (2001) carried out a study on different religious communities. Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and Parsis are governed by different marriage and divorce laws. The Muslim law is basically uncodified. The main objectives of the study were to know the family background and socio-economic condition of divorced/ separated Muslim women; and explore the causes and situations which compelled them for divorce or separation. The total population of divorced or separated women in rural and urban areas of Midnapore district was 6,552 in 1995-1996. 10 respondents each from four districts, namely, Panskuta, Keshpur, Midnapore Sadar, and Kharagpur were chosen. About 49% respondents were illiterate to just literate; and only 4% female members from upper class Muslim families were studying. Many of the divorced and separated women were not able to earn anything (16%). Other women’s earnings ranged from Rs.500 to Rs.2500. Around 10% male members got married once, 57% respondents’ male partners married twice, 31% married three times, and 2% married 4 times.

In 78% cases, the respondents were forced by their male partners to get divorced, while 22% respondents willingly separated from their former husbands. The reasons for divorce were extra marital affairs (20%); economic crisis (22%); maladjustment with spouse (20%); and other reasons (12%). 78% deserted or divorced women had not received any money or assets from their husbands. In most cases, the respondents got help from their parents (49%); 20% from nearest friends; 25% from brothers and only 6% from neighbours. Children faced many problems relating to the divorce and separation of their parents. The study recommended postponement of the age of marriage through legal reformation, compulsory
education for Muslim girl children, and preparing a situation-based realistic basic education system. Court marriage should be made compulsory under the observation of any officer, and the quota for vulnerable sections of women should be sanctioned, to increase their political participation and for the betterment of their life.

Chowdhury and Bhuiya (2001) found that the microcredit programmes were linked to emotional well-being among vulnerable women. In a study assessing the effects of a credit-based, income-generating programme on the participants’ emotional well-being in Bangladesh, it was found that contributing to household income and holding land were positively related to emotional well-being.

Brown and Chowdhury (2002) showed the situation of divorced or separated Muslim women in India and observed that, while many “return to their birth family’s home for shelter”, “some…have poor relationships with their brothers” and may not be allowed to return. In West Bengal, “these women become landless and destitute despite the fact that their birth family or in-laws own agricultural land”.

Deshpande (2002) revealed that marginalization and social exclusion had considerably increased among vulnerable groups world-wide. Women continued to make up the majority of people with limited financial resources and opportunities, constraining their life chances, and placing them at risk for exclusion. The Indian society has not been untouched by this phenomenon. Indeed, Indian women, especially from marginalized groups such as Dalits, widowed and abandoned women continued to experience greater risks for marginalization and exclusion.

Khan (2003) found that the situation of separated Muslim women could be distinguished from that of divorced Muslim women in at least one crucial respect: the prospect of remarriage. In this respect, the information suggested that, while remarriage could remedy the socio-economic hardships faced by divorced women, the option would practically be closed to separated Muslim women who had not filed for divorce or received their entitlements, including the return of the dower (mehar).

Padman and Razeena (2003) revealed the psychological resources and psycho-social needs of destitute women living in MahilaMandirs, personality profiles, levels of emotional maturity, adjustment capability, and the problems faced
by the inmates of Mahila Mandirs, and examined the implementation of various rehabilitation programmes. The data was collected through field survey from 121 inmates living in 11 Mahila Mandirs, and in addition, from 50 slum dwellers who were deserted. The age of the inmates ranged from 26-56 years and nearly 90% of them belonged to low socio-economic status. Many inmates suffered from various psycho-somatic illnesses. The authorities of the Mahila Mandirs reported that destitute women were extroverted, easily suggestible, irresponsible, unskilled, highly emotional, maladjusted, and their coping skills were extremely poor. Institutions and care homes had not given any importance to the rehabilitation of these women, especially in the areas of health, education and self-employment, or made any attempt in the area of distress management and legal aid for abandoned and deserted women. There was requirement for skills training and short-term personality development courses for destitute women.

Purna (2003) found that if separated, single or divorced women did not enjoy financial or housing support from their kin they needed to provide for themselves and their children. They needed to secure employment, which paid adequately to maintain the family and possibly pay for accommodation (which in itself is not easy for an unmarried woman to obtain). If legal action was required (for maintenance or divorce, etc.), the women needed to pay for this. The Indian state does not provide much in the way of legal aid, and there are but few NGOs, which are able to provide legal support in such cases. It is most likely that the women would have to engage lawyers at commercial rates, which were likely to be prohibitive.

Nanivadekar (2004) revealed the trends and traumas of families in India, through a record of 16,270 cases out of total 3,00,000 cases registered with the Family Counselling Centres (FCCs). The data was gathered from 91 FCCs from seven states, namely, Maharashtra, Delhi, Kerala, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, and Manipur. The results revealed the following reasons for discord in the family – alcohol/drug addiction (11.94%), personality clash (8.87%), extra-marital/pre-marital affairs (8.20%), interference of parents (6.7%), psychological problems (4.78%), dowry demand (4.55%), economic crisis/poverty (4.43%), harassment by in-laws (3.73%), desertion (2.92%), interference by in-laws (2.1%).
physical or mental torture (2.05%), and conflict with other relatives (1.87%). The findings highlighted the need for a gender-sensitive family centered approach to be adopted in counselling practices of FCCs, and suggested that activities like awareness generation camps should be organized combined with pre-marital counselling for prevention of family discord.

The Department of Women's Studies, Sri PadmavatiMahilaVisvavidyalayam (2004) identified the factors leading to the desertion of women by NRIs. Married women of Andhra Pradesh, who were deserted by NRIs, constituted the sample of the study. Data was collected by purposive sampling procedure from Family Courts in Hyderabad, Vijaywada, and Guntur Civil Court, which represented the coastal Andhra region. Interview schedule, mailed questionnaire, and case study methods were employed in this study.

Most women got married above the legal age of marriage. More than 75% males married after attaining 25 years, while 23% of them married when they were between 21-25 years. More than 80% women had less than one month gap between betrothal and marriage. About 60% of them were Hindus, followed by 28% Muslims, and 12% Christians. Around 80% respondents reported that their parents were the persons who took the decisions regarding marriage. Around 60% of them opined that they saw their spouse only once when they came to see the girls. About 87% of them reported that there was no mediation between them before desertion. Nearly 33% of the respondents reported that they did not have any knowledge about the procedures to be followed for their visit and stay abroad.

Jobbi (2005) identified the motivating factors and social causes driving NRI (Nonresidential Indians) boys and Indian girls to enter such marriages and the coping mechanisms of deserted women. The study was conducted by the investigator in the two cities of Punjab, namely, Jalandhar and Hoshipur on a sample of 26 deserted women. According to the parents of girls, dowry was the main reason for breakup of the marriage. The girl suffered physical violence, mental torture, and unreasonable demands made by the groom’s family.

The All India Democratic Women's Association (2005) found that India has the largest Muslim population (18%) in the world after Indonesia. Muslim women in
India can be said to be a discriminated minority community. Reforms in Muslim personal law are often opposed by sections within the community in the name of protection of minority identity. Reforms were demanded by women’s groups, activists and other liberal sections of society in consonance with the constitutional provisions of equality and non-discrimination on the grounds of sex. After the Shah Bano judgment given by the Supreme Court of India (1985) and the passing of the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights and Divorce) Act, 1986, the demand for a Uniform Civil Code was dropped by most progressive and liberal women’s organizations and groups, who then started emphasizing on reforms on various personal laws from within the community. They argued that the Shariat envisages gender equality, but had been deliberately misinterpreted by patriarchal and fundamentalist interests.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) provided a comprehensive framework to challenge the various forces that have created and sustained discrimination based on sex. Since Article 5(a) of the CEDAW Convention asks all States to take appropriate measures to modify conduct to achieve “elimination of prejudices and customary and other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes or on stereo type rules for men and women”. This stand has obvious implications for reform in women’s status in India, as the retention of the inferior status of women in the family is often justified in the name of culture and tradition.

The Refugee Review Tribunal (2006) revealed that women who were divorced, separated, widowed and abandoned women featured disproportionately in the industry of prostitution. There was no certainty that separated women in India could find paid work and the possibility that they were cajoled or forced into dangerous work, such as prostitution, was great. The UN has noted that it was difficult to find paid work in India, including for graduates, and the long-standing gender occupation segregation was slow to change. While some employment opportunities for women were improving they tended to be in the poorer paid and more insecure sectors.
According to the Planning Commission of India (2006), women tend to be the most commonly landless and are the poorest even among poor households. At the same time, in the rare cases where women have land or a house of their own, it was found to make a critical difference to them and their family’s welfare. For instance, such women faced less risk of destitution and domestic violence, and improved economic well-being. The welfare of their children also improved. A mother’s assets were found to have a greater positive effect on children’s nutrition, education, and health than the father’s assets. Women also tended to spend more of their income on the children’s needs than men. Allotments made to women, would therefore, benefit both poor women and their families.

NIPCCD (2007) found that Andhra Pradesh and Punjab states in India have the large number of NRIs working in North America, South America, Australia, Canada, and the Gulf countries. More than two-third of the NRI marriages turned out to be fraudulent matrimonial alliances. There were thousands of such deserted women in India, especially in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Punjab. NRI-deserted women mostly belonged to middle and upper socio-economic class of families. Andhra Pradesh, which is presently gaining importance in global market, especially in the field of Information Technology, sends a large number of men from India to foreign countries. Many of them lure innocent brides from Andhra Pradesh informing falsely that they work in established companies. Only after marriage the bride’s family realizes that they have been cheated. The data collected from Punjab revealed that most of these marriages were arranged through relatives. The anxiety of the parents of girls had led to hurried marriages with NRIs without verifying their antecedents. The brides dream of an affluent life abroad, and therefore, look to NRI bridegrooms to improve their social status in the society. The NRI husbands on their part lured women with the promise of a luxurious life abroad in exchange for a handsome dowry from the bride's parents, and then, abandoned them within days, months or years.

A study done by SOPPECOM (2008) in the Daundtaluka of Pune district and Ghole ward of Pune city in December 2008, to assess the extent and nature of desertion of women, was noteworthy. The percentage of deserted women in the
Daundtaluka region was about 5.92 per cent. The highest incidents of desertion were reported amongst the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Denotified Tribes (DTs), and Muslims. All these women had returned to their natal homes. About 50 per cent of the deserted women were non-literate, the remaining being within the category of secondary schooling. More than 70 per cent women were engaged in wage labour of some kind. The highest numbers of women, about 40 per cent were involved in agricultural labour and 33 per cent were involved in other labour activities that included working as unorganized workers in new small-scale industries, as construction labourers, etc.

Ram (2008) analyzed the National Family Health Surveys 1998-99 and NFHS 2005-06. In India, 13% of married women aged 15-49 years were childless according to the 1981 Census (13.4% in rural areas and 11.3% in urban areas), compared to 16% in 2001 (15.6% in rural areas and 16.1% in urban areas). About 4% of younger childless women aged 15-34 years were divorced/ separated/ deserted as against just 1.5% among those with children. The analyses further showed that women who remained childless faced many adverse results in the form of divorce/desertion and discrimination.

Nidhi and Bharti (2009) found that the role of a single parent was a challenging one, especially when the family was headed by a woman. Problems of single mothers were linked with the upbringing of children, their future, and setting down in life. Until the time, the children got married and or got jobs they were dependent on the single parent. After that the problems were considerably reduced. This study discussed the problems faced by single mothers, i.e., social, emotional, and economic, wherein a sample of 50 single mothers were selected by the snowball sampling technique. The results of the study revealed that financial problem was the main stressor for majority of the single mothers. The emotional life of the single mother was also affected by their single status. Majority of the single mothers reported that they felt lonely, helpless, hopeless, and faced lack of identity and lack of confidence. In the social sphere, majority of the single mothers tried to avoid attending social gatherings and had changed their dressing style, and due to depression had developed poor food and eating habits. Majority of the single mothers found it hard to maintain discipline among the children due to the absence of male
members. The mothers complained about loneliness, trauma, and depression, and found it difficult to handle the responsibility of childcare and to establish a routine for her children.

Singh (2010) found that most separated or deserted women, usually along with their children, were forced to live with members of their natal family, such as parents and brothers, and were financially dependent on them. Often, they were not welcome and lived as outcasts in the family.

Separations, desertions, and divorces are increasing in India today. Not much attention has been paid to the manner in which these deserted and separated women live, often with their children, and what their rights and entitlements are in/from the marital home. Very few empirical legal studies exist on the economic status of divorced and separated women in India. In the recent past, some studies by social scientists on single women, particularly widows, highlighted their general social and economic condition. In some of these studies, the condition of separated/deserted women has been described as even worse than that of a widow (Agarwal, 2007; Soppecom, 2008; Harsh and others, 2010).

Kulkarni and Bhat (2010) conducted two studies at different times in two different parts of Maharashtra on women, who had been forced out of the marital home or chose to walk out due to violence, showing that women’s expectations from marriage and tolerance for violence have changed. The men and their families, on the other hand, continued to behave in regressive and patriarchal ways while expecting the women to conform to traditional norms of the “good wife and mother”. It was also clear that given their increasing numbers and plight, the State Government could no longer afford to neglect these women. At the same time, women’s rights organizations and civil society should help them to build a culture of resistance.

The National Family Health Survey (NFHS-III) conducted studies by NIPCCD (2011) in 29 states during 2005–06 and released a report in (2007) that revealed that 37 per cent married women in the country were victims of physical or sexual abuse by their husbands. Over 40 per cent of Indian women experienced domestic violence at some point in their married lives, and nearly 55 per cent thought that spousal abuse was warranted in several circumstances. The survey showed that
countrywide more women faced violence in rural areas (40.2 per cent) as compared to those in urban areas (30.4 per cent). The survey found that one in every three women, who had been married at any point in their lives, said they had been pushed, slapped, shaken or otherwise attacked by their husbands at least once. Slapping was the most common act of physical violence by husbands. The survey also found that one in six wives had been emotionally abused by their husbands.

Sanjay (2012) conducted a study on abandoned women and her problems that revealed that family violence was increasing day by day. There are social laws regarding family violence, which can curtail it. There are many reasons for family violence, one of the reasons being monetary benefits on the part of men and women. Women were the victims of the family violence in most of the cases. Since the wife is harassed in the family, she leaves her husband and lives as a separate life as an abandoned wife.

**Overseas Studies:**

Winch and Weiss (1971) hypothesized that the more frustrating the interaction with the marital partner, the greater the relief a spouse would feel at the end of the relationship, and presumably, the less the disturbance in health. Health might actually improve over what it had been during the later stages of a frustrating marriage. Further, they postulated that partners who felt "responsible" for ending a marriage because they were no longer able to bear the spouse's failings (alcoholism, mental illness, etc.) felt guilty and remorseful. These feelings, in turn, would manifest themselves in symptoms of health disturbance and they suggested that the complaint, which was probably the most devastating in its impact on the individual’s sense of self-worth, was discovering that the spouse had been unfaithful.

It was difficult to obtain figures giving an adequate description of the Canadian scene. The 1966 Census showed that there were 82,009 single parent families with wife only at home, excluding widows, and including, separated and deserted wives, plus wives with husbands in institutions and similar cases (Guyatt, 1971).

Spanier and Hanson (1978) found kinship influence to be unrelated to the adjustment to marital separation. It could be argued that support from kin was not a
positive influence in the adjustment of marital separation, since such support could be mixed with disapproval of the separation. Although persons could turn to relatives for help following the dissolution of a marriage, they would find that the support - financial, emotional, and services came at a cost. The relatives would not hesitate to indicate their disapproval of the marital breakup, and the separated person would feel uncomfortable with the disapproval of his or her relatives. Another possible explanation for the lack of significant relationship between social contact and adjustment was that frequent reliance on one's relatives as indicative of difficulties in establishing new relationships.

Gerstel et al. (1985) revealed that different sets of factors would explain the increased distress of men and women whose marriages had dissolved because marriage seems to protect men and women in such different ways. The hypotheses were largely supported. The authors showed that, compared with married women, separated and divorced women have fewer people to rely on and those they do rely on are both more restricted to kin and are experienced as burdensome. More important, though, separated and divorced women faced a lower standard of living and were at the same time left with parental responsibilities. As hypothesized, it was this latter set of material factors, which were particularly important in explaining their greater distress compared with married women.

The limbo of separation was associated with physical and psychological health problems. In fact, even higher rates of physical and psychological distress were reported for the separated than for the divorced or widowed, whose rates were generally higher than those of the married or single (Carter and Glick, 1976; Bloom 1978; Somers, 1979).

There is very little research or literature, which focuses on desertion. Traditionally, it has been assumed that the phenomena of desertion applied only to men. However, recently, the phenomenon of the "runaway wife" has occurred with greater frequency. Men have deserted because of marital disagreements, quarrels, alcoholism, and infidelity and inability to support a family (Skarsten, 1974; Snyder, 1979).
Jon (1996) discovered that parental separation could be regarded as a marker of a more generalized family and social distress, and was usually the outcome of a range of factors, including economic stress, marital unhappiness, family conflict, and in some cases, what could be called ‘difficult children’. Separation was a transition point, too, which signaled further stresses such as moving house, changing schools, economic decline, the reduction in or loss of relationships with wider kin and friends. Further, he pointed that family dissolution was becoming a normative event in western society, with 60% of marriages predicted to fail in the United States, and about 40% in New Zealand.

Mannan (2002) observed that parents should be made aware that in the rapidly changing socio-economic context, marriage on no account guarantees security for women, as the increasing rate of desertion and divorce demonstrates. Economic empowerment of women is an important means to fight back at violence and injustice as it raises self-worth and supplements with resources to fight her battle. Therefore, girls should be given the necessary skill training and education so that they are capable of defending themselves. Further, when married daughters return home on being deserted or divorced (there are other reasons than demands for more dowries), they have no future except to be married again. The other options are limited, especially employment, as most of the women have no training of any kind in most situations.

According to the Refugee Women’s Resource Project (2003) there was a high prevalence of violence against women in India. With regard to the situation of separated or divorced women, the information indicated that, in the context of communal violence, single women and women estranged from family faced a higher risk of sexual abuse.

Margot et al. (2005) found that women reported a range of intense feelings at various stages of separation, including: scared about the responsibility for the economic future of themselves and the children, sad about the break-up of the family unit, nervous about how they would juggle work and home commitments, resentful about career sacrifices they may have made in their role of homemaker, hateful towards their former partner, bitter about their new circumstances, worried about
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dealing with bureaucracies and the legal system, fearful of making the same mistakes in another relationship, concerned that the relationship with the former partner may remain in conflict, and relief that things were out in the open.

Igra (2006) found that marriage was the foundation of a successful society as declared by the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, the founding document of contemporary welfare policy for poor families in the United States. The by now almost axiomatic assumption that marriage belonged in any programme of welfare reform has a long history, stretching back to the early twentieth century. This author examined how marriage and welfare policy intersected in the progressive era reforms designed to combat men’s desertion of wives and children. Jewish agencies played a leading role in making desertion a focus of family and welfare reform in New York City. Working with their non-Jewish peers, Jewish social workers and lawyers participated in creating an anti-desertion system that consisted of special domestic relations courts, laws, and welfare policies. They built the National Desertion Bureau, a model legal aid agency, to track down Jewish deserters and returned men (and their pay checks) to families. The desire of welfare reformers to anchor deserted women in the category of ‘wives’ revealed a larger commitment to using marriage to contain women’s poverty.

Ulrike et al. (2006) described the reasons for the breakdown of the partnership as (in the perspectives of the former couple): unfulfilled emotional needs, different attitudes towards gender roles (especially concerning work distribution within the family and responsibility of fathers), diverse educational and pedagogical principles, communication problems, absence of dyadic coping and conflict solving strategies, different priorities regarding spare time and family time, strong professional engagement, and long workdays of men. From the female perspective, alcohol abuse was problematic, whereas men estimated sexual problems as a source of conflict.

Islam (2007) revealed that husband-deserted women were the major victims of women’s poverty. Due to their incapability to work, limited access to formal labour market, and the general attitude of the society they were forced to either confine themselves into their homestead and go for less-paid or non-paid homework or go for charity or begging. Due to extreme poverty most of them were deprived of...
the support from their family members. Job/labour market opportunity was limited to the women, and for the poor women like distressed and husband-deserted it was more restricted. Most of the women of middle class and upper class had access to the labour market or family support. But women of poor community could not enjoy the family support sufficiently because of the incapability of their family members. Deserted women were not only financially vulnerable, but they were also exposed to vulnerabilities in terms of social, cultural, and psychological perspectives.

Shamita and Urjasi (2009) explored various socio-legal aspects of abandonment of South Asian wives in their home countries by their immigrant husbands. Since in South Asia, marriage defines a woman and divorce is still culturally unacceptable, abandonment had debilitating and far-reaching consequences for married women. It profoundly affected financial, emotional, physical, and social conditions of South Asian women and rendered their lives and livelihood virtually nonviable. Two important features of the type of abandonment of wives highlighted in the paper were deception and the deliberate infraction of women’s legal rights.

Clark (2010) revealed that the local British Poor Law Guardians concerned with the maintenance of deserted and neglected families was transformed into an imperial, and later, transnational policy promoting justice for abandoned wives and children. Both, local court cases concerning maintenance and policy debates at the national and imperial levels revealed the ways in which a breadwinner model of masculinity shaped maintenance policy and practice. Although the maintenance problem was framed differently by local welfare providers and imperial heads of state, concerns about welfare costs and human rights intersected in the figure of the irresponsible male citizen, who challenged the dominant model of British/imperial masculinity by refusing to maintain his wife.

2.3 Research Gap:

There are many lacunae in the studies made on deserted women. There is a number of studies abroad and on Non-Residential Indians. There are also some studies in India, but those studies more concentrated on separated Muslim women as well as on socio-economic security, reasons for desertion, issues and concerns of deserted women; most of these studies are based on non-participatory approach and
on socio-economic issues.

The present study intends to understand the influencing factors, psycho-social and economic status, and coping mechanism of the deserted women in Gulbarga district of Karnataka.