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CHAPTER-I
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction:

"You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women". - Jawaharlal Nehru

Everything has its own inherent nature. Light is the nature of sun, waves the nature of sea and coolness the nature of wind. What endows a deer with placidity and a lion with aggression is their original nature. Similarly, women and men have their own unique natures that distinguish them from each other (Matha, 2010). All human societies attach great importance to sex differences. Every society differentiates its members on the basis of sex, treating men and women in different ways and expecting different pattern of behavior from them. This differentiation does not necessarily imply that one sex should have status superiority to the other, but in practice, sexual differentiation is always translated in to sexual inequality. "In fact the inequality of sexes is probably the oldest form of structural social inequality. As Robertson (2003) points out, it certainly existed long before social castes or classes first appeared.

Hierarchy has been the truth of societies either based on clan, caste, race, class or ethnicity and gender (Gupta, 1993). But gender discrimination has been universally found. Historically it is evident that women have always been reduced to secondary position in the status and importance in the social realm of the society. We live in a world characterized by deeply unequal sharing of the burden of adversities between women and men. But the development and progress of any nation rests in the equal share of men and women in several walks of life. However, India has been practicing

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traditionally patriarchic dominated values. The patriarchic society has distinguished work on the basis of human physical strength, which assumes that, the men are stronger than the women in biological feature... These factors led to the concentration of women in certain jobs over the centuries. Concentration of women in predominantly female jobs can be seen. Even within relatively integrated occupations, men and women are seen to be doing different jobs. This is what the economist call the “dual labour market” (Nanneke, 1991) segmented labour market models also study this phenomenon and try to understand the way the market is structured, focusing primarily on the issue of inequality the attitudes, behavior, and every aspect of life in women were subjected to this gender segregation (Barrett, 1979). Social attitude to the role of women lags much behind the law. Therefore the women are deprived from various socio economic privileges in society (Heptulla, 1992).

Division of labour on the basis of sex has been a universal feature of the human society. Women and men have been assigned different works and responsibilities everywhere. The gender based division of labour creates stereotypical mindsets, which often manifest it at various levels beginning from the skills women are equipped with and the kind of opportunities given for educational development, the kind of jobs they are assigned, to the position they are given in the hierarchy of the job market (Finlay, 2007). Their capability is decided by their gender, and this bias is reflected in almost every aspect of employment. Man power has been traced from male work force only where as females were not taken into account. Gender inequality exists in most parts of the world.

Economic activity, simply put, is the activity of the economy. The production and distribution of goods and services at all levels can be called as economic activity. It includes the work that people do to enhance their quality of life. Work is an important source of self-definition in society (Ghidina, 1992). In Indian society, the occupational role is usually accorded based on various socio, economic, religious, gender ideologies.
The economy also portrays different kinds of inequalities in the market arena. Some of these differences imbued in the labour market include the most obvious division of labour which arose from differences in age and sex. For instance, the oldest people in the tribe lacked strength and agility to hunt or forage afar into the field and so, performed more-sedentary tasks. The very youngest members of the tribe were similarly employed and were taught simple food gathering. The sexual division of labour (White, et.al, 1975) was based largely upon physical differences, with men taking on tasks such as hunting while women specialized in food gathering, child rearing, and cooking. The assignment of tasks in primitive agricultural societies may have involved a division of work along sexual lines, with the fields entrusted to the women while the men hunted although men would have helped with the more physically demanding tasks such as clearing land. Work within the family farm unit often was divided along sexual lines the men commonly bore chief responsibility for such seasonal tasks as plowing, sowing, tilling and harvesting. While the women cared for children, prepared food and made clothing (Encyclopedia Britannica).

According to Durkheim and others work, the concept of division of labour explains Men work outside and Women work Inside, which could be broadly understood. The growth and evolution of society headed towards simple to complex societies, where livelihood moved from household to different professions. Though Men worked outside and Women worked inside the household it is evident and clearly understood many a time women have continuously worked both outside and inside in the agriculture dominated system of production and livelihood. Supplementing this argument, debates have been made as a result respites were given to women especially in the context of menstrual cycle, pregnancy and child rearing. Some of the traditional families denied women entering the so-called sacred areas of the house like kitchen, temple or pooja room etc. However, with the work becoming more non-agricultural and demanded different skill set and formal training outside household environment, women were slowly excluded.
systematically and with justification. Different occupations demanded more strength and power to sustain and hence men predominated. Juxtaposed to this argument now a day all the jobs are now being carried out on the automation or machine operated hence, the concept of masculine and feminine is nothing more than a textual construction.

However in the economic discipline’s understanding, the needs of the economic system with respect to labour and consumption are seen as promoting a change from traditional sex roles to quasi egalitarianism (Halter, 1971). “The Sociological, Anthropological and social- psychological theories all seem to point ultimately to change in the requirements of the economic system as the prime moving force of shift in sex roles or change in the status of women (Rajan, 1993).

Till the beginning of the 20th century women were regarded as the guardians of morality they were seen as made finer than men and were expected to act as such their role was not defined as either works or as money makers. Women were expected to hold on to their innocence until the right man came along so that they can start a family and inculcate that morality they were in change of preserving to the next generation. Until modern industrialized times, legal and culture practices, combined with the inertia of longstanding religious and education traditions, had restricted women’s, entry and participation in the workforce.

In the 20th century women started getting formal education as a result they started entering the world of work. That made space for women in the work force amongst other economical and social influences. Also, in a democratic country like India, the right to employment is intrinsically connected to the right to life and survival. The ILO in its documents talks of its primary objective as that of to promote equality between men and women in the world of work. Yet in the labour market, women have difficulty in exercising the right to work, as men and women do not have equal access to employment (Karnataka Labour Journal, 2010). Due to raise of in demand for
production, women found themselves working outside the home. In the first quested working century, women mostly occupational jobs in clerical, secretarial, education institutions and hospitals what is called “lace-collar” jobs.

Contrary to the common perception, a large percent of women in India work the large number of women engaged in service occupations in the 1980’s already exceeded the number of those employed in industry, and the proportion increased thereafter. By the 21st century the service sector had come to represent the fastest-growing area of the workforce in the world’s more number of people engaged in service (Encyclopedia Britannica Inc, 2012). The end of 20th century has seen influx of women in to the labour market. The push for employment, for various economic reasons, created structural change in the social and cultural fabric of patriarchal society (Dixit, 1998). Global capital flow, the expansion of trade and advancement of technology have drastically improved the lives of women worldwide, more and more women are entering the labour force to improve their quality of life and their families and at the same time increase their autonomy (Devi, 1982).

Women have a long history of engagement in economically productive work. Not only have they produced goods and services for their families own consumption; they too have a long tradition of working for pay outside the home. Women working, outside their homes is hence not a new phenomenon. Women have been participating in economic activities since times immemorial. It is not the fact that women work that demands sociological attention, it is instead the concentration of women in certain jobs that piques the interest. Women seem to be heavily concentrated and over-represented in low-skill, routine, non-manual occupations, including work as clerks, cahiers, typists, secretaries and receptionists, and in unskilled manual jobs in retailing, clothing, catering and personal services (http://www.enotes.com).
This pattern is termed as “occupational segregation”, describing this division of occupations into some which are dominated by women and some others by men (Bhandri, 2004).

In today’s or present situation in India women have started working in male dominated jobs such as defense, police, security, hospitality industry (Air hostesses), journalist, ticket collectors and drivers in Railways, and bus conductors, drivers and technicians in transport industry. Even though women liberation has taken place in India, the transport industry had failed to draw the attention of women workers till 1980’s. The report of the census of India, 1981 reveals that, there were 17.35% women working in textile industries, 20.35% in cottage industry but, there were only 2.7% in transport industry (Cotton, 1986). It has long been assumed that working as conductors in a bus is predominantly a male domain. But off late women are seen to be breaking this supposedly male bastion and have entered in large numbers.

In 1980’s onwards women gradually entered into the transport industry as bus conductors in different parts of India. In the same way, the situation can be seen in Karnataka with respect to Karnataka Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) and Bangalore Metropolitan Transport Corporation (BMTC). There was 2.4 percentage of women representation in the occupation structure of BMTC till 1980. Later 12 Anglo-Indian women stepped into BMTC as bus conductors. After 1990’s the women recruitment in the transport industry raised, due to the impact of state government policy of 33% of reservation for recruitment of women. Therefore, in the organized sectors there was a need for women recruitment which led to opportunity for women in different sectors in all strata. At present women workforce has raised from 2.4 to 4.97 percent in BMTC. These factors have given opportunity for women to join the transport industry. This development shows that, the organization stepping towards feminization of its workforce in recent decades.
The HRD of BMTC shows that the total staff strength of 27,542 employees as on 31.03.2009 among them there were 1371 women employees. Out of this 756 work as bus conductors at present it has raised to 1100 in the year 2011, but majority of the women employees are working as bus conductors, it constitutes 55.14 percent of the total women employees. There is no women representation either at Board level or at top five strata of administrative level. There are only 14 women working at the ‘B’ and ‘C’ cadre level it represents 2 percent at officer’s position (Annual Report of BMTC: 2009). Rest of the women work force concentrated at ‘D’ group level such as clerical and computer operators etc. Though in the transport industry feminization has been taking place in the work force, there is lack of opportunity for women representation in all strata of organizational structure. Even women force rose in BMTC organization; it has failed to provide the constitutional privileges and provisions of factory Acts to women employees. It clearly indicates that there is still practice of gender discrimination or masculine values continuing in this sector.

1.2 Conceptualization:

This study is primarily focusing on the difficulties and occupational challenges of women bus conductors in BMTC because the nature of bus conductor’s work is entirely different from other occupations. Since it is a mobile work women bus conductor’s work by standing, have to bear vibration and sound of the bus and interact with the commuters of multi-personalities. Women find it very difficult to tolerate, however in the case of pregnant women it is a highly difficult task. Even in this situation large numbers of women are entering bus conductor job due to their economic necessity.

Apart from these problems, she has to work with male colleagues and has to work in different shifts and return home at late night. The working women have to perform the dual role-domestic and occupation roles. The dual role of the working women results in many conflicting situations and demands readjustment and reallocations in her roles in both places. Family
crises due to illness, education of children, care of old, arrival of guests, socio-religious ceremonies in the family etc., require much adjustment in the office life. Moreover, she cannot get adequate time to spend with husband and children (Kumad: 1993).

In the light of this, it would not be an exaggeration to emphasize the significance of sociological study of the BMTC bus conductors for comprehensive understanding of the problems and challenges of the working women in transport industry. This study makes a modest attempt in assessing the dual role of women bus conductors. In addition, their inter-personal relations with other employees; assessing the perceptions and attitudes of women worker in transport industry towards their own position as well as their work; finding out the conditions of work, services, attitudes and the treatment by others towards women conductors. The study also aims at studying the consequences of occupational stress and health hazards of women bus conductors. Finally, this study would be suggesting feasible ways and means to improve the working conditions and inculcate a better sense of confidence and optimism in them and adjust to the new ‘Environment’.

1.3 Overview of literature:

Studies apart from general work pattern and conditions there is a whole lot of literature available on women working in different sections since time immemorial. A woman working is not a new phenomenon whereas, women working in the formal and informal sectors especially for salary and for the payment is the concern. A woman working is a global issue as it has challenged the male dominant spheres. Women also have raised issues and concerns along men in this direction. Areas of global concerns with regard to women are innumerable ranging from age, work, payment timings, different sectors, status to familial etc.,

Studies on women in academic parlance changed very recently to the new jargon ‘gender’ (a social construction) from the historical perspective. Fedigon (1986) described about the changing role of women in models of
human evolution. From sociology of work and occupational perspective, Abbott (1993) derives theories, Leicht and Fennel (1997), Smith (1997) provide new forms of organization and changing organizational context and professional work, where Philips and Imnoff (1997) discuss about women in relation to their career. Understanding these patterns of women in work and occupation England (2005) theorized on same lines. Women, off-late, have entered into different professions and each profession demands different life styles, approaches, work patterns and effect women in particular and their immediate near ones in general. In this direction, Kay and Gorman (2008) have studied women in legal profession. Similarly, under sociology of professions, the level of job satisfaction, prospects and provisions have been extensively studied especially on doctors, engineers, teachers, nurses, etc. Inequality and differential treatments have been the hand realities of work organizations and work women in formal organizations are also differently paid (Reskin, 2000). In continuation, those women who work have a bearing on family say Bielby (1992), Sorensen (1994) and Albiston (2007).

Women having moved from closed doors to outside household activities and working in formal organizations are not free from impacts on health. Stress (Baker, 1985) happens to be first impact, due to dual role, multiple activities, more expectations have led to job stress and cardiovascular problems (Sorenson and Verbrugge, 1987, Schnall, et.al, 1994).

The most untouched and unexpected area by the women is politics, their participation in political institution occupying different positions and performing different roles. Women in parliament have been the issues of many academic studies in their recent past (Ray and Korteweg, 1999). Women in movements (Beckwith, 2001) and active participative also are debated. Paxton, et.al, (2007), Iversen and Rusenbluth (2008), Wangnerud (2009), Doepke, textilt and Voena (2012) and others have discussed multiple dimensions of women and their participation in political arena.

Woman working is not a new thing. However working women in the formal sectors and professions is a new phenomena. In this direction, when
the researcher tried to look into the studies conducted so far on the areas and the issues pertaining to working women, a whole lot of literature is available. They differ anyhow from areas, aspects, perspective, age group, professions, health, and challenges so on. A brief overview of the available recent literature is mentioned here. However, the detailed outline of the literature and its review is being carried out in a separate chapter later.

Religious norms and values play a significant role in regulating the lives of women and girls in many communities. The Muslim community influenced by their religious background, highlighting the complex relationship between gender, faith, and work in India (Ghatak, 2006). In the recent years the trade liberalization have influenced on increasing competitive force which have affected women’s relative wages and employment (Menon, 2009). There are many oppressive forces for working women in society. The capitalism and patriarchal values and attitudes of the society towards working women and middle class women in her works mainly pertaining to the position of women in male-dominated societies (Ravari, 2010). Women education is one of the major factors that determine female labour force and work force participation in India in recent days. Though the education ascertain the extent of change and trend of women status but there is inter relationship between gender, work, and household conditions on the one hand and role of women in decision-making on the other (Dash, 2010). Though the women entered to working world, they remain at the bottom in the hierarchy of power and rewards in the work place. Therefore there is need to examine women’s association with work beginning from the point of accessing work to its outcome on women’s well being and identity (Singh, 2010).

The overtime and improper work schedules will effect on family conflict (Jansen, 2010). Women professionals have to face difficulties of proper function of a dual-earner household. Most of the middle class women are highly dependent on the presence of a domestic worker. In the present situation the working mothers spending less time for the next generation. Most of the low-income households in India, who are participating in work, do
not have allocation of time for various child care activities when compared to non-working women (Sivakami, 2010). Depressive symptoms are widespread and medical problems affecting women are worldwide. These symptoms increased as a result of spousal abuse and other factors such as responsibilities at home, social obligations to the family, and financial hardship were embedded in their familial and social environment (Al-Modallal, 2010). Working women face the problem of dual role especially with reference to home, work place and social contacts. Work family conflict is another major problem of working women. Long working hours affects the family balance directly and children care irrespective of their professions (Alam, 2011). Some studies show that, the female employment significantly reduces the incidents of spousal violence (Chin, 2011).

There are some studies which have made comparison between employed and non-employed women about responsibility for housework; child care within the household methodology. In a study on working status and anxiety levels of educated women concluded that there is a relationship between the working status of mother and their health as well as their children in Calcutta (Mukhopadhyay, 2003). Poor family work status and differences in employment between husband and wife have provided empirical evidence of the widespread nature of domestic violence (Jayaseelan, 2004). There is an interrelationship of women’s status in terms of socio-economic inequalities and its effects on women’s health (Ghosh, 2005). There is a need to take protective steps in providing a range of services to women employees and working mothers in every industry (Joseph, 2005). Maternal health care and education is very important for working women (Pernilla, 2006). There is a lack of information about their occupational health problems for women who work in lower occupations (Sachdev, 2006). Working conditions are influencing health status of working women (Roy, 2008). A comparative study made on mortality risk among Black and White working women. It illustrated the importance of considering personal meanings associated with objective work characteristics (Shippee, 2012). Hygienic
characteristics of working conditions are very important factors in any industry. Especially for working women it is most essential in determining their health conditions (Ellseev, 2011).

The satisfaction of work has various facilities provided by the organization like safe and clean drinking water, sitting postures, working environment, leisure, salary, and working hours etc. working fewer hours contributes to women’s satisfaction with their time. Working women face sexual harassments and discrimination at the work place. There is a need to strengthen the social legislations and policies which would help in achieving equality for women at work and their safe family life (Strachan, 2010). Lack of leisure time and night shifts for the working women have brought so many health and social complication at office as well as at home (Suh and Judy, 2012). Psychological health problems have experienced by working women as a result of their experiences of intimate partner violence (Al-Modallal, 2012).

There is gender discrimination in IT industries in India one study has stated that there is a difference in assigning work in core job characteristics, workforce marginalization (Ilavarsan, 2006). Working in the night shift was banned by factory Act of 1948. Recently in the changing circumstances and development of new industrial growth in India especially in IT and other service sectors women need to work in night shifts. Role erosion and role overload dimensions are seen more among stress dimensions in BPO employees (Vijayashree, 2010). IT organizations have developed a new form of working environment. It may influence their perception of self, identity and gender relations. On the other hand the local particularities of socio-cultural norms, gender identities can also have an influence on perception of self and identity formation (Devi, 2010).

The sexual harassment of women appears to be more blatant and endemic in India than in western countries, probably because of the low status of Indian women, the high dominance of Indian men (Kanekar, 1993). Several studies stated that there is an increase in workplace harassment among women because of the rise in number of women employees. The
women who had experienced harassment were not aware reluctant to complain, fearing for their jobs or being stigmatized, and most were not aware of formal channels for redress (Chaudhuri, 2006). The legal environment governing sexual harassment at the workplace, as contained in international instruments and the resultant obligation of the central legislature to make domestic law (Kumar, 2009). There is need for the government to address the issue of harassment for the purpose of ensuring a safe working environment for women (Unnikrishnan, 2010).

Work related problems and worries among working women is one of the important issues to be analyzed in India. One of the study results showed that 39.33 per cent respondents had work related problems and 59.33 per cent respondents had work related worries (Jindal, 2011). There are various medical, technical and environmental factors which affect the productivity and performance of the women workers. The major factors affecting the productivity are health factors, sitting posture or nature of work, working environment and man machine system (Thakre, 2011).

The role of women, including wives, mothers, and daughters in the homes of men who work in industrial jobs has also traditionally been ignored (Iversen, 2008). The working women have to bear the major house hold responsibilities and perform multiple roles as workers, home maker, mother and wife. The sex role perceptions and attitudes towards working women are influenced by cultural norms of gender equality which determine the position of women in society and their educational and economic status. The cultural norms favor women mainly in their domestic and marital roles. Women’s employment does not alter sex role perceptions mainly because of the prevailing culturally defined gender based norms (Bharat, 2011).

Women in some countries such as Japan and India tend to quit their jobs because they prioritize their families over their career. Therefore the employers should find out the solutions to a better gender balancing equity such as diversity and inclusion programs (Suzanne, 2010). Work family conflict is common to all working women irrespective of their professions. The
nature and working environments have impacts on their job satisfaction and job turnover (Ahmad, 2011).

1.4 Theoretical perspectives:

Conventionally, the practice in the academic parlance is to visualise and understand a phenomenon from single theoretical perspective. Whereas, the reality would be that any phenomenon could be understood and explained in multiple perspectives and dimensions. As the object of study can be seen from multiple sides which in reality as a practice is absent. Similarly, the social phenomena being studied are being done from the perspective of explaining from any single theoretical dimension. In fact the present need of sociological research needs multiple perspectives of understanding any phenomena.

Structural Functionalist Perspective:

Sociological perspectives provide a strong foundation in the structural and functionalist perspective which explains the existing structure and practice is a part of properly understood evolution and hence, the parts in it and the social and institutional parts and practices hence are essential and needed for the proper functioning of the whole (society, institution, group or organisation). Familial understanding and functioning pattern within the family members, husband and wife (& others) probably explains the structural understanding and functioning of the family as an institution at the individual family as associations and hence they sustain and survive the changes. The division of labour between the genders and roles (multiple), being performed perfectly explains the theory.

Symbolic Interaction Perspective:

The interaction between the members in the society and institutions are witnessed in the forms. The symbolic interaction is nothing but the reproduction of the existing understanding of the arrangements. It is reiteration and continuation of the same in common day to day activities. The
actions, roles and performances are recreated in everyday life through customs, traditions and values as well.

**Social Exchange Theory:**

The Social exchange theory though has been refuted widely, has the same understanding in the primitive societies that the practices of the people are well within the structure of performances, that one performs actions, interaction against the reciprocity of the same. They also reproduce the existing, understood, dominant views of the structured societies. The conflict that exists in the minds are not explained and attempts to unearth the difficulties and suffering of the people are not prevalent.

**Conflict Perspective:**

In continuation, from the Marxian perspective History of all existing societies has been the history of Class (gender) struggles. It is not unknown that in all societies of the world there had been continuous debates and differences within themselves when it comes to men and women in terms of rights, duties, function, inheritance, power, and all such socio-cultural attributes. It continues even today. It is indeed ‘inhuman’ in many societies till date where women are treated as second gender by allowing to get their rights on par with men after several struggles. The consciousness and subconscious minds of the ‘men’ who rule and ‘women’ who get ruled in the household, institutions, societies and ‘state’ is the testimony of many texts and practices in the society. Hence, the conflict exists in the everyday life of every women. It is there in the house and ‘home-sweet-home’ [I am the boss of the house, but I have my wife’s permission to say so].

**Feminist Perspective:**

Feminism which is understood to have emerged in US is also what has happened across the globe however, may not have used the same jargons or is the result of academicisation. Feministic perspective also looks women from
the oppressed point of view and demands for equal status and rights. Multiple perspectives under feminism argue on the same lines with degrees of difference as Marxists, liberal, and like.

Going away from the past developments in terms of theoretical understandings the present research looked for the new and convincing argument for the theoretical foundations. Dorothy Smith’s views were found to be more relevant and the triangulation method being proposed in the present study suffices.

Sociology was explicitly set out as the “scientific” and “objective” study of society when it first emerged as a discipline in the nineteenth century, but because its first practitioners were almost exclusively men, it implicitly assumed and reflected the relevancies, interests, and perspectives of (white, middle-class) males. “Its method, conceptual schemes and theories had been based on and built up within the male social universe” (Smith 1990a:23). The failure to recognize the particular standpoints from which they spoke not only left sociologists unaware of the biases inherent to their position; in addition, it implicitly made the discipline of sociology a masculine sociology. Feminisation of BMTC is the understanding from which the present study starts with such critical note on the practices of the organisation which are explained subsequently.

Smith advocates a “sociology for women” that begins “where women are situated”: in the “particularities of an actual, everyday world” (Smith 1987:109). Smith’s sociology for women aims not to “transform people into objects” but to “preserve their presence as subjects” (ibid.:151). Smith uses the notion of standpoint to emphasize that what one knows is affected by where one stands (one’s subject position) in society. We begin from the world as we actually experience it, and what we know of the world and of the “other” is conditional on that location (Smith 1987). Yet, Smith’s argument is not that we cannot look at the world in any way other than from our given standpoint. Rather, her point is that (1) no one can have complete, objective knowledge; (2) no two people have exactly the same standpoint; and (3) we must not take the standpoint from which we speak for granted. Instead, we
must recognize it, be reflexive about it, and problematize it. Hence, the Women Conductors and problematizing their situation fits very well in this framework. All the studies conducted so far probably fits in this framework and different issues also fall in this gamut.

Women conductors are situated in the different locale every day, both within the family (household and BMTC organization, if that is to be treated as one) and outside; society. “Our situated, everyday experience should serve as a “point of entry” of investigation” (Smith 2005:10). Women conductors’ situation is being taken as the point of entry in this research.

Smith calls her particular approach institutional ethnography. Institutional ethnography is a method of elucidating and examining the relationship between everyday activities and experiences and larger institutional imperatives. Interestingly, the very term “institutional ethnography” explicitly couples an emphasis on structures of power (“institutions”) with the micro level practices that make up everyday life (“ethnography”). That is why researcher visits the respondents in their situation of work (BMTC) taking their standpoint as far as possible along with their perception of how others perceive them. It is on these lines the whole research design is built and carried out.

1.5 Rational of the study:

Since so many studies have been conducted on various factors of work force it is essential to look into the women dimensions of working class. With ever changing, ever growing new sectors, opportunities for both men and women have increased. However the challenges women face in the working environment are different when compared to men. With biological and social constructions many stigma are attached to their freedom and behavior with respect to their rest, nature call, leisure time activities, interaction with men, customers and so on.
These aspects remind the research community to think from multiple perspectives to understand and evolve/ find suitable solutions to resolve the problems faced by the women conductors and to provide both facilities and provisions for them.

1.6 History of women in the work force:

In India, women’s employment profiles, referred to as ‘career patterns’ by Hakim (1996) falls into two categories, working woman and homemaker. The reasons for the shifting pattern of employment, from being predominantly male oriented to the present scenario, where there are almost equal participation of women in all economic activities can primarily be attributed to the demand and supply factors or basically, the demands of the market. The history of women in the work force follows the market dynamics. Upon a detailed examination of the how women entered work force, one can trace back to the end of 17th century and early 18th century the birth of industrial revolution took place in Europe. It created an opportunity of employment in industries which had a major impact on the laborers working in the agriculture sectors. Many of the agriculture laborers left the agricultural fields and started migrating towards the industrial sectors as they were getting hand some wages in the beginning. Later on the wages were not sufficient to cater to the needs of the family in the industrial society this gradually led to women seeking work in the industrial sector for the purpose of improving the economic situation in their family. But the women were paid less wages compared to the men working in the same sector. This was the first step of women who stepped out of domestic work and started working in unorganized or informal sector (Blau, 1978).

During the mid 18th century in France the political revolution took place which led to the rise of democracy slowly it gave importance to the gender equality in the society and took many measures to uplift especially women. On the other hand, the rise of Feminist theories took place in France which supported women to come forward and participate in all fields (Dak, 1998).
In the early stages in India, the subjugation of women was present, moreover women used to work and participate in both domestic and agriculture sector. Mainly women were not exposed to the society they were under the control of male in the family.

1.6.1 Women’s employment in India under British rule:

During the British administration in 19th century, a large number of women were found in professional like teaching and nursing. Because of the British government and its recommendation in the education commission in 1882, more women were recruited in teaching professions. As the result of this revolutionary step by British administration and the effort of social reformers, the Indian women stepped into outer world from the domestic life. Eventually women were also provided clerical work (Altekar: 1938).

Women started stepping out of traditional or custom aspect and started working with the male is some selective sectors. Women’s employment under British rule has largely remained hidden form history. There is hardly any book or memories that provide detailed information on the kind of work that woman were employed in under British rule. However, a broad analysis of the subject does throw some high in women’s employment in colonial India. In 1921 over thirty-nine million women or one-third of the female population were in the work force. However, very few of these women were professionals. In the modern economic sector emerged with colonial rule, provided women with new opportunities for employment. For example, the professions of teaching and medicine were now open to a few women, factories, mines, and plantation employed significant numbers of women. However they were employed under such harsh and difficult conditions to view this employment in positive light (Raju, 2007).

1.6.2 Professional Position Occupied by Women under British rule:

In the 1920’s and 1930’s women’s organization demanded educational and medical service for females. Separate institutions were recruited to
deliver these services because sex segregation norms prevented women from using institutions designed for men. Women leaders insisted that the new institution should be staffed by female professional. The jobs created were for women much like themselves—educated able to move about freely and comfortably interacting with both men and women. There were only 68,000 medical professionals, 30,000 women employed in educational and scientific fields, and 6,000 women in law and business (http://www.indianetzone.com).

Women in post independent India were the part of a new state that developed a bureaucratic structure designed to meet the specific needs of women. This included creating the National Social Welfare Board. There are social labour about women working outside or in some particular occupation so there is limited choice for them and little chance of upgrading. Their hard work is undervalued, especially in family production. Middle class women who work in offices and companies also face gender discrimination in many ways. Generally they also get paid less than men in private firms. In public sector of course remuneration is same but generally women were not given important assignments as they were considered casual about their work. Men have ego hassles working under women. Sexual harassment is one form or the other is common in work places (Chandrakala, Anandrao & Hate - 1948).

In spite of it there are social taboos about women working outside or in some particular occupation. So there was limited choice for them and little chance of upgrading and their hard work had been undervalued, especially in family production. Middle class women who work in offices and companies also face gender discrimination in many ways (De-Souza, 1975). Generally they also get paid less than men in private firms. In public sector of course remuneration in same but generally women are not given very important assignments as they are considered casual about their work men have ego hassles working under women. Sexual harassment in one form or the other is common in work places (Rashmi, 1990).

From the impact of industrialization and urbanization in India many job opportunities were created but later on only some specific jobs were meant
for women such as, telephone operator, receptionist, garment workers and etc. Later on from the 19th century due to the impact of Globalization, Liberalization, Privatization many foreign companies started rising in India and many jobs were created for women like BPO, Data entry, Tele caller which can be called as safe jobs, and more over which are suitable for women (Gills, 2002).

The participation of women in the work force has definitely increased over the years and is even more visible. However, their position is defined and negotiated in terms of being women which is a direct reflection of the hierarchical sexual division of labour. The changing economic system has necessitated the entry of women in to labour force and their increasing importance as economic units as part of a capitalist structure (Banerjee, 1991).

Currently, India is passing through an unprecedented phase of demographic changes. The ongoing demographic changes are likely to contribute to an ever increasing size of labour force in the country. The Census projection report shows that the proportion of population in the working age group (15-59 years) is likely to increase from approximately 58% in 2001 to more than 64% by 2021. In addition to the overall variations in the estimates of labour force in the country, the gender dimension of the labour force is equally important to understand. In general, women participation in labour market has been typically low in India. Only 25 to 30% women in rural and 15 to 18% in urban areas participate in labour market (Lalitha, 1982). One of the reasons of low participation of women in labour force is the non-recognition of a number of women centric works as economic activities (such as cooking, collection of fuel and fodder, house and utensils cleaning etc.) and women friendly jobs being innovated. Further, what women were conventionally performing, they have been appropriated by men task and some have been automated where there is market. Moreover, variety of social and family related constraints compel women to confine themselves to household
activities at their prime working age. Early exit of women (probably post marital age) from labour market is particularly reflected in urban areas where women face inadequate social and family support system. However, it is important to recognize that women participation in labour market has significantly increased in recent years, particularly in urban areas. Further, most of the increase in women participation in labour market is contributed by young women in urban areas. Since India is committed to creating a gender friendly labour market environment, there is increasing realization to broaden the definition of economic activities on the one hand and to provide a conductive working environment on the other, so that women’s contribution to the national economy is properly recognized (Jha, 1985).

1.7 Problems of working women in the contemporary Indian society:

Working women in India are faced with lot more challenges than their counterparts in the other parts of the world. In India men do not share most of the household chores, it is women who have to cook, clean the house, make the dishes, wash clothes, get their children ready for school etc. Men just take care of few chores that are to be dealt outside the house. So the major burden of running the family is on the shoulders of women. It was alright for women to handle all the chores as long as they were homemakers. Now with their increasing need for getting some income for the family, they have to work all the more harder. They have to take up a 9 to 5 job plus handling all the household chores that they handled as a homemaker. Men’s role has not changed much (Kaila, 2005).

Women have started sleeping lesser than before because only when they wake up early they can cook for the family, get themselves ready for the job, get their children ready for the schools, so on an average, women lost 2 hours of sleep per day and up to 14 hours sleep per week. If they happened to work in a highly pressurized environment, then they will bring home their work and that cuts few more hours of sleep. It is not just about the reduced
sleep, but such a lifestyle builds stress. This stress is passed on to the family and frustration level builds up in the family. This leads to relationship problems (Devi, 1998).

They have to handle harassment's at their work place, sometimes just over look things to ensure that their job is not jeopardized in anyway. Many Indian families are still living as joint families along with the parents and in-laws. This adds to their stress further because they have to please all the family members of her husband. Listen to their complaints that they make against her and turn deaf ears towards them and so on. Overall, majority of women in India look towards or live in the hope that things will change. Some of us have given up that hope and learnt to accept that nothing can be done about it (Matur, 1992). India has a long way to go before our women will be able to live their lives to the full.

But most women continue to remain marginalized as they are generally employed in a chain of work and seldom allowed independent charge of their job. Sharing of responsibility at work place or taking independent decisions is still a remote possibility for them. Economic independence of women is important as it enhances their ability to take decisions and exercise freedom of choice, action. Many of the working women, who control their own income, do contribute towards the economic needs of family as and when required. They often participate in discussions at their work place and their views are given due weightage before any final decision. Working women do use and spend their income at their own sweet will but sometimes permission of the husband becomes necessary for the purpose (Mishra, 1994).

It has been advocated by many researchers that independent earning opportunities reduce the economic dependence of woman on men and increase her bargaining power in the family. This bargaining power depends on the nature of work she is employed in. But the income earning activities increase the workload of a woman unless the man accepts an increased share in domestic work. Since globalization is introducing technological inputs,
women are being marginalized in economic activities, men traditionally being offered new scopes of learning and training.

India has about 340 million people as its labour force of which only about 40 million are in organized sectors which means over 300 million in unorganized sector and bulk of which is agricultural labour. There are estimates that over 90 percent of workingwomen are involved in the informal sector (Bharath, 2004). According to the 2001 census, the average age of all female workers was 33.6 compared with the male average of 36.5. These data are reported by local employment offices that register the number of people looking for work (Karnataka Labour Journal, 2010).

Even if a woman is employed, she may not have control over the money she earns, though this money often plays an important role in the maintenance of the household. In Indian culture women are expected to devote virtually all of their time, energy, and earnings to their family. Men, on the other hand, are expected to spend time and at least some of their earnings on activities outside the household. Women contribute a higher share of their earnings to the family and are less likely to spend it on themselves. Recently, women share of the family income increased and she will manage this income. However, the extent to which women retain control over their own income varies from household to household and region to region. Many women still sought their husbands' permission when they wanted to purchase something for themselves (Rai, 2002).

Since the working woman earns an independent income in the same patriarchal set-up, where the basic infrastructure of society has hardly changed, though her own role within the same structure is passing through a transitional phase, it is but natural that she would remain vulnerable to exploitation even in her economically independent status. Society perhaps yet needs to accord due recognition to women to take the lead role and women, at the same time; need to be oriented vigorously towards assuming this role in the society (Kumar, 2000).
1.8 Factors responsible for women entry to employment:

Women have been entering the labour market at an increasing rate in the last two decades in Indian society. Many lower and middle class families, the traditional concept of the husband working and the wife taking care of the house and children are not following. The cost of living is increasing; both women and men have to meet their family requirements. In many families the wife is forced to go to work in order to supplement the family income (Mishra, 2006). Most women are working because of economic need. In addition, in almost all families the women are still expected to take care of the household and children, although they may get some help from their husbands considering the circumstances, going to work in these situations in certainly conductive to stress. In recent days “many middle class families prefer a working woman as daughter-in-law. She is considered as a perpetual dowry” (Kumar, 1992). More over the combined income gives the family higher status.

India is a multifaceted society where no generalization could apply to the entire nation's various regional, religious, social, and economic groups. While middle and lower class women benefited from entering the workforce and the feminist movement, Women with low educational attainment entering the workforce in mass quantity lowered earnings for some men, as the women brought about a lot more job competition (Murthy, 2001). For the first time in the history of this country, there was distinctive socio-economic stratification among women as there has been among men for centuries. This deepened the inequality between the upper/middle and lower/working classes. Prior to the feminist movement, the socio-economic status of a family was based almost solely on the husband/father's occupation (Wood, 1975).

From the past 2-3 decades the global expansion of trade, capital flows, and technology has resulted in increased formal and informal market opportunities for women, which is referred to the feminization of labor. The expansion of neoliberal capitalism has created new job opportunities
specifically for women due to reservation policies, their willingness to take employment and for the proper utilization of their education. As the global economy expands, multinational companies proactively recruit women in both the developing and the developed world to fill what have been traditionally male occupations (Usha, 2008).

1.9 Feminization of workforce:

Dramatic economic and social changes led to the feminization of the labor force in India. Globalization of the economy led to decline of manufacturing industries and the rise of the services sector this developments paved the way to women gained entry into the labor force (Kumar, 2000). Industrialization created jobs beyond the home for women. Women have to face new tasks and challenges at home and in the labor force. These developments demanded a workforce larger than the male population could furnish and included tasks that few men would do and created white-collar jobs. These shortages of human labor provided paid work opportunities for women, but at the same time rarely created a bridge across the traditional gender barrier (Shirly, 1987).

Within female labor markets, class, race and ethnicity or race intertwined with gender to define women’s job options. These factors, as much as economic considerations determined which jobs women could have and influenced their decisions about whether, when and where to seek jobs. There were an overwhelming number of women in clerical occupations; clerical occupations were once considered to be male dominated. Towards the end of the 19th century clerical occupation became feminized (Gills and Piper, 2002).

The shift from manufacturing to the service industry created the next largest percentage of women (after clerical employees) work in service and selling occupations. Service work comprises food preparation and service - waiters and cooks among others. Sales occupations include sales supervisors,
sales representatives in retail and personal business among others. The service economy created two kinds of jobs: large number of low skill, low-paying jobs and a small number of high skill, high paying jobs primarily in the protective services occupation. Even though women make up a majority of service workers, and about half of sales workers, they are overrepresented in traditionally feminized jobs. (Menon, 2008),

Corporations needed to fill expanding skills created by the new technological wave. Typewriting became identified as feminine specialty, and natural for women workers, hence, women were allowed entry to the work force. Women were expected to be nice, neat, attractive, clean and expected to follow order and be loyal to their bosses (Raju, 2007).

The 1980’s gave way to even greater economic growth that drew growing numbers of women into the labor force. The feminization of work progressed as labor demand mounted and both low-status and high-status service occupations grew. The economic forces driving the feminization of the labor force created ever more job opportunities for women as the end of the century approached (Shanmugasundaram, 1993). Women reached executive positions, when they reached them it was largely because political forces created affirmative action policies for government and corporations (Singh, 2004).

There is a gap between the rich and the poor widened during the last decades of the century, and working women, from food service workers to teachers, saw their real earnings decline while the most fortunate women strode up the income ladder. Although women made great educational strides during the 1980’s, not even college training insulated them from the employment crisis of the late 1980’s and early 1990’s. Those women who graduated without a specific, marketable skill found themselves especially vulnerable (Subhasini, 2006).
The feminization of the labor force has been increased in the late twentieth century. In many ways, this greater involvement of women in work stems from the ongoing expansion and transformation of the country economy from its agricultural origins, through industrialization, into its late-twentieth-century service-based, postindustrial configuration (Paap, 1995).

Until modern industrialized times, legal and cultural practices, combined with the inertia of longstanding religious and educational traditions, had restricted women's entry and participation in the workforce. Economic dependency upon men, and consequently the poor socio-economic status of women had also restricted their entry into the workforce. Particularly as occupations have become professionalized over the 19th and 20th centuries, women's access to higher education had effectively excluded them from the practice of well-paid Such factors had largely limited women to low-paid and poor status occupations for most of the 19th and 20th centuries. However, through the 20th century, public perceptions of paid work shifted as the workforce increasingly moved to office jobs that do not require heavy labor, and women increasingly acquired the higher education that led to better-compensated, longer-term careers rather than lower-skilled, shorter-term jobs and high status occupations (Singh, 2004).

In the last 30 years we have experienced great changes toward gender equality in India. Women began to enter the workforce in great numbers. Women had also had high labor market participation during In the late 1980's when women began entering the labor force in record numbers, they were entering in addition to all of the men, as opposed to substituting for men during the globalization. This dynamic shift from the one-earner household to the two-earner household dramatically changed the socio-economic class system of this country (Singh, 2004).

While middle and lower class women benefited from entering the workforce and the feminist movement, Women with low educational attainment entering the workforce in mass quantity lowered earnings for
some men, as the women brought about a lot more job competition. For the first time in the history of this country, there was distinctive socio-economic stratification among women as there has been among men for centuries. This deepened the inequality between the upper/middle and lower/working classes. Prior to the feminist movement, the socio-economic status of a family was based almost solely on the husband/father's occupation (Ram, 1998).

1.10 Challenges faced by working women in India:

Most of the Indian working women were face financial demands of their families in the present day. The sky rocketing cost of living, increasing expenses on education of children, increasing cost of housing properties in India force every family in India to look for ways and means of increasing the household income. As a result, women in India who were mostly known as homemakers are forced to go for jobs and take up even careers that were considered only suitable for men (Rai, 2002).

Working women in India are faced with lot more challenges than their counterparts in the other parts of the world. In India men do not share on most of the household chores, it is women who have to cook, clean the house, do the dishes, wash clothes, get their children ready for school etc. Men just took care of few chores that are to be dealt outside the house. So the major burden of running the family is on the shoulders of women. It was alright for women to handle all the chores as long as they were homemakers. Now with their increasing need for getting some income for the family, they have to work all the more harder. They have to take up a 9 to 5 job plus handle all the household chores that they handled as a homemaker but men’s role has not changed much (Mishra, 2006).

The working women have to handle harassment's at their work place, sometimes just over look things to ensure that their job is not jeopardized in anyway. Many Indian families are still living as joint families along with the parents and in-laws. This adds to their stress further because they have to please all the family members of her husband. Listen to their complaints that
they make against her and turn deaf ears towards them and so on. Overall, majority of women in India look towards or live in the hope that things will change. Some of us have given up that hope and learnt to accept that nothing can be done about it. India has a long way to go before our women will be able to live their lives to the full (Mishra, 1994).

1.11 Women employment in India:

Women workforce constitutes an integral part of total workforce in India. On 31st March 2004, women constituted 19 per cent of the total workforce. The participation of women in the labor force has always been lower than that of men, in the rural as well as urban areas. The work participation rate for women has increased significantly. In 1981, work participation rate for women was only 19.67 per cent which increased up to 22.73 per cent in 1991 and 26.68 per cent in 2001. In the women workforce, women from rural areas are greater in number as compared to the urban. Only southern zone register a marginal dip of 0.8 percent.

As on the 31st March, 2005 a total number of 50.16 Lakhs women employees were engaged in the organized sector, out of which 29.21 lacks (58 percent) in the public sector and 20.95 lakhs (42 percent) in the Private Sector. Employment of women in public sector increased by 1.1 percent and by 2.5 percent in the private sector during 2004-2005. The zone wise analysis showed an increase of 8 percent in North-Eastern Zone, followed by Western
Zone (5.3 percent), Eastern Zone (3 percent) and Central Zone (1.3 percent)
And Northern Zone (1.2 percent). Only southern zone registered a marginal
dip of 0.8 percent.

1.11.1 Some vital statistics:

TABLE 1.1: NUMBER OF WOMEN JOB SEEKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Women (in lacks)</th>
<th>Percentage to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td>24.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>104.5</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>108.8</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>106.0</td>
<td>25.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>107.5</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>106.1</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: A Handbook of Statistical Indicators on Indian Women 2007

- The table 1.1 reveals the number of women job seekers has increased from 99.3 lakhs in 1999 to 106.1 lakhs in 2004. Thus the percentage of women job seekers to the total job-seekers has also increased from 24.6 per cent in 1999 to 26.2 percent in 2004.

TABLE 1.2: NUMBER OF EDUCATED WOMEN JOB SEEKERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Women</th>
<th>Percentage to total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>7911.7</td>
<td>27.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>8525.6</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>7921.4</td>
<td>26.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>8032.4</td>
<td>26.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>7537.7</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: A Handbook of Statistical Indicators on Indian Women 2007
• The table 1.2 reflects the number of educated women job seekers as on December 2004 was 7537.7 thousand. Educated Women at the end of 2004 accounted for 25.8 percent of the total educated job-seekers.

• Women workers constituted 19 per cent of the total organized sector employment in the country, as compared to 18.4 per cent in the previous year. As on 31st March, 2004, there were about 49.34 lakh women workers employed in the organized sector (Public and Private Sector).

As far as industries are concerned, in 2005, the manufacturing industry faced a dip of 1.1 percent in women employment. On the other hand, other industries reflected an increase in women employment. An increase of 7.8 per cent was registered in Wholesale and Retail Trade followed by 5.6 per cent in Mining and Quarrying, 5.5 per cent in Agriculture, Hunting, Forestry & Fishing, 5.2 per cent in Financing, Insurance Real Estate & Business Services, 1.7 per cent in Electricity, Gas & Water, 1.5 per cent in Construction, 1.4 per cent in Community, Social and Personal Services and 1.2 percent in Transport, Storage & Communications.

TABLE 1.3: CHANGES IN WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT IN SOME MAJOR SECTORS 1975-1988 (THOUSANDS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1975</th>
<th>1988</th>
<th>% change (total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public</td>
<td>Private</td>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>391.0</td>
<td>405.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>53.9</td>
<td>399.4</td>
<td>453.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>43.2</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>66.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>52.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communications</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and Insurance</td>
<td>35.2</td>
<td>8.2</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Services</td>
<td>861.1</td>
<td>236.6</td>
<td>1,097.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: A Handbook of Statistical Indicators on Indian Women 2007
The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed changes in almost every aspect of the day-today lives of women, from the domestic sphere to the public. A rise of a new generation of female transformed the traditional patriarchal social structure across the globe. By the advent of LPG process this social shift, had been set in motion at the beginning of the century, developed further as women were propelled into the workforce, exposing them to previously male-dominated professions it made changes in the social and domestic roles of women (Gupta, 2000).

Women are an integral part of every society. Though women were definitely an important part of their society but were not thought to be equal to men in anyway. They were not provided with the rights or the freedom that men were provided with. They spent their lives within the four walls of their houses and remained under veils (Ratra, 2006).

The pattern of Indian women's employment has changed markedly since the 1970's. In the traditional sectors in which women have worked throughout the century like, plantations, mining and manufacturing, have not been the areas of growth. Indeed in the better-paid and unionized jobs the proportion of women in the workforce has declined drastically. Women have been increasingly pushed into unregulated non-unionized jobs, with the exception of electronics and the service sector (Laxmi Devi, 1998).

Banking and insurance have provided new areas of opportunity for women, and nationalization has been a key factor in countering some aspects of gender discrimination. As table 1.3 shows, in areas such as electricity, construction, trade, transport and communication, finance and insurance, and community services, employment in the public sector is an important factor in boosting women's employment. However recent national and international policies, which have led to the dismantling of the public sector, are affecting those limited openings. It is therefore urgent not simply to develop the means for retraining women but also for women to participate in creating alternative economic strategies (Murthy, 2001).
Since the times immemorial, worth of the work done or services rendered by women has not been recognized. India is a multifaceted society where no generalization could apply to the entire nation's various regional, religious, social, and economic groups. India's economy was undergone a substantial transformation since the country's independence in 1947. In 1992, India began to implement trade liberalization measures (Singh, 2004). But most women continue to remain marginalized as they are generally employed in a chain of work and seldom allowed independent charge of her job. Sharing of responsibility at work place or taking independent decisions is still a remote possibility for them. Economic independence of women is important as it enhances their ability to take decisions and exercise freedom of choice, action. Many of the working women, who control their own income, do contribute towards the economic needs of family as and when required. They often participate in discussions at their work place and their views are given due weightage before any final decision. Working women do use and spend their income at their own sweet will but sometimes permission of the husband becomes necessary for the purpose (Ross, 1976).

The most obvious division of labour arose from differences in age and sex. The oldest people in the tribe lacked strength and agility to hunt or forage far afield and so performed more-sedentary tasks. The very youngest members of the tribe were similarly employed and were taught simple food gathering. The sexual division of labour was based largely upon physical differences, with men taking on tasks such as hunting while women specialized in food gathering, child rearing, and cooking (Sharma, 1991).

The earliest human groupings offer no evidence of a division of labour based upon class. The challenges of providing food made it necessary for the whole group to contribute, so there could be no leisure class or even a class of full-time specialists producing articles not directly related to the food supply. There were, however, part-time specialists; a person who excelled at fashioning flint tools and weapons could produce enough to trade any surplus for food (Oakley, 1982).
The assignment of tasks in primitive agricultural societies may have involved a division of work along sexual lines, with the fields entrusted to the women while the men hunted (although men would have helped with the more physically demanding tasks such as clearing land). Because crop cultivation began as a part-time means of supplementing the food source, there was little likelihood of full-time specialization in primitive agriculture. Yet even in its earliest stages agriculture was significant to the organization of work, for it provided a slight surplus that could be used to support human society’s first real specialists: makers of metal tools and weapons (Parsons, 1959).

Work within the family farm unit often was divided along sexual lines: the men commonly bore chief responsibility for such seasonal tasks as plowing, sowing, tilling, and harvesting, while the women cared for children, prepared food, and made clothing. If slaves were available, their work was similarly divided. During planting and harvesting seasons, the entire family performed fieldwork, with sons and daughters entering into an apprenticeship under their parents. Technology also influenced work organization. The usual draft team in antiquity—a pair of oxen—required two operators: a driver for the team and a guide for the plow (Parsons, 1959).

Growth in the scale of commerce during the middle Ages was coupled with advances in technology. Both these phenomena helped transform the nature of work. Of central importance were the applications of wind power and waterpower; these marked the beginning of the replacement of human labour by machine power. The new machines introduced in the 18th century demanded a rational organization of job functions that differed greatly from that of the old handicraft tradition. Smith (1776) gave the classic description of the new production system as exemplified by a pin factory.

Women are now better off than they were five decades age. Women have jobs they are earning money they have more economics power in the 21st century than ever before. Economic globalization has finally provided women with a lifetime of opportunities. In the past thirty years electronic
communication and transport have interestingly made it possible for corporation to operate across national boundaries and at the same time bring women a better quality of life than they could envision for their futures. The rise of the service industry has resulted in increasing number of opportunities for women. More women entered the labour force occupying jobs that were once not available to them. These new available opportunities worked in a sustainable way. Jobs were created for mother's way jobs women were able to enter the labour force and look forward to a bright future (Raju, 1993).

The boundaries of the gender division of labour between productive and reproductive roles are gradually being crossed as women have started to enter formerly male-dominated areas of work and have started to accept greater responsibility for domestic tasks, including child care. However changes in women’s roles have been greater and much more rapid than changes in men’s roles.

Work is a socio-economic activity. It is universally found in all period and all stages of the human life in society. Work or earning is visibly seems to be an economic activity but it has social significance in the society. Therefore the economic activities have been developed within the framework of institutional norms. Work is not only meant for the livelihood but it also has an impact and social stratification such as class, caste, ethnic and gender based entity (Mehta, 1982).

In the process of civilization, the social activities have been institutionalized with norms and mores in the society. These norms helps develop the early institutions such as marriage, family and division of labour emerged in the society, The new phase of division of labour based on gender which is recognized as sexual division of labour. Women member of the family were restricted for only domestic work and as well as it was their duty of men member of the family were doing remaining work such as, bread earnings, farm works and cattle beards (Milkman, 1987).
In the present scenario women working outside have been raised even traditional patriarchal society. The conventional practice of gender based labour has been changing in recent days. There is need to re-define the role and status of women in patriarchal society.

**Conclusion:**

In the above chapter the argument has been conceptualized based on gender theory. The traditional values of sex based division of labour have been long practiced and have been deep rooted in patriarchal society till recently. This cultural practice has made women confine to certain submissive jobs. The various influences of modern democratic values have motivated younger generation in social, cultural, political and economic factors and changing the fabrics of the society. In the present scenario every aspect of the women is being traced through gender equality. It has changed the role and status of women and questioning the conventional existing values.

Since very recently, during the last couple of decades women are entering to the men’s working world. The problems of women working in this sector are not the same as those faced by women working in other arenas. The problems these women face are unique to their work environment. Society has also come to accept women’s foray into these predominantly male bastion since only the recent times. There is a need to redefine the role of working women because of the dual roles they play. On one hand they cannot forgo the tasks traditionally undertaken by women at home, such as cooking and taking care of the family. On the other hand, they also cannot back off from the responsibilities entrusted to them in the workplace. This has led to women undertaking responsibilities both at home as well as at workplace. Hence, there is a need for the policy makers also to frame policies that can lighten the burden on women to some extent.