Chapter-II

Review of Literatures
2.1. Introduction:

In the pages to follow regarding review of literatures, an attempt has been made to briefly present the issues and problems relating to "Women and Poverty". In India, along with Assam, the main focus of most studies on women is their poverty, social status, education, rights, and employment at the present days. This will not only help to find out the underlying factors responsible for the current trend of the poverty of women but also help us to proceed on our present topic.

In this chapter, 'Review of Literature' if we analyze the survey in category wise then we have to divide them in different categories as follows:

2.2. Social and Economic Status of Women:

In the first category we have six different well known studies of different researchers as stated below.

Anuva Saikia (1982) in her work on, "Economic Status of women in the Rural Areas of Assam," opined that women are an integral part in every Society. The Status of women in society is directly linked with social and cultural traditions, stages of Economic development achieved educational levels and political attainments for women in Society. The economic status of women is determined by the role played by them in Carrying on economic and non-economic activities in Society.

In her opinion, the economic status of women in Assam, the rural sector is dominant with 90% of its population living in 22,000 villages. Female population is a significant force in Assam. The economic Status of women at all India level indicates that in the large sector of village community consisting of cultivators, artisans and wage labours, women engage themselves in production and marketing of agriculture.
About 50% of the labour force in plantation industry consists of female workers. But only 8% of women workers are engaged in manufacturing industries of modern type and 4.3% are engaged in household industry.

According to Anuva Saikia, the Status of women in every Society is directly linked with Social and cultural tradition. The Economic Status of women is also carried on economic and non-economic activity in the Society. In her works, she also mentioned that, the factors influencing economic Status of women is related on the nature of economic and non-economic factors, demographic features of female population, economic development of women, reflection of women activities in employment and income statistics.

P.D. Saikia (1980) in his work 'Economic and Social Status of Rural Women (Non-Tribal) in Assam' – examined that the Status of women in Society, both in the developed and underdeveloped countries continues to be inferior to men. Women have not given equal rights in Social, political as well as in economic fields. The necessity of improvement of status of women has now been recognized all over the world as an important aspect of national progress and development. It is also felt that the problem of Poverty cannot be tackled without providing opportunities of productive employment to women. Productive employment to women would provide necessary economic base and improve their Social Status.

Women play a vital role in the Society. Apart from the matriarchal Society women play a decisive role in most of the patriarchal societies also. Though women are the key factor in the process of change and development, yet in many countries they are under estimated. In many parts of rural India women participate equally or even more in some societies with men in various agricultural operations.
According to him, the Female work Participation rate in Productive work is high in the European countries in comparison with the countries of South Asia. On the other hand, countries having tribal population have higher percentage of female workers.

In his work P.D. Saikia expressed that, both in under developed and developed countries women have not given equal rights in Social, political as well as in economic fields. It is also felt that the problem of poverty cannot be tackled without providing opportunities of productive employment to women.

(Women play a vital role in the Society. He also mentioned that, women are the key factor in the process of change and development.)

Ms. Minati Sharma (1991) in her work, “Status of Women Need; for Multi-dimensional Change” expressed her views on the social and economic status of women. The work reveals that, women in India is addressed as weaker section of the society or what is called fair sex and by that women are mostly under estimated, under mined and exploited. But in fact women are not the weaker section of the society; rather they are the pillars of the social fabric. Moreover, persistence of old ideas in the society that girls should not go for male dominated jobs, household chorus to be performed by women only are still the social menace which dominates the society and even educated people could not over come such irrational conviction. She also mentioned in her work that, social justice, equality, economic prosperity and peace are a remote dream for women. Women have shown their competency as and when got a projection. Highly qualified women are moving all around seeking for ventilation, violence against women is increasing day by day even in the hands of guardians of law. She also opined that, women in India belong to one community i.e. deprived and exploited section of the society.

Minoti Phukan (1975) in her work, ‘Status of labour women in the Tea Gardens of Assam’ – observed that, the Status of women is usually determined in terms of their role and position in a Social System or Sub System. The tea garden labour society is a
part of the broader of Assamese Society. But this labour community remained by and large aloof from the mainstream of the Socio-cultural life of the Assamese Society.

Though the tea-garden labour Society is a working class under highly capitalistic industry, usual pattern of industrial environment is absent. Yet the Status of women is not as per with men either in an economically affluent class or a working class in case of a tea garden labour. Status is defined as a relative position of an individual in a Social System or Sub-System. Status is realized through roles.

According to her, the Status of working women in Tea Garden areas is not considered to be equal to man in work. Occupational wage surveys indicate that in tea-plantations the wage disparity between male and female workers were 6.70% and 9.80% respectively. These findings indicate that women workers were not honored equally with the Status of men. The wage rate of men was found slightly higher than that of women in the selected gardens under study.

In concluding remark, the tea garden labour women are better placed in respect of employment as labourers in the gardens, because of their specialized skills in the tea plucking. The entire tea garden labour community being virtually uneducated and of non-contact with outside world, the Social Status of women labourer is not much influenced by other Societies.

Ms. Giti Goswami and Dr. Dilip C. Nath (1997) in their work, “The Status of Women and the Inter-live Birth – Interval; An experience of urban Assam”- opined that, the status of women, which is relative and multidimensional, has an important bearing on the long term reduction in the fertility level. Though, the status of women is found to have strong association with fertility behavior in developed and developing countries in all the continents, yet women are not accorded equal status with men practically in all countries of the world. In determining status of women, factors such as the role of women in decision making in the family and in the community, their educational status, their
participation in social, economic and political activities should be taken into consideration. Nath and Goswami said that, longer education which is considered to be the most important status reflecting variable of women. They again mentioned that, socio-economic condition of the household is also supposed to influence the length of inter birth interval, as it has been shown in several studies, that health and nutritional status of women, depends on socio-economic conditions of the household.

Thus, it is clear that education and parity of the mother, social and economic status of the household are the key factors that influence the length of inter live birth interval of urban women in Assam.

2.3. Human Rights and Poverty:

In this second category over the subject the studies of different well known researchers have been analyzed.

_Virendra Pal Singh (1994)_ in his work "Human Rights Situation and Poverty in the Tea Gardens of Assam" expressed the idea to explore the human rights situation in the tea gardens of Assam. In his paper, he discussed first in historical perspective and then by focusing upon the status of human rights situation in the tea gardens of Assam in recent years.

The paper is based on the review of existing literature on socio cultural life in the tea gardens of Assam and on the empirical observations of the present author in the gardens of South Assam in last five years.

_Pal_ opined that, human rights are, in varying degrees, included in the national political constitutions of a large number of countries. The United Nations has so far adopted around 50 human rights instruments conventions, declarations and proclamations. A U.N. study in April 1993, reports that at least half of the worlds population has been suffering from violation or deprivation of their human rights of one
kind or another. It states that nearly 1.4 billion people are absolutely poor and another 1 billion people are marginally poor; besides colossal refugee problem, under nutrition, millions of victims of racism and 200 million child labourers.

**V.S. Sundaram (1998)** in his work “India’s Poverty and Needed for Development of Human Right” opined that, estimates of poverty in India are typically based on normative minimum calorie intake. The calorie norms were fixed at 2200 calories per person per day for rural areas and 2100 calories per percent per day for urban areas. There is a close linkage between poverty, deprivation and ill health.

He mentioned that, the incidence of poverty was estimated to be 56.4% in rural areas and 49% in urban areas in 1973 – 74. About 35% of the total population falls below the artificial poverty line. In his work he also said the co-relation between strong economic growth and poverty reduction has continued in to the 1990’s. Although India has made significant progress in reducing poverty over the last two decades, the incidence of poverty is still much higher than most other regions of the world.

The 1998 World Bank Report Titled “Reducing Poverty in India” focuses on anti poverty policies of the government. Again he said India, has secured many notable social and economic achievements including the eradication of famine, a reduction in population growth and significant reduction in the levels of poverty.

He also described in his work that, human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. The development of women in their rights is one such area for the consideration of international community.

He also opined in his work that globalization and women are an important part in his work. Globalization has presented new challenges for the realization of the women’s equality, the gender impact of which has not yet been systematically evaluated. Again he pointed out that; benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed.
heading to wider economic disparities, the feminization of poverty, increased gender inequality.

_Gaya Panday_ in his work on "Poverty and Violation of Human Rights", The case of SCs, STs, Bonded Child, Migrants, Women and the Aged Labour opined that, human rights are those which are used essentially by all human beings beyond race, caste, region, ethnicity, religion, languages, creed, sex etc.

He again said “India is a country of multi-castes and multi-groups”. In India, social structure and the position of all castes is not equal. Women belonging to SCs, STs and weaker sections are exploited and oppressed by resourceful persons because they have to work to feed themselves and to supplement the family income.

Pandey in his work said, in our country instances of violation of human rights of aged labour appeal frequently. The families of aged labour are not in a position to feed them without earning. Aged labourers are not paid wages equal to young labour for some hours and same kind of work.

_A. Ramanamma and S. Sattar (1990)_ in their work, "Poverty, Human Rights and Women" find that, the human rights of the poor are more violated than the rich. In India, women are poorer than men. In the discussion of the entire population of women, especially the ST and SC women are very poorer. They find in their work and expressed that the main objective in their work is if social and economic poverty of women is to locate the violation against women poverty can also be increased. They opined in their work and they define poverty in different way like, poverty is hunger, poverty is lack of shelter, poverty in being deprived of literacy, poverty is powerlessness, and lack of representation and freedom.

In their opinion, poverty is a call for action - a call to change the world adequate shelter, access to education and health, protection from violence and a voice in what
happens in their community. They again said, a method to alleviate poverty, poverty has to be defined, measured and examined and even lived. In their work, they expressed that more than 40% of the population is illiterate, with women, especially tribal and SC women.

**Temma Keplan (1990)** on the work “Women’s Right as Human Rights – Women as Agents of Social Change” – mentioned that, the term “human rights” usually referred to violations of people's bodily integrity by the agents of the state. In the 1990’s grass roots women’s organizations pressured the official human rights organizations to discount the apparent separation between public and private life and to characterize as human rights abuses such violent acts as female genital nutrition, enslaving servants and child prostitutes, dowry death, domestic abuse.

She again pointed out that, women’s international social movements, basing their strategies on participatory democracy. In her work, she also mentioned that, during the last decade, grass roots women’s groups all over the world have been intensifying their call for “Women’s human rights”. The abuse of women and girl-child are not only unfortunate occurrences but are actually violations of women’s human rights, Since the 1970’s international women’s federations and grass roots women activities have occupied public spaces to denounce violations of women’s human rights.

**Jadi Bala Komaraiah (1998)** in her work “Human Rights and Poverty – the case of Scheduled castes / Scheduled Tribes and women, expressed that, human rights are those minimal rights that individuals need to have against the state or other public authority by virtue of being members of the human family, irrespective of any other consideration. Human rights can be generally defined as those rights which are inherent in our nature and without which we cannot live as human beings.

She again opined that, the work participation rates by sex, the SC/ST male workers are higher i.e. 51.41% for SCs and 54.74% for STs as compared to female
participation, i.e. 25.98% for SCs and 43.71% for STs. The SC/ST female population rates are significantly higher than that of their counterparts in the total population. In this discussion it confirms that the SC and ST women have to work in higher number because of their poverty.

2.4. Women’s Work and Employment:

Under the third category eleven well knew studies have been reviewed to assess women’s work and employment.

_Nirmala Banerjee (1983)_ in her work “Women’s Work and Discrimination” she said that, while poverty is by no means a problem confined to women alone there is now sufficient evidence to indicate that women are at a special disadvantage when it come to competing it through gainful activity. During the last decade this phenomenon has been widely noted in India through several studies, notably those of the NSS organization. Briefly she indicate that women are more concentrated in manual and especially casual activities, unemployment and seasonal variations in employment opportunities etc. are more frequent amongst them, the relative wages and earnings of women are usually lower than those of man in the same industries and operations. In spite of similar qualifications and same work women earn less than men. She again said, to a certain extent the inferior position of women in the present day labour market of India can be explained by the desperation of the women workers. In the last 20 years, growing poverty and a continuing state of stagflation in the economy have its impact on the labour force. A large number of women who had neither any training for the job market nor any preparedness for such work were deprived of getting jobs.

She examined in her work, “Forms of Discrimination and Women’s Work”, that two kinds of discriminatory practices in the labour market can lead to women’s inferior position; (a) for identical task women are paid less and (b) women are confined to a limited number of relatively inferior tasks. She opined in her work that, for identical agricultural task women’s earnings are less than 70% of the male ones.
Moni Mukharkjee (1984) in her work "Contributions to and Use of Social Product by Women" said, poverty is deprivation of something – for example, of goods and services produced in the economy in the conventional sense. Women were more deprived than man than poverty is reckoned. Women contribute relatively less in enterprises which sell commodities at a price above cost and make profits they contribute more to work within the household in comparison to man.

She also mentioned that, if we compare the contributions and sharing by man and woman in the social product including housewives, services the contribution of women is smaller simply because of economic factors or some conventional social factors which enjoin that women should be paid less than man even when they do the same job. The notion of poverty she mentioned here that, it has something to do with goods and services which households and persons desire or need to possesses. She again said that the biological need of man for food is taken to be higher than that of women. The main task in her work is an estimate of the value of housewives services in India, an estimate of the women's contribution to the net domestic product (NDP), the use of social product by women indicating how one could try to obtain quantitative estimates.

Amitabh Kundu (1994) in his work "Trends and Pattern of Female Employment, A case of organized informalisation" expressed that the participation of women in economic activities is the major concerned in gender studies. It is generally believed that an increase in employment of women would result in an improvement in their economic and social status. He again said in his work that, the involvement of women is much women oriented programme have also benefited the women, and therefore women as mere instruments for achieving better goals. He also opined that, increase in the workforce participation of women cannot by itself be taken as the objective of development strategy without considering the pattern of employment, nature of jobs, duration and work conditions. Kundu’s work also proves that, the work participation rate (WPR) in India comes out as higher for males than females. The work also expressed
that, the urban rates of work participation are lower than the rural areas, for both females and males.

**S.S. Suryanarayanan (1990)** in his work, "Gaps and Biases in Data Relating to Employment of Women" mentioned that, gaps and biases in the output in social process and it arise from inter group differences in the participation of the problem or phenomenon at hand and the socio-cultural factors. Gaps and biases result also from the general problem of the scope and content of data. He reveals in his work that issues like development of women, including employment of women are also, like any socio-economic issue, subject to such socio-cultural conditioning. Development of women had a low profile in the early phase of Indian planning. In his work he mentioned that, expansion and improvement of the data system on employment of the women received considerable emphasis in any of the period.

**Dr. Amitave Mitra (1993)** in his work, "Female Labour Participation – a District level study" – mentioned that, it is almost universally accepted that the women’s primary role is that of a home maker and it is for the man to provide subsistence to his family. Under certain conditions, in addition to the role of a house keeper, women also participate sometimes in the gainful activity of the community. The analysis of female participation in economic activity formed a part of very general topics about recognizing the rising status of women in society. He also finds in his work and mentioned that, in India, the Southern and the North Eastern states, have a higher female participation than the Northern states. He expressed that, according to 1991 census, the female participation is the highest in Mizoram (43.12%) followed by Manipur, A.P. and lowest in Punjab.

**Debendra Kumar Nayak and Aijazuddin Ahmed (1971)** in their survey, "Female participation in Economic activity" said that, female participation rate is remarkably low in the rural areas of Punjab and Haryana and high in other states. Female workers are generally confined to primary sector. Analysis of female participation at different levels reflects the view that women are confined to household chores. The other question of
primary importance is the structure of female work force. It was observed that female workers are generally confined to the primary sector and most of them are classified by the census as either cultivators or agricultural labourers.

In the study of B.G. Manniar, he said that, Poverty alleviation is a multi-level plan. He mentioned that minimum level of living standards continues to survive at a minimum subsistence level. He also mentioned that poverty line has defined as the per-capita monthly expenditure. Different alleviation programmes like, IRDP, TRYSEM, NREP, RLEGAP among the rural areas, to control the poverty alleviation. He again said that, if water harvesting, waste land uses control, literacy and education can control the problem of poverty alleviation little bit.

Virendra Pal Singh mentioned in his work that the status of tea-garden in Assam totally depends on the human right situation. He said that in the areas of tea garden 1.4 billion people are absolutely poor and another 1 billion people are marginally poor. He also said that the present human rights situation in the tea gardens of Assam can be analyzed in terms of the actual working condition of the labourers.

Again in the study of V.S. Sundaram, he said that human rights and development are both based on the basis of estimates of poverty and it is based on typical normative caloric intake. He also said that, the benefits of the growing global economy have been unevenly distributed heading to wider economic disparity.

Similarly in the study of Nirmala Banarjee, she mentioned in her work that, women are more concentrated in manual and especially casual activities and seasonal variations in employment opportunities.

She again said that, the position of women in the present day labour market can be explained by desperation of the women workers. In her work she said, over a long period,
consistently shows that not only in working condition of women and the wages were also lower in women’s job.

In the work of Moni Mukharjee, she opined that, women were, more deprived than men. When poverty is reckoned, women contribute relatively less in enterprises; they also contribute more to work within the household in comparison with men.

She again said, the contribution of work is based on the social product and services.

Dr. J. Bhagyalakshmi (2004), in her work on “Women’s Empowerment: Miles to Go” pointed out that, gender equality and empowerment of women is recognized globally as a key element to achieve progress in all areas. In her work she also mentioned that the development of women and protect their rights is the main important factor. Women have to face so many problems, especially rural women and their significant role in survival of their families. She also opined in her work that – Two third of world’s adult illiterates are women, 70% of the world’s poor are women. Though women play a major role in agriculture and allied sectors, their contribution is hardly recognized.

In her view, the empowerment strategies are – reservation of women in parliament and in state legislative, adequate representation of women in decision making, organizing women into self-help group are ensuring easy and equal access to education to women and girls. The policy recognizes the causes of gender inequality, which are related to social and economic structure. Besides empowering women to participate in decision making process, the policy also visualized the means of economic and social empowerment of women.

Sheetal Sharma (2006) in her work on “Educated Women, Empowered Women”– opined that, empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a good nation. Empowerment of women involves many things – economic opportunity, property rights, political representation, social equality, personal rights and so on. The status of women is
undermined by asymmetrical power relationships in decision making, personal and social rights, access to resources and entitlements. Women in many countries still lack of rights to inherit property, own land, get educated, obtain credit, earn income or work outside home, control their fertility etc. They are still widely under represented in involvement in decision making at the household or social level.

Although education is essential for everyone but in case of women it is particularly significant. Education plays an important role in bringing about awareness on women’s rights. Educated women are likely to have jobs, marry later and have small and healthy families. In her paper she said that, education of women is a step in direction of ensuring gender equality, education empowers women to make decisions about themselves, their families and their communities. Empowerment and development of women lays emphasis on removal of women’s illiteracy and obstacles inhabiting their access to elementary education, women’s participation in vocational, technical and professional education at different levels. Education would surely liberate and equip women with ability to take control of her life, accomplish her dreams and enhance her status; educated women are always empowered women.

*Sanjay K. Hangda, Parthe Ray (2006)* in their work on “*Employment and Poverty in India during the 1990’s*” pointed out both employment and poverty condition in India. This study focused on the observed inverse relation between poverty and unemployment. Employment promotion and poverty alleviation are often viewed as complementary policy. They again opined that in a world where sustained economic growth had led to a reduction in the incidence of poverty. At the macro-level, the linkages between growth and poverty can be conceptualized in terms of the average productivity of the employed work force. The relationship between poverty and unemployment could be a vicious one in the absence of growth. A vicious cycle between poverty and unemployment is, by no means, the only possibility, Employment intensive growth could, however, hold the key to poverty reduction. They also expressed that,
higher employment growth in the un-organized vis-à-vis the organized sector does not, however, assure productivity employment and hence, reduction in the poverty ratio.

**G.K. Chadha (1996)** in his work on, "Non-Farm Employment in Rural Areas: How well can female workers compete", express that, in the post independence history of India's economic development to some extent has grown up. We discover a mix bag of success and failures. But then, the long list of failures, especially in the areas of basic facilities for decent human existence, health, education etc. But now, the areas of success and failures are well known, and adequately commented upon. He mentioned that, in rural India, there has been undergoing economic transformation, not only in agriculture but in the non-farm sectors as well. Among the rural females it is more than that among their male counterparts. Among urban females also it is more than of their male counterparts. The male-female differentials also widened in the rural areas, while in the urban areas, the female workers improved their employment growth record by impressive margins.

The author shows that the discrimination against female workers as regards the type of employment offered wage rates or earnings per day. Chadha said that the male-female wage differential is the widest at the level of illiterate workers. The uneducated women are highly discriminated against in employment to regular salaried jobs, especially in the non-farm sector. It is indeed a pity that women are treated as respectable life partners but not respectable work partners.

'Women and Power' Empowerment matters, understanding power – Janet Gabriel Townsend in work this over the subject mentioned that – world poverty has been created and is kept going chiefly by the abuse of power, abuse of power in international trade, debt, investment and aid as well as in national and local politics, and abuse of power in the treatment of poor people by rich and of women by men. The goal of women's empowerment is not just to change hierarchical gender relations but to change all hierarchical relations in society, class, caste, race, ethnic relations etc. In his opinion,
empowerment means the gaining of power by the vulnerable. Feminists define empowerment in different ways. In the development matter, reduced to welfare or to poverty alleviation is very much important in the understanding power situation.

He emphasizes that, gender and development was created to stress the importance of power relations between women and men. Power goes far beyond decision making and even beyond observable conflicts of interest. In this paper, Townsend pointed that; women usually need permission to work as do anything. When a woman can go without permission, her husband has less power over her. Men in many societies see gains in power by women as threatening, and in terms of men’s power over women they are quite right. If women empower themselves, men’s power over them will be reduced.

2.5. Employment, Gender & Poverty in the Macro Economic Policies:

In this category the studies of two established researchers have expressed their views over the subject.

Jayati Ghosh (1995) in her work on “Macro Economic Trends and Female Employment: India in the Asian context” – this paper contains an attempts to consider some of the recent evidence on female employment in India, in the wider context of such patterns in Asian countries in general. In her work she mentioned that, in any consideration of female employment patterns in the past decade, the effect of macro economic processes and policies looms large. In almost all of these countries, the share of women in manufacturing has been increasing, and in some strongly export oriented countries such as South Korea, Malaysia and Thailand, women have overwhelmingly dominated in manufacturing employment particularly for export. Considering the implications of macro-economic strategies in general for improving the social and material status of women, the implications for the material conditions of women of such variable like – access to basic needs, such as food, clothing and shelter, and to the provisioning of common property resources should be taken into account. She again said that, access to education and skill formation which would allow women to move from
formal to informal employment and public to private sectors, typically favors the feminization of employment at the margin. Women are literally pushed into the labour force, usually on highly disadvantaged terms. The macro economic processes affect the material condition of women in these countries.

*Bina Pradhan* in her work on "*Gender Biases in macro Economic Policies*" explained that, women's issues and problems have been raised to the level of social consciousness such that theoretical formulations, policies and actions. Women have also received special attention as regard to poverty alleviation and basic needs programmers of various governments. She mentioned in her work “Strategic gender needs” from a feminist perspective is very much important task. She again opined that, the experiences of women in the third world, show increasing the female poverty (both absolute and relative) gender inequality and a lack of opportunities for women (Feldman, 1992). Female Poverty and exploitation of women labour in the household and market structure will continue. But above all she expressed in her work that, patterns in the feminization of wage labour, exploitative conditions, widening gender disparities, insecurity of women in labour markets, increasing female poverty and migration are only some of the inevitable consequences of development strategies and macro economic policies pursued by the respective countries in the region.

2.6. Women’s Works, Growth and Economic Reforms:

Under this category fourteen relevant studies of different researchers have been analyzed and reviewed as follows.

*Bina Agarwal (1987)* in her work "*Rural Women Poverty and Natural Resources, Sustenance, Sustainability and Struggle for Change*, examines that women in such house holds are burdened with a significant responsibility for family subsistence as female headed house holds and as sole economic providers.
She expressed that, women’s systematically disadvantaged position in the labour market, their little access to the crucial means of production associated with production technology lead them to many troubles.

In her work she focuses on the gender based inequalities in the distribution of food and health care within poor households that can endanger female survival itself.

In the next part of the analysis, she again said, gender inequalities, and in access to employment opportunities explores the links between these inequalities and the intra-household gender discriminatory practices. On the basis of ethnographic evidence which, highlights women’s unequal and declining access to land, and outlines some of the barriers they face, especially under the conditions of poverty.

_Bina Agarwal_ again mentioned in her work that, escalating ecological degradation in India today and its disproportionate burdens are fully borne by poor women.

_Srilatha Batliwala_ in her work, 'Women in Poverty' the Energy, Health and Nutrition Syndrome she stated that the word syndrome as a combination of Symptoms resulting from a single cause or so commonly occurring together as to constitute a distinct entity. It is hard to find a more opt definition of energy health, and nutrition and that relationship to Poverty.

It may be felt that Poverty has an impact on the health and nutrition of the poor, regardless of age and Sex. This paper attempts to show that what they (women) do- and also why strategies or women’s health and nutrition need to be emphasized within strategies for general development.

According to her, the role of women is the magnitude of the burden on them compared to that on men. To determine this she has to examine the hours per day spent on domestic and agricultural activities and translate these into calorie costs. The study did
not monitor other domestic works such as cleaning, sweeping, washing cloths and utensils and child care, all of which are calorie-intensive and all of which are performed almost exclusively by women.

*P.V. Sukhatme (1981)* in his work, "*Measurement of Poverty*" examined that, the 'Protein gap only occurs when there is a 'calorie gap'—but when overall intake calorie is sufficient, the amount of protein in also adequate.

Today his work has taken quite a different direction—direction which has frightful implications for women. To grossly ever simplify his theory, he states that just as there is inter-individual variation in food intake, there is also an intra-individual variation. Since both inter and intra individual food intakes will fall into a normal bell curve, even though everyone is healthy.

*Sukhatme* ignores the possibility that such 'adaption' over a life time may have disastrous consequences on health. He opined that more women die, earlier than men. He also pointed out that the maternal mortality is so high—400/1, 00,000 because of calorie deficiency.

He mentioned in his work, health care service can play an important role in alleviating the health problems of women to some extent.

*B.G. Maniar (1979)* in his work "*Poverty Alleviation – A Multi Level Plan*"—he opined that, 'poverty anywhere endangers prosperity everywhere'. By poverty means a social phenomenon in which a section of the society is unable to fulfill even its basic necessities of life. In another sense, it can be described as deprivation of minimum level of living standards and continues to survive at a minimum subsistence level. It means a poor person is unable to keep body and soul together. In his opinion, India is now facing the mass poverty problem. The extent of poverty in India is worked out in terms of poverty line.
He expressed in his idea that, P.D. Ojha was the first economist to estimate the extent of poverty in terms of the per capita per day expenditure. He also said that, in the year 1979 on the recommendation of the Task Force on Projection of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand, the poverty line was defined as the per capita monthly expenditure needed to obtain the consumption basket corresponding to the calorie norms of 2400 per capita per day in rural areas and 2100 per capita per day in urban areas in the base year 1973 – 74. The poverty line so defined was Rs. 49.10 for rural areas and Rs. 56.60 in urban areas.

He also defined that, water harvesting, waste land uses, population control, literacy as education, if we controlled all these problems these may help to solve unemployment problem, little bit to poverty alleviation. He again said, rapidly growing population is the biggest problem in eradication of poverty. Again, literacy and education backwardness are big impediments in alleviation of poverty.

Sundari Ravindran’s Study (1993) on “Poverty, Gender inequality and reproductive choice” mentioned that, poverty adversely affects health and indirectly fertility behavior. Resulting poor health, especially of women and children, affects reproductive choice. She again expressed reproductive behavior is also strongly influenced by maternal health. Sundari Ravindran’s Study reveals that infertility results from reproductive tract infections (RTI). Pregnancy wastage may be very high in the presence of RTIs. Ravindran argues that population growth is lower in India than in some other parts of the world. Further she points out that, agricultural growth is in pace with population growth but a skewed distribution rather than the increase in population. Poverty thus limits access to resources, affecting health and fertility. She again said, limited access to food, education or any other resource impinges on fertility decisions and behavior down generations on account of poor health and inadequate exposure to information on health, contraceptive use and low decision making capacity.
T.K. Moulik (1990) in his work on “Psychology of Poverty in India”, said that, poverty in India is not a new phenomenon. He mentioned in his work that the psychology of poverty in India is more a religious problem rather than otherwise. The main purpose of some what elaborate discussions above is an attempt to review the historical perspective of India’s poverty and a broad generalized view of the societal response towards the problem of poverty. In the socio-cultural premise the psychology of poverty in India is portrayed to solve the problem of poverty.

Moulik also reveals in his work that poverty is basically conceived here as a condition of material deprivation. The analysis of psychology of poverty, sites as its task the understanding of given behavior patterns within a specific group. Thus if one wants to understand the poverty situation in India, psycho analytically, considerable importance must be given to individual consciousness of poverty as it is experienced as well as group consciousness. He again said that, the “Psychology of Poverty” only when we can make definitive statements about the relationship between poverty and the behavioral traits of the poor.

Ratna Sudarshan and Bibek Pradhan in their work on “Global Trading Practices and Poverty Alleviation in India: A gender perspective”, mentioned that, the developmental experience does involve a gender gap. The status of both men and women, as judged by standard indicators, has improved over time. But the gender gaps still persists. They also mentioned that, the actual gender difference, since attendance is far lower for girls in schools, as observed in micro studies.

They mentioned in their work that, in terms of solution of poverty, there is little to add to what has been said in the context of unemployment. The direct schemes for reducing unemployment may also help to reduce poverty and growth is the best method of alleviating poverty. Poverty and extreme poverty in particular, has a gender dimension (a higher proportion of the very poor are women). Women in extreme poverty suffer from a lack of access to means of production, which is accentuated by illiteracy, weak position
within the household and low social status. In their work they also expressed that, women’s employment patterns are distinct. These characteristics influence the interpretation of changes in women’s work force participation rates. The ‘gender gap’ in literacy, health and skills all of which will influence women’s work participation.

Ajit Kumar Singha in his work on “Poverty Alleviation for Development” opined that sustainable development must bring the degree of abject poverty to a minimum level as far as possible. In his view, the relative poverty is a universal fact and has existed in every society at all times. In his paper he mentioned that, the level of abject poverty of the exposed poor masses deprived of basic human needs under the ‘Glass Curtain Economy’. Singha also mentioned that, the poverty was resulted into a low level survival rate, low adult literacy; population without access to safe water, health services and sanitation. Poverty has been historically identified as the main persistent malady of the Indian Economy. He also said that reduction in poverty and unemployment and improvement in the quality of life have the basic goals. The strategy of poverty alleviation was visualized since later part of 1970’s. The poverty alleviation programmes have not made significant dent on the problem of poverty. Singha again expressed that, poverty of poverty alleviation programmes jointly with anti development institutional framework have successfully kept the poverty in fact.

Talwar Sabanna in her work on “Growth, Poverty and Economic Problems in India, a Macro View” expressed that, there is an interesting debate in India on the impact of growth and economic reform on poverty alleviation. In the analysis of growth and poverty issues it is noteworthy that the increased GDP growth and moderate inflationary pressures have helped to alleviate poverty. She also opined in her work that, poverty in today’s official definition depends on the level of per-capita consumption. In India the issue of growth versus, poverty has been debated quite extensively. Inequality refers to the relative standard of living across the whole society. It is always assumed that a high level of inequality contributes to a high level of poverty in different ways.
Debesh Bhowmik (2007), in his work on "Women and Poverty" mentioned that, the concept of poverty is the nature of gender wise poverty and its measurement. If the poverty of male and female poverty and it’s relatively, are the same then no deprivation would be emerged. He also expressed in his work that, the level of poverty of both male and female are different. Generally the women are poorer than the male. He also said that, there are several reasons of women’s poverty namely, the numbers of poor women are higher than the male, and the level of poverty of women is below the male according to intensity of poverty. Because the women are more fatuous than the men, and their standard of living are comparatively low since their level of consumption.

In his opinion, women are poorer than the men, and its general causes are – the opportunities of employment of women are poorer than the men, another measurement of poverty is the calorie intake technique. The indicators of human development are the Principal measurement of limits poverty to the modern economists. He again opined in his work that, the life span of the women is higher than the men, so the burden of disease of women is greater than the men. He also defined that, women’s poverty is in tensed in calculating the human development index. Women are deprived in education, nutrition, occupation, leadership and freedom compared to men.

Ramkrishan S. Ranjan (2002) in the work on "Trade Liberalization and Poverty Revisiting the Age old Debate" mentioned that, the issues economic globalization and poverty, the issue is far from straight forward. It is important to keep in mind that globalization of production and trade, globalization of finance and capital flows and globalization of labour, both are mutually exclusive trends. He said in his work that the aspect of globalization that would undoubtedly reduce poverty world wide would be to allow greater mobility across national borders of unskilled labour. Indeed, the recent World Bank (2002) report entitled Globalization, Growth and Poverty, which attempts to offer evidence of the benefits of being a ‘globaliser’ implicitly, recognizes that there may not be a direct link between trade policy measures and outcomes.
Suresh D. Tendulkar (1987) in his work on “Economic Growth and Poverty” opined that the relationship between economic growth and relative income inequality has received considerable attention in the development literature since 1955. The relationship between economic growth and incidence of absolute poverty has not been sufficiently explored. But in India, the anti-poverty strategy has relied and continues to rely on economic growth as one of the major instruments for poverty alleviation. He said in his work that, economic growth can or cannot be expected to reduce the incidence of poverty. Indian economy is predominantly agrarian, densely populated, large economy with a diversifised industrial structure that is typical with reference to its low level of per capita income. Poverty is viewed as a state of absolute deprivation defined operationally in terms of a certain normative minimum level of per capita consumer expenditure called the poverty line. This paper attempted to explore the relationship between economic growth as a casual factor and the incidence of absolute poverty as a consequence.

Arjan de Haan (2004) in the work on “Migration, Gender, Poverty: Family as the missing link” expressed that, the links between migration and poverty are different and increasingly a gender perspective has informed studies on migration. The differences in terms of gendered patterns of migration are as striking as the similarities. This paper explores the gender perspective, that rather than looking at women. They also mentioned that, women’s access to employment and migrations have changed during the 20th century. The paper is written on the assumption that, internationally, the majority of migrants are men, but that women are by no means absent. Female migration and employment have changed over time. He also emphasizes a link between patterns of feminization of migration. As regards migration, Gender, Poverty, Hann opined that, the links between poverty and migration, neither at the macro level, nor at the level of individuals and groups. Hann has written in his paper that, poverty and deprivation would be the main driver behind the migration, but the geographic as well as the gendered patterns of migration proved to be much more complex.
Malavika Karlekar (1982) in her work, “Poverty and Women’s work” expressed that, among the poor, it is the women who are most affected by development, either by being ‘by passed’ or by being used to bring about the modern economy. Those working in the proliferating area of women’s studies feel that as middle class men are by and large in positions of decision making, plans and programmes to overlook the needs of women. The proportion of the world’s women who were officially classified as being in paid employment increased from 31.3% to 35%. It is assumed that, female illiteracy and ignorance would hamper a women’s ability to work in both outside and inside the household.

It is important to note over here that continued female employment at certain levels does not necessarily mean an enhancement of personal status. The wider role of employment in a women’s life depends on her position in the socio-economic hierarchy.

She also opined that, for the large bulk of the world’s female working force, poverty decides how the family income is to be spent. It is true that working class women in employment may have mere freedom in deciding when they should get any work. In the discussion of the female work force participation, the female work force rate increased at a faster rate. In 1971 census it was only 12.7% but at present, of the total women workers in the country over 80%. Employment of women in certain low status, ill paid jobs provides men with the opportunity to move out of traditional occupations. She also expressed that, women more than men are subjected to various forms of exploitation.

2.7. Class Relation, Family Structure and Bondage of Women:

Joyoti Gupta in her work over the subject opined that wives of bonded labours are often forced to intensify their labours both within and outside the home in order to help the husband and repay debt as reviewed below:
Jayoti Gupta (1990) in her work, "Class Relations, Family Structure and Bondage of Women" said that, the legal and economic bondage of woman is contemporary India has been relatively ignored in existing literature. In her work she mentioned that, only 2.3% of bonded labourer as female (Marla – 1981). Wives of bonded labourer’s women are often forced to intensify their labour both within and outside the home in order to help the husband repay his debt.

She again opined that, a relationship of dependence and the status of an unfreeze labourer is from the essence of this system of bondage.

The central focus of the paper is on the manner in which class relations mediate between various forms of family and gender relations.

2.8. Women’s Work and Fertility:

Youssef in his work expressed that paid work may be significant for women’s autonomy, promoting her decision making authority etc. as analyzed.

Yousefs (1982), studies on "Women's work and Fertility" – reveal that, women’s work primarily refers to her economically remunerative activities and excludes the entire gamut of her activities within the household that are unpaid. Studies point out that, paid work may be significant for women’s autonomy, promoting her decision making authority that in turn positively influences reproductive choice. The relationship between women's work and fertility is neither direct nor simple. Studies reveals that through various intermediary factors, work may have a positive or negative effect on fertility. A number of hypotheses have attempted to capture the relationship between women’s work and fertility. As Youssef derives from these findings, the negative impact on fertility may be highest where the role conflict between home and work is greatest for the women. Thus a number of factors related to women’s work have a negative influence on fertility.
2.9. Modern Women’s Problems and Solutions:

*Srinivas* mentioned in his work that women’s status has remained low in comparison to men in different caste, religion and region etc.

*Srinivas (1978)* in his work on “Modern women’s Problems and Solutions”, he mentioned in his work that women had to suffer some or the other form of problem in different degrees from time immemorial. This is true that in comparison to men, women’s status was remained low, but women’s status also has differed along with region, caste, class, religion and the urban, rural and tribal differences. *Srinivas* has also opined that lack of occupational opportunities is applicable on only middle class women. *Srinivas* has also commented that in Indian society at present, both traditional values (in-equalitarian) and modern values (equalitarian) are in existing. The girls of modern families are seen protesting against the discrimination and they also abolish the difference between poor girls and richer one. Now-a-days he also expressed that, all parents of middle class are giving education to their daughters. Girls are also studying today at an equal level with boys due to various reasons, maintaining higher standard of living. Before independence, the girls who wanted to devote more time to their career, used to adopt an un-married life and remain satisfied generally. But now owing to the changing views of men and women, the tendency of carrying out both, the profession and married life, is increasing among women.

2.10. Technology and Feminization of Work:

*Iftikar Ahmed* commented on the extended and the trend of female labour force participation in recognized and remunerative economic activity.

*Iftikar Ahmed (1994)* in his work on “Technology and Feminization of work” expressed that, the labour force participation rates of women have been fairly high and increasing in most parts of Asia. The extent and the trend of female labour force participation indicate much greater involvement of women in recognized and
remunerative economic activity. Ahmed also mentioned in his work, the aggregate labour force participation rates in Asia have been increasing for women and declining for men. It has been observed that, there is always a trend towards feminization when employment contracts and conditions in an occupation become flexible and hence un-bargain able in nature. Thus he also said that the trend towards feminization of employment in Asian countries results from employers needs for cheaper and more “flexible” source of labour, and is strongly associated with the moves towards casualisation of labour.

2.11. Gender Gaps and Development:

Bibek Debroy over the subject opined although women perform a large chunk of the work, their contribution is often undervalued partly because of gender gaps.

Bibek Debroy in his work on “Gender Adjustment Policies and Social Safety Nets” opined that, an economic reform or liberalization process can be broken down into two components-stabilization measures and structural adjustments. He mentioned in his work that, in the year 1989 – 90, 34% people below the poverty line and it increased to 38% in 1991 and 40% in 1992. Many of these poor are women. The gender gap in development has been commented upon often enough. Debroy attempted that particularly in subsistence economics; women perform a large chunk of the work, although this contribution is often under valued. Partly because of this under valuation, gender gaps are reflected in wage rates, health care, educational attainments and nutritional status. It can therefore be argued that economic growth tends to reduce the gender gap, even if it does not completely eliminate it the same.

2.12. Rural Poverty in India:

Barbara Harris over the subject communicates the holistic experience of rural poverty.

Barbara Harriss (1986) in their work on, “Rural Poverty in India, Micro level Evidence”. Locations, magnitudes, intensities and trends are the macro level stocks in
trade informing the anti-poverty agenda. The micro study may communicate the holistic experience of poverty.

She again discussed, micro level evidence are related to scale. The integrating non-quantitative information of a relational nature, about non-economic factors such as caste and gender, which affect poverty indicators such as income, expenditure, assets and debts etc.

In her work he said that, the theory and unit of enquiry, micro level evidence for poverty the scope of this review, all these are the important for the rural poverty in India.

**Research Gap:**

Most of the studies deal with the relationship between poverty and gender. However, very few studies have actually dealt with the extent and measurement of economic poverty in quantitative terms, extended to various dimension of economic prosperity. Such studies are even rarer when we consider North East India of South Assam. Though the general perceptions that the status of women in this region is superior to other parts of the country, yet an in depth study to the accessibility of economic opportunities or resources, may reveal the real dimension of suppressed or concealed discrimination if any, existing in this region. The present study therefore proposes to fulfill this gap in gender studies relating to this area.

**2.13. Conclusion:**

From the above mentioned valuable studies it can be said that Economic and Social Status of Women is very much important in the development of ‘Women’s Poverty’. All these studies indicate that women are not recognized as the social and economically equal to men. In their works they also mentioned that, economic and social status of women is related to the nature of economic and non-economic factors, demographic features of female population, economic development of women, reflection
of women activities in employment and income statistics. It is also felt that, the problem of poverty can not be tackled without providing opportunities of productive employment of women. Social justice, equality, economic prosperity and peace are a remote dream for women. The status of women totally depend on the role of women in decision making in the family and in the community, their educational status, their participation in social, economic and political activities. It has been shown in several studies that, health, equal distribution and nutritional status of women depend on socio-economic condition of the household.

But in practice women are still in the grip of traditional roles and have not freed themselves from the dominance of men power. In order to save them from poverty stricken situation, women should understand the value of education, their rights, should become economically independent and also should improve their standard of living and status etc.

References:


