CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of the existing studies relating to the research problem has been arranged briefly under the following subheads:

2.1 Women’s involvement in various activities

2.2 Socio-Economic status of women

2.3 Livelihood security, its measurement and coping up strategies.

2.1 Women’s Involvement in Various Activities

Hirway and Roy (1999) inferred that for netting rural woman’s work, concepts and methods adopted by census and population and the NSS were not adequate. These methods presented gross underestimation of women’s participation in economic activities. They were hopeful of time survey method to solve this problem. They inferred that:

1. Contribution of rural women in terms of time and effort was not low or less than that of men but this effort was largely unpaid, home based and not visible

2. Men put in 46.06 hours in extended system of national accounts activities put together per week while women spent 52.32 hours per week on these activities. They spent 25.2 hours on household management, 5.06 hours on taking care of children, old and sick (men one hour) and 0.07 hours on community services etc (men 0.12 hours) per week.

Subrahmanyan (1999) attempted to analyse issue relating to female labour use in Andhra Pradesh agriculture. The data collected for the study on income, saving and investment conducted by Agro Economic Research Centre covered 100 household over 10 villages for 1971-92 and 1997-98.

He concluded that introduction of HYV seeds and mechanization in paddy cultivation increased the demand for female labour by 85 percent. Cotton, paddy and chillies had high female labour participation and sugarcane had the lowest demand for
female labour. Females of 85 percent of the cultivating households participated in family farm activities and this proportion was higher among marginal and small farmers.

**Tripathi (1999)** measured women’s contribution in hill economy of Tehri district of Uttar Pradesh. Analysis indicates that annual contribution of women to crop production was 80 percent of total labour employment whereas men contributed just 20 percent. Women contributed 41% higher for field preparation, manuring and sowing over male’s contribution. Weeding and hoeing accounted for 48 percent of total human labour requirements of which 45 percent was contributed by women. In fruit production, female labour employment accounted for 64 percent of total labour employed whereas it was 36% for male counterparts. The labour contribution of women in milk production was 82 percent of the total employment. Regression analysis revealed that contribution of female labour in the production of fruits, crops, milk and to the gross farm income was positive and significant.

**Sharma et al. (1999)** estimated the magnitude of participation of female labour to agricultural and livestock enterprises and contribution of female labour to total farm income. The study was based on sample of 120 households drawn from two blocks, Nichar and Kalpa in the tribal districts of Kinnaur of Himachal Pradesh. Cobb Douglas production function was used to study the resource elasticities and Euler’s theorem was applied to estimate the increase.

The results showed that the contribution of female labour to total labour requirement was more than half except on operations of marketing of crop production and livestock rearing. In case of livestock enterprises, female labour contributed 70 percent for indoor activities. Female labour contributed more to total income in all important crops and livestock than male labour in all farm categories. It was suggested that females of the tribal areas should be trained and time saving energy sources like cooking gas, child care center and better educational facilities should be made available to the women in these tribal areas for better resource utilization.

**Ghuman (2005)** in his study on female participation in agricultural activities in sub-mountainous region of Punjab concluded that the respective share of males and
females was 57.69 percent and 42.31 percent in the two enterprises of dairy and crop production in the paddy zone against 49.36 percent and 50.64 percent in maize zone. In paddy zone their share of participation was 36.81 percent in dairy and 7.94 percent in crop sector. In maize zone their respective participation share was 22.98% in dairy and 11.08% in crops production.

Operation wise use of female labour was limited to hoeing, harvesting, threshing transplanting, grading, marketing and storage activities. Their participation ranged from 23.68% to 26.04% in hoeing, harvesting (34.78% to 38.89%), threshing (31.93% to 36.90%) and transplanting (39.77% to 45.83%) on different farms in paddy zone as against hoeing (21.53 to 23.00%), harvesting (35.77 to 38.41%), threshing (33.33 to 34.41%), transplanting (38.60 to 40.87%) on maize farm categories respectively.

Statistical analysis of work participation by male and females on daily basis showed that females spent more time in domestic activities than men. Time spent on agricultural activities in a day was almost the same for men and women.

Singh and Sengupta (2009) analysed that women’s participation varies across regions of states of Punjab and Madhya Pradesh. In upper Punjab, women hardly work but in middle Punjab, women work as hired agricultural labour and not as family worker. In lower Punjab, some women work as cultivators. Caste factor has a role to play. Upper caste women (Jat sikh) do not work in the fields as farmers and labourers. Rai Sikh women work in crop production as cultivators and involve in all activities except ploughing. Majority of labourers from BPL (Below Poverty Line) families do hired work but do not own land. Women in Madhya Pradesh (from BPL families) engage in all activities in agriculture while men work in rural services sector. Women work on their fields and also as agriculture labour. They are involved in animal husbandry, in milching, washing and making cow dung cakes.

Chayal et al. (2010) conducted a study in Bundy district of Rajasthan to assess women involvement in agriculture. He estimated that women participation was 100% in major farm operations of cleaning, picking, cutting, storage, drying of grains and processing. In weeding, gap filling, winnowing, cleaning, shifting produce to threshing floors and grading, their involvement was more than 75%. In threshing, raising nursery
for seedlings and thinning, their participation was 50-75%. In manuring, sowing and in irrigation, their participation was 25-32.5%. Their involvement was minimal in ploughing (2%) and in fertilizer applications (1%). Women were not found participating in marketing of the produce.

2.2 Socio-Economic Status of Women

Mason (1986) explored several conceptual problems in social demographic studies of status of women including clarification of much used term, ‘status of women’. He stressed on most definitions of status of women implying one of three dimensions of gender inequality: prestige; power and access to or control over resources. Problem of measuring status of women reflects failure of many authors to adopt clear definition of the concept. The second problem in measurement arises because a legal right may enhance women’s prestige or autonomy in one context but have opposite effect in other. He suggested various demographic, family and economic indicators commonly mentioned in sociological literature in measurement of status. Men and women are typically unequal in number of important aspects and nature and extent of their inequality varies across social settings and life cycle stage. Strategies likely to improve on quality of work on status of women are to avoid using the term status of women and instead talk in terms of gender inequality. Status of women probably should refer to differences among women in power, prestige or resources rather than to inequality between sexes.

In a world, where women bear and rear children, their autonomy from male control during child bearing years, the respect they are accorded by virtue of being women, type and amount of resources they control, should be the determinants of mortality among infants, children and women.

Gupta (1987) carried out a study to investigate female discrimination in rural Punjab. Eleven villages in Khanna tehsil of Ludhiana district were restudied after earlier survey in 1950.

Findings emphasized that despite many changes, sex differentials in child mortality in Punjab continue. In Punjabi society, female discrimination is strongly
related to individual couple's family-building strategies. Punjabi parents are careful to limit the number of daughters they should have. Overall results show that child mortality are affected more by the socioeconomic status of parents (as measured by mother’s education or land holdings) than by sex differentials. Discussing the extent of "neglect," the study envisages that in the years of peak mortality (first two years of life), expenditure incurred on medical care for sons was 2.34 times higher than for daughters. Nutritionally, boys received nutritious food that was superior and valued socially. Higher amount was spent on clothing boys which reflects differences in caring between genders. Wider sex differentials were observed among children in health care than in food allocation.

The study suggested that strong preference for sons hinders decline in fertility rate. The reasons for discriminating against females are not only economic but also are culturally determined. In Punjab, sex bias is determined more by rights of asset ownership and decision making. The structure in the state restricts women from providing economic and other necessary support to their parents. Thus cultural factors transform into economic considerations. Sex differentials in child mortality in Punjab and Haryana have stronger sex differentials than in rest of the country. The main reason behind this is that females in Punjab are structurally marginalized in the region’s kinship system. Indian society is patriarchal. Parents benefit more from having sons than daughters as daughters cannot contribute to the subsequent welfare of her natal household after her marriage. The flow of resources is one sided i.e. from the woman's parents to her husband's household throughout her life. “Because women are so marginalized, brothers and sons are of greater value than sisters or daughters for every individual”. This reinforces the mindset of the parents to rear them in a better way than daughters.

Malhotra and Manther (1997) examined a sample of 577 women in Kalutara district. Role of women in household decision making, control over money matters and other household matters were the dependent variables. The main factors identified which affect decision making were; women’s and husband’s characteristics e.g. education; participation in wage work; life course stage; family structure. Results
concluded that paid work and education increase women’s decision making in financial, but not social and organizational matters concerning the household.

**Hosgor and Jeroen (2006)** conducted a study to assess differences in gender roles, attitudes, socio-economic status, attitudes and autonomy among women. Turkish Demographic and Health Survey data (1998) was used. Analysis was conducted on nutrition and health of women and children in developing countries. Dummy variables were used to assess gender roles, attitude by creating dichotomous dependent variable. Main questions posed were “Whether women married before age 16; if there was blood relationship with the husband; if the marriage was arranged by the family; was there a bride price paid for the marriage and if there was only a religious marriage ceremony”. Multi variable logistic regression analysis was conducted for two indicators of “traditional gender role attitudes: whether or not women agreed with the statement that important decision should be made by men and it is better for a male than a female child to have education”.

Results indicate that women in countryside and East Turkey accepted traditional gender role attitude more than those in the town. Women in the west living in towns fared better with regard to educational opportunities and household income but their dependence on their husbands were more than those of countryside because very few of them were gainfully employed. The women in the east were found to be worse than in other region on all indicators of women’s status used in the analysis.

**Haddad (1999)** examined association between child nutrition outcomes and relative status of women in seven Asian countries. He used various indicators in the study to examine status of women relative to men by using UNDP’s HDI, GDI, GEM trends.

The results indicate lower status of women in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan as compared to other countries of South and East Asia and those of the world. He concluded that female status and her education results in 50% of reduction in child malnutrition rates over the period of 25 years. Perpetual poor status of women carried over from one generation to the next with more preference to boys. “This resulted in
higher rates of female infant mortality, less food given to girls, less health seeking behavior for girls and lower educational investment in girls”.

He concludes that equality in women’s status relative to men’s had a positive impact on child’s growth and. Moreover, it discourages gender based discrimination perpetuated through generations. It also sought economic and cultural reasons for poor status of women in the countries under study. Efforts need to be put to modify policy and design projects to counter gender discrimination. He stressed on reliance on monitoring of the status of women and the support required from enabling legal environment.

**Puhazhendhi and Jayraman (1999)** evaluated the performance of informal group promoted by NGOs in terms of empowerment of rural women in Periya district in Tamil Nadu and Chitradinga district in Karnataka. They concluded that group activities improved literacy significantly. 55 percent graduated to school during group organization. 67 percent effected improvement in their homes, 20 percent improved sanitation facilities in their houses significantly. Quantity and quality of clothing showed improvement. Value of good hygiene was realized by the members. Children were being immunized against various diseases. These improvements in the physical quality of life of the group members also significantly contributed to overall improvement of the life style of the members.

**Jyothi et al. (1999)** stressed on rural women’s empowerment and their role in decision making in farm financial and household activities in Kolar district of Karnataka where Integrated Rural Development Programme was being carried out. Sample of 90 households was selected and an empowerment index was constructed. This index comprised variables like women's education, social participation, savings, ownership of land, ownership of other assets, control over income of the family and access to credit. The magnitude of empowerment index showed that among large farm categories, only 3 percent had high level of empowerment. The logit analysis performed to identify the socio-economic factors that have bearing on the decision making process revealed that women's participation in farm financial decisions was positively associated with education of the husband and empowerment index of the women.
Singh et al. (1999) attempted to examine extent of contribution of farm women in decision making in Punjab. The study concluded that women decision was less than 30 percent in farm activities like sale and purchase of land, machinery, implements, fertilizers, taking loans and advances. As regards non farming activities such as purchase of consumer durables, social and religious ceremonies, women's participation was more than 50 to 80 percent. The impact of women's education significantly explained 67 percent of the variation in farm income of households significantly.

Kishore et al. (1999) analysed the role of women in decision making process in agriculture in Khairabad and Machrehta blocks of Sitapur district in Uttar Pradesh. They concluded that respondents having high participation in decision making were highest in medium socio-economic status group (23.53 percent) followed by higher socio-economic status group (17.94 percent). None of the lower socio-economic status group women were involved in high level of participation in decision making. Thus, it was concluded that level of involvement of women in decision making was influenced by factors such as level of education, land holding, joint or nuclear family, caste, age, landholding and socio-economic status.

Alagumani (1999) reported that 73 percent rural women were involved in decision regarding household consumption in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. 55.74 percent were involved in production decision and 38.70 percent of rural women were involved in investment decisions.

Sain and Aggarwal (1999) examined the impact of changes in the cropping enterprise on employment and economic status of women in the periphery of Ludhiana city in Punjab. The results highlighted that the status of women labour force tilted in their favour when cropping pattern underwent change from wheat to winter vegetable production. The shift from cereals to vegetable production improved the status of women wage earners. The study suggested that some portion of area may be allocated towards vegetable enterprise so as to improve economic condition of poor women by providing them gainful employment.

Tuteja (2000) while studying the contribution of female agricultural workers in Haryana concluded that proportionate contribution of females in household income
declined with increasing farm size. The status of female agricultural workers in decision making was found to be poor. They did not enjoy the status commensurate to their involvement in the households as workers. They lacked in health, education, support services and did not have access to economic resources.

Sathar and Kazi (2000) aimed to find necessary dimensions of women’s autonomy in household and community decision making in rural Pakistan and to determine relative association of socio-economic status and women’s autonomy. The variables used for the study for four main areas were: community, women’s status, socio-economic and household characteristics. Women’s status was divided into five areas: decision-making, access to resources, mobility, the relationship of fear of husband and communication with him and economic autonomy. Socio-economic characteristics chosen for the study were: education of spouses, husband’s occupation, income and landholding. Indices were compiled for access to resources, decision-making inside and outside home, economic autonomy, mobility, domestic violence, inter spousal communication and domestic violence. Multiple linear regressions as a statistical technique were used to study their independent effects. Explanatory factors were education of the respondents and husbands, age of the respondent, her economic activity, their residence and family type. Their main findings were that Northern Punjabi women exhibit less economic autonomy, higher mobility and higher autonomy in decision-making than their counterparts of Southern Punjab. Age and family structure affected women’s autonomy significantly whereas education turned out to be an insignificant factor. Education of the spouse was also not statistically significant in explaining variations in autonomy and coefficients were negative. Income also could not have much influence on women’s autonomy. Women’s work had positive effect on women’s autonomy, negative on access to resources, and positive association with fear of husbands. The results indicate that “community effects were strong in setting norms regarding mobility and economic opportunities for women and levels of education of both men and women”. Women in barani areas had the advantage of making certain household decisions but had less economic autonomy due to their limited work opportunities. Mobility in Central Punjab was higher which played significant role in accessing markets as well as in health care and family.
**Bloom et al. (2001)** in their study analysed the relationship of maternal health care utilisation and dimensions of women autonomy in Varanasi, India from a sample of 300 respondents. They investigated variables affecting women autonomy in three areas: decision making power, control over finances and freedom of movement. A composite measure for each area was created. Cronbach alpha coefficient assessed reliability of index. Goodness of fit test assessed appropriateness of the final model. Proportional odds regression model estimated the likelihood of the decision making. After controlling for covariates like age, education and household structure, women having ties with her natal kin had higher likelihood of having greater autonomy in all three areas. The results indicate that women with greater mobility utilized higher level of antenatal care and were likely to go in for safe delivery care.

**Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001)** based their findings on study conducted in Pakistan’s Punjab province and from two Indian states and examined women’s autonomy, taking into account her decision making, freedom from threatening relations with husband, mobility and access to and control over economic resources. These factors were highly constrained in Pakistan and in North India than in South India. The results suggested that South Asian women were not included in family decision making.

Summary index of autonomy was constructed. Ordinary Least Square regression of the composite index of autonomy of all the factors assumed to influence autonomy was estimated. They concluded that in gender-stratified society of UP and Punjab, autonomy was affected by factors like family structure, size of dowry, absence of control, the economic activity (UP) and secondary education (Punjab). Tamil Nadu having egalitarian society set-up, education and economic activity turned out to be powerful indicators of autonomy. Pooled regression analyses show that the influence of religion was moderate and not consistent. Tamilian Muslims exhibited higher autonomy than Hindu or Muslim counterparts from U.P and Punjab. Influence of Islam had been modest in South and Hindu culture played a dominant role. Factors playing dominant affect on women’s autonomy and conferring her with authority in U.P and Punjab were identified as; age, marital duration, number of surviving sons, nuclear family, residence and dowry. Female autonomy varies in different regions of the country. Women of
south India exhibited higher level of autonomy than those residing in the north. Regional social system was far stronger in north than that of religion and nationality.

Randhawa (2002) carried out a study to examine decision making role of rural women in Amritsar district of Punjab. She concluded that farm women had little or no say in routine farm activities like arranging inputs, deciding about crop productions etc. With respect to non-farm activities or domestic activities concerning family, women had monopolistic power to make decision. The results of linear regression on the factors affecting decision making of rural women brought out that education of the women, nuclear status of the households, status of husband in the family, dowry brought, economic condition of parental family of the women turned out to be significant variables boosting the decision making role of rural women.

Hindin (2002) explored the nature of women’s autonomy in household decision making using data from 1994, Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey. The key independent variable for the study was marital status. The survey included women who were single, married and divorced/widowed at the time of the survey. The sample population consisted of 1639 single, 3138 married, 471 divorced and 206 widowed women. He explored the relationship between autonomy and marital status using cross tabulation. Hypothesis 1 was tested to see if men dominated. Multivariate logistic regression technique was used to describe the association of marital status and autonomy with attention to social context in which decisions were made.

Results indicate that married women were less likely to have no say in major purchases (OR=0.06), over their own working (OR=0.20) and over their own earnings (OR=0.41) as compared to single younger women. Married women were more likely to have no say over the number of children (OR=1.75). When older women marry and were married for 5 years or less, they were less likely to report having no say in decision about major purchases and whether they worked. They were less likely to report having no say in decision about number of children to have. Young women with longer duration of marriage were less likely to have no say in major purchases (OR=0.63) and number of children (OR=0.87). Divorced and widowed women were more likely to report having no say over major purchases (OR=1.64). Women who
returned to live in their parental home had less autonomy than other divorced or widowed women. They were 7.23 times more likely to have no say over the purchase, three times less likely to have no say over their own work and earning (OR=0.35).

Mahat (2003) explored reasons for low status of women in Nepal. The strong bias in favour of sons means that girls are discriminated. He analysed that women have low levels of access to education, healthcare, economic, political and social opportunities. Literacy rate for men and women was 60% and 30% respectively and maternal mortality rate was highest in the world. One out of 32 pregnant women died due to pregnancy and child birth complications. GDI (Gender Development Indicator) of these women was worse than other South Asian women. Women’s participation in politics was only one fifth of that of men. The empowerment approach which was fundamental to alternative development philosophy placed emphasis on autonomous decision making for communities, direct democracy and experimental social learning.

The study mentions that women lack human rights. Legal provisions deprive women from getting equal opportunities as men. Women’s access to land and property was derived through her marriage. Constitutional provision lacked enforcement mechanism to protect women from sex discrimination and exploitation. Trafficking of girls and domestic violence were endemic. Most rebels were protective to women. Government and NGOs have establishing wings to focus on women’s empowerment but real action at the grass root level was still needed.

Anonymous (2005) National Family Health Survey (II) was conducted to study the factors influencing female autonomy and their relative significance for the well being of a woman in Kerala. The autonomy has been measured in terms of women’s power of decision making, their mobility status and access to resources. The dependent variables for the study were; who decides on health care; who decides to purchase jewellery; who decides to cook and who decides if women can stay with her family. Composite index of autonomy was determined by giving values 0 or 1 to all the indicators.

Multivariate regression analysis as a statistical technique was used for the study. Autonomy index was constructed and used as the dependent variable. Set of
independent variables retrieved from the data were age, education, place of residence, family structure, religion, caste, standard of living index and work status. Results of regression analysis indicated that education had significant negative relationship with autonomy. Caste and standard of living were insignificant in influencing women’s autonomy. Age showed significant positive relationship. Muslim women exhibited less autonomy as compared to their counterparts from Hindu families. Women’s nuclear families enhanced their autonomy. Multivariate classification analysis was carried out to assess the gross and net effect of independent variables on autonomy. Although education had shown a negative and moderately significant relationship in multivariate regression yet its net effect had reduced implying that education did not have a significant effect on women’s autonomy in multiple classification analysis. In case of work status, its effect had reduced on women’s autonomy in age of 35-39 years indicating that women had less autonomy in their reproductive years. Greater autonomy in the growing years influenced the reproductive decisions of their daughters and daughters in law positively.

Meitei (2004) conducted a study based on sample of 643 married women in reproductive age (20-49). Three groups of women: non-working women; working women in the organized sector and those in handloom weaving were studied. He examined the effect of education, earnings and access to resources on women’s decision making given the social set up. The analysis revealed that 85% of women in the sample were literate and 69% of them participated in one or other earning activity. Ten decisions generally taken either by husband or wife or by both at household level were considered. The analysis revealed that majority of the decisions was taken jointly (both husband and wife). Working women took more independent decisions than the non working women.

Results of multiple regression analysis shows that explanatory variables like religion, access to household resources, marital duration and category of women such as weavers, non weavers and working women had significant association with decision making index. Education turned out to have no significant impact on decision making among women of the state. Work status of women turned out to be a significant independent variable influencing autonomy in decision making.
Rahman and Rao (2004) examined Dyson and Moore thesis which had dominated demographic thought on female autonomy. The thought asserted that culture of North India which favours exogamous marriages and that of South India finding favour with endogenous marriage prompted higher autonomy of women in South as compared to North India. This article directly tests the conceptual framework of the thesis and the statistical validity of various explanations for differences in women’s autonomy in North and South India.

The data were collected from randomized survey conducted in 1995 in districts of Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh (UP). Two categories of dependent variable were taken i.e. freedom of mobility and level of participation in decision making. Explanatory variables included were presence of mother and in laws, wife’s age, husband’s age, years of school of husband and wife, ownership of land, marriage years, literacy level of wife’s parents and consumer durables. To find reasons for wide disparities in two Indian districts, the results show Uttar Pradesh respondents’ far greater constraints on mobility, have lesser decision pertaining to children as compared to Karnataka but UP women have higher authority over household expenditure.

The results do not comply with Dyson and Moore’s analysis of village exogamy as indicator of gender equity relation between and North and South India. Results indicate that exogamous marriages had very less impact on women’s mobility but a weak and positive association with decision making. The findings could not establish any advantage of South Indian women in exercising power over varied spheres. State level variable showed significant impact on decision making variables and on the mobility of the respondents. Results indicate better autonomy outcomes for women of Karnataka than those in U.P. “Culture matters to women’s autonomy but not in the way Dyson and Moore predicted”. To improve women autonomy in both, North and South, improvement of women’s economic opportunities and investment in village infrastructure could help.

Bharathamma (2005) aimed to study; extent of rural women empowerment through income generating activities; to study the profile of rural women; study the relationship between empowerment and personal characteristics of these women.
Sample of 120 respondents was selected from Gadag district of Karnataka. Statistical tools of mean, standard deviation, frequency, percentage, t test and chi square were used.

The major findings of the study were that there was 24.6% of the respondents improved their empowerment through activities pursued for income generation. Nearly three fourth of the respondents were getting monetary benefits up to Rs.1500 from income generating activities. 9.8% of the respondents improved the communication ability followed by increased confidence level due to respect from the society (76.7%) and respect from family members (67.5%) by taking up income generating activities. Marital status, family type, land holding, social participation and mass media participation showed highly significant association with empowerment whereas family size, education, material possession, caste, income, age, and extension participation indicated no such association. Lack of education, over burdened with dual responsibility, lack of proper training and lack of sufficient finance were the constraints perceived by rural women.

Das and Das (2006) studied the effect of technology on social parameters of economy of two villages of Orissa based on primary survey of 900 households. It measured the association of technology with occupational pattern of women, female education and factors that influenced women employment. It also assessed employment possibilities in both farm and nonfarm activities in the village.

The findings indicated that in both villages under study, 33% of hired agricultural labourers were women working in the village or nearby. Higher caste women or rich class did not work outside the village. Gender division of labour indicated rigid society in the villages. Women of both villages engaged themselves in multiple jobs like cleaning, child care, cooking, washing, waste disposal, carrying water and fodder.

Women participated in decision making for activities pertaining to farming, village meetings, purchase of animals, selling of crops and orchard plantation. Major constraining factors for women in availing employment opportunities in the villages included village tradition, caste system and lower educational status. Due to many
social constraints, women belonging to higher caste were compelled to remain housewives. In Orissa, it was observed that there was a tradeoff between material resources and women’s autonomy. As the family became richer, women lost their power to earn and social autonomy. In this state, women were educationally very successful but socially not. Real progress occurs when women become producer of their own welfare and not the recipient of charity.

**Woldomicael (2007)** studied different components of women’s autonomy in decision making and their association with maternal and child care health utilization. Data from Demographic and Health Surveys of Ethiopia and Eritrea was used. He studied the impact of socio-economic indicators on women’s status. Sample comprising 14,070 women aged 15-49 years was taken up. Analysis focused on last births of women that happened five years prior to survey.

Logistic regression models were fitted to identify factors determining the likelihood of women participating in decision making on visiting relations and families and making large and daily household purchases. Logistic regression models for each outcome variables were then fitted to examine the effect of women’s autonomy on maternal health care.

The results show that place of residence, women and spouse’s education had positive association with health care utilization and on use of facilities for health care. Women who had sole final decision on making daily purchases were likely to seek antenatal care during pregnancy and immunization of children in Ethiopia. Where autonomy was low, seeking health care was strongly and positively affected by socio-economic factors of the women viz. employment, residence and education.

**Gurung (2007)** in his study to determine socio-economic status of women in Nepal revealed that despite large number of women agricultural labour force in Nepal, women were still deprived and discriminated on economic grounds. Better education and economic status and ownership of assets determine better status of women farmers. Women in the study area had less ownership of assets, fewer roles in decision making, and less role in income generating activities. Women were found highly involved in
domestic work (98.2%) cooking food (91.7%), cleaning house (88.9%) and fetching water (76.4%). Women had less economic independence as compared to men. They had to get permission from their husband to spend the money. 56.9% of women respondents had no access to financial contribution which indicated low economic status.

**Acharya (2008)** investigated the effect of women’s education on their autonomy in household decision making by using 2006 Demographic and Health Survey data for Nepal. Multivariate Logit model was estimated for respondents say in household decisions which related to household matters; visit to her family, small household purchase, big household purchase and her own health. These variables were regressed on various socio economic characteristics of the respondent, her husband, household and her education. In the analysis, results indicated statistical insignificant relationship between basic education with dependent variables for all four decision matters up to secondary level. Respondents’ with higher education showed increased say in two out of four decision matters considered. Self employed women had higher probability of having some say compared to those employed in others business or fields. Marital duration affected decision making positively. Statistical significant factors in one decision outcome were found to be not significant in the others.

**Government of Punjab (2008)** conducted a study pertaining to 300 households from two districts of Fatehgarh Sahib and Hoshiarpur in Punjab. Main objectives of the study were to examine factors responsible for gender inequality in critical development indicators and government intervention schemes. Findings show that 3.7% and 5.3% of the households respectively of Hoshiarpur and Fatehgarh Sahib’s females have property in their name, 21% of these sampled households were both earning members while 6% were single earning members.18% households of Hoshiarpur and 5.7% of Fatehgarh Sahib reported vehicles for women. Fatehgarh Sahib had more illiterate females than Hoshiarpur. There was average of two pregnancies per respondent. Main reasons cited for educational differences between males and female were poverty; lack of transport facilities, involving girls in domestic care or sibling care. Main determinants of health condition of females were improper food intake (95%), work load (0.7%), improper health care awareness (39.3%), time constraints (9%) lack of medical facilities (3.7%).
Most of the respondents mentioned that decisions were taken jointly by the family but few mentioned males to be prime decision makers.

**Acharya et al. (2010)** aimed their study to examine women’s autonomy in household decision making. Nepal’s Demographic Health Survey (NDHS) 2006 data on married women aged 15-49 years (n=8257) was used for the study. The data consisted of women’s autonomy in four household decision matters: making major household purchases, own health care, making purchases for daily household needs and visit to her family or relatives. Socio demographic variables were used in multivariable logistic regression to assess the relationship of these variables to all four types of decisions. Chi square tests were used to find association between independent and explanatory variables. Significant factors were then used in bivariate and backward stepwise multivariate logistic regressions to determine independent factors as determinants of women’s autonomy in DM.

Results indicate that women’s autonomy in DM was positively related with their age, number of living children and employment. Women from Terai region exhibited less autonomy in decision making and so does the rural women in all four outcome measures. Women from western region were likely to be assertive in health care decision and less assertive in purchase of items of daily needs. Women’s increased education affected decision making positively in own health care significantly. Rich women were found to be less autonomous to make decision in own health care significantly.

**Tandon (2010)** in an article in national daily inferred that “real empowerment eluded women even in the 100th year of International women’s day”. He reported that 27 percent young women in the country are autonomous in taking decisions. These results are based on a study conducted by International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS), Mumbai. Main findings of the study are that women were far behind economic and educational empowerment. 25 percent of young women were illiterate as compared to 8 percent men. 11 percent of women had bank accounts, less than half of them could operate the account themselves. Just 15 percent of them had ever participated in community organizations, health camps, festivals and cleanliness drives. Only 10
percent participated in sports or social club. They found it difficult to participate in politics because of lack in exposure. That is why there is a need to educationally empower the women in order to make them politically empowered.

Chakraborty (2011) attempted to study female autonomy by constructing indices of autonomy using survey information on each spouse’s perception on domestic decision making.

The main aim of the study was to assess the impact of female autonomy on children’s education, their enrolment and retention at the level of secondary education. Geographical closeness of husband and wife’s parents were taken up as indicators of mother’s autonomy. Results concluded that proximity to only wife’s parents have the likelihood of raising her autonomy and it in turn improved child’s outcome through greater child care. Two stage least square estimation of models revealed that mother’s autonomy had positive and significant affect on enrolment of children in the lower secondary school. Enrolment decreased at higher ages. Father’s education was an explanatory factor for secondary education enrolment. However, when the sample was decomposed into boys and girls, boys had the advantage from greater autonomy of mother. Mother’s autonomy index showed negative and significant impact on dropouts from secondary education in 10-14 age group but no effect was observed for higher secondary education. In fact boys exhibited significantly better outcomes in households with both genders. The study cautions policymakers that gender directed policies may not accelerate the equitable development process.

Shyamalie and Saini (2011) compared key socio-economic pointers contributing to the status of women in Hills of India and Sri Lanka. In order to have idea of women’s involvement in decision making, composite index was constituted assigning higher weighing in case of independent decision making. Ten areas of women involvement in decision making were considered for economic and social related household matters. Step up regression analysis was employed using SPSS 9. The status of women was studied under 3 categories low, high and medium decision making. Key determinants of women status used were; caste, age, education, family, size, type of family, husbands, educational level, social participants, marriage duration land ownership and women’s income etc.
The results of regression analysis revealed that in Nuwara Eliya (Sri Lanka) and Kangra (Hills of India), model for low status women category showed that marital status, social participation, occupation and saving had positive and significant impact on status of women. Husband’s education had negative impact on the women’s status. In Nuwara Eliya district, for low status categories, education was not a significant factor contributing to the status. For high status women, education, joint family, social participation and marriage duration were positive and significant determinants of status of women. However, the family size was a significant negative factor in the status of women. Estimated model for high status category showed that it was highly dependent on education, occupation, landownership and women’s income.

Das (2012) assessed the level of autonomy and decision making ability of tribal women. The study was based on primary data surveyed and collected from three tribal hamlets of Santoshpur village in Sundergarh district. To study women’s involvement in decision making, an index was constructed assigning a higher weightage in case of women’s individual independent decision making. The decision making role was studied under two categories; decision making role at household level and at community level. Ten areas of women’s autonomy in decision making were considered for economic and socially related decisions.

She concluded that women having high decision making role in household matters take independent decisions regarding their own daily expenditure, take decision pertaining to visiting kins and relatives, treatment of sick and in children’s education. But they were found to be passive participants in decision making at community level. Literate respondents, employed, having share in household income, ownership of title of resources, widowed and aged enjoyed higher autonomy as compared to the others. Non tribals enjoyed more autonomy than the tribals. Government should focus on developing the literacy rate among the tribal women which would facilitate their economic upliftment.

Arooj et al. (2013) aimed to find out association of women’s say in decision making and socio-economic factors in Muzaffarabad of Azad Kashmir. Cross sectional survey was conducted on married working women \((N = 500)\). The data consisted of
women’s three decisions: birth control decision, financial decision and freedom of expression. Socio-demographic variables were used in chi-square analysis to study the association of the variables with the said decisions. Main findings indicated that age, residence, education, professional differences, job nature, monthly income of married women were highly associated with autonomy in decision making. 59% women of above 30 years age exercised independence in birth control decisions significantly. Urban women (96%) are more likely to be autonomous in birth control decision than women from rural areas significantly. Educational attainment affects women autonomy as professionally qualified women were more independent in birth control decisions(87.2%), independent in spending income (86.5%), having freedom of expression (55.4%). Further, women living in nuclear families exercised more independence in birth control decisions (77.2%), income spending decisions (76%) and enjoy more freedom of expression (56.2%). Women working in government sector had independence in birth control (71%), financial decisions (70.4%), and freedom of expressions (52.4%) significantly. Women earning salary of above Rs 20,000 enjoyed autonomy in birth control decisions (87.5%), financial decisions (87.2%) and freedom of expression (57.4) significantly.

**Sharmistha and Grabowski (2013)** attempted to find determinants influencing women’s autonomy outside the household which was measured by criterion of mobility in rural north India (Uttar Pradesh). Data from World Bank’s Living Standard Measurement survey of household for the state of Uttar Pradesh for 1997-98 was used. 2000 respondents from 64 villages and 11 districts formed the data. Results were reported for variables; “freedom to go to a doctor without the permission of a male member of the family; freedom to go to the doctor without male escort”. Relationship between the variables was considered first looking at pair wise correlations to study whether the relationship between dependent and independent variables were endogenous. Significant correlations at 95% or above were identified. Binary logit regression technique was used. Results of the logit included elasticities obtained from marginal probability analysis.

The results of the study indicate that infrastructural availability had a positive influence on women’s autonomy. Opportunities offered to earn off-farm income in the
village could affect autonomy positively. Female autonomy improved if the village pradhan belonged to scheduled caste or had significant political experience. Age of the household head affected autonomy negatively. Female head of the household had a positive impact on autonomy. Education was found to have no significant impact on women’s autonomy as measured by female mobility. Creation of off farm employment opportunities, infrastructural investment and political reforms that break down caste barriers have been considered as policy implication to improve women’s autonomy.

Bharati et al. (2013) in their study examined women’s autonomy in the family. Decision making by the women was taken up for household matters like getting health care facilities, buying jewellery, having access to money, having freedom of mobility to go to market or relatives’ house.

They analysed variations in the percentages of women state wise who participated in the household decision making and investigated whether socio-economic factors of levels of education, working status of women, types of occupation etc., and household characteristics like standard of living, sex of head of household had positive influence on women empowerment. Data from NFHS-2 Survey (1998-99) were analysed for the study. Odd Ratios for Coefficients of logistic Regression were estimated to determine women’s autonomy in decision making.

Results of the study indicate that women were fully autonomous to decide about cooking and had access to money but could rarely buy jewelry of their own. About one-third of women could decide about health care or had freedom to go to relatives’ house or market. Rural women had less autonomy than those of urban. Age, educational attainment and working status of the women enhanced autonomy.

The findings indicated that age of the respondent affected empowerment of woman positively and remained almost the same among different occupational groups. Husband’s education or occupation could not improve women empowerment.

Working women contributed to empowerment as against non-working or unpaid working women. Behaviour of north-east region was different from other regions in India when coefficients of the logistic regression were compared. Highest women autonomy was observed for cooking in north-east zone. South zone exhibited the
highest autonomy in buying jewellery and north zone the lowest. West zone had highest autonomy in access to money and central zone had the lowest. Freedom of movement was found to be greatest in west zone and lowest for the Central.

2.3 Livelihood Security and its Measurement

“Household livelihood security is defined as adequate and sustainable access to income and resources to meet basic needs including adequate access to food, potable water, health facilities which together provide a variety of procurement strategies for food and cash” (Drinkwater, 1992).

Chamber and Conway (1992) cited that “livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recovers from stress and shocks, maintain its capability and assets and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation. All households are not equal in their ability to cope with stress and repeated shocks”.

CARE USA (1996) realized the significance of food security in a broader perception and adopted and used household livelihood security in its conceptual framework.

CARE, India (1996) drew a 2 percent sample from village Tathirasparam in Bastar region of Madhya Pradesh state. Different zones were stratified, including plains, plateaus and hills, each of which had peculiar family livelihood security strategies. The team members conducted interviews on household survey questionnaire. It used detailed question on family size, work dynamics, water and sanitation practices, literacy, income sources, cultural practices assets, participation in community organizations. Quality of housing, sources of water and literacy were observed and ranked by the interviewers.

The results indicate that the village was on livelihood security index of 1.9 on a scale of one (serious threat) to five (well protected) for livelihood security. Malnutrition affected two-thirds of girls and half of the boys. Less than 4 percent of the households had latrines. No girl could read and one in five boys was literate. Six livelihood security components were ranked below the fragile equilibrium midpoint (2.5). The village profile consisted of limited livelihood coping strategies, months of food insecurity, no
proper access to potable water, no health services, no government or community organization and poor sanitation.

**CARE, Kenya (1996)** assessed livelihood security in Kenya using livelihood security index. The comprehensive index was made up of four indices that reflected health, educational, food and economic security. They compiled number of different indicators under health security (health services access, population services access, access to water and latrines, prevalence of respiratory problems, diarrhea, immunization rates and birth spacing), educational security (availability of schools and teachers, affordability quality and use and literacy rate by genders) food security (months of self provisioning from primary productivity, reliance on coping up strategies), and economic security (current income balance, current assets balance, average income per household).

**Kabir et al. (2000)** identified illness as a major constraint in ability of slum households to have secured livelihoods in Dhaka (Bangladesh). Illness has negative effect on human and social capital of households thus pointing to their vulnerable livelihood. There is a need to address the problem with action required on three fronts; reduce the risk of morbidity as it was significantly associated with poverty, stemming from poor habitat and living conditions and poor nutrition. Provision of quality, accessible and affordable health care for adults was required.

**CARE, USA (2002)** documented standard indicator for livelihood outcomes, food, education, health, economic, habitat, nutritional, social network and environmental security and how these measures affected changes in the condition or aspect on the quality of life of population.

**Das (2005),** in a micro level study on livelihood security of women in village economy of Orissa concluded that agricultural operations were mostly conducted by men and farm activities by women. Wage differentials were higher in the farm sector. Work participation rate for females was inversely related to agricultural productivity. “Women belonging to higher caste and rich landowning class were compelled to remain as housewives and run the risk of higher livelihood insecurity with worst fall back
Awareness and poverty prompted women to supplement their income and hence expanded their livelihood base. Orchard plantation, appliqué work, fishery, agarbati and candle making formed diversified source of supplementary livelihood of the people. Contractual agreements encouraged exploitation of women in the nonfarm sector. Caste system, lower educational status of women, village traditions were the main limiting factors for women in getting employment opportunities.

**Tango International (2006)** took up a study to determine livelihood matrix for Kanai Nagar community in the Mongla region of Bangladesh. Despite rapid gains in food self-sufficiency, many rural households remained food insecure. They had poor access to land and diversified livelihood opportunities and insufficient incomes which led to limited purchase of food. Dal was eaten by the poor thrice a week, vegetables eaten everyday in a week, fish 2-3 times per week depending on availability.

The poor faced severe food shortages for 10 months and the middle class for 7 months as a result, the poor reduced consumption to one meal a day. Middle class poor relied on a loan from relatives to cope with the food shortage. In times of food crisis, women were the worst sufferers. The poor households could not afford to educate their children. The middle class could not afford intermediate school as they had no good clothing for their children. 20% of the households had serious diseases and the middle class could not afford medical treatment during severe illness for the family members. They relied on family health clinic and health staff often visited the village. Availability and accessibility to safe drinking water constituted biggest health problem. 56% of the population reported no latrines.

Regarding habitat, poor housing security was indicated as middle class poor had tin roofs and poorer households dwellings comprised small thatched structures on government land. At times of conflict, problems were resolved from within the village or by the chairman. If that was not successful, they would go to the police station or the court. Husbands and other younger men sometimes abused women. Sometimes the miscreants harassed women and police had to be bribed to avoid harassment. Women from poorer households were abused by the husbands, often malnourished and had less say in household decision making.
Meena and Jain (2008) measured attitude changes of rural women towards initiatives of self-help group undertaken at CIPHET, (Central Institute of Post Harvest Engineering and Tech), Ludhiana. The main aim was to develop their capabilities through training programmes to be carried out for value addition and processing technologies for income and employment generation. To evaluate, the working of SHGs, attitude construct Likert type scale was developed for which Cronbach alpha coefficient of reliability was 0.85. The survey had five sections consisting of education and training, socio-economic upliftment, marketing and entrepreneurship qualities, bankcredit aspect and technology adoption. Significant t-tests for average value of attitude of women before and after the training revealed significant changes in attitude of women in all the areas of training under study.

Udong et al. (2009) aimed to assess the strategies used by the women fish traders in Ibaka (Nigeria) in coping with institutional and cultural constraints. The study assessed the norms, inheritance practices, beliefs, taboos, status of infrastructural facilities, marriage and their impact on livelihood approach for the fish trade.

The fish trade constituted a major source of income for women traders. Years of experience, ability to establish network of trust and size of capital outlay added to competence in the trade. The strict division of labour between men and women ensured guaranteed income which had given women traders autonomy in the livelihood. Main reasons for limited economic activity for women were lack of infrastructure and finance, polygamy, patriarchy, institutional and cultural constraints.

Singh and Hirenath (2010) examined empirical evidence of sustainable Livelihood Security Index (LSI) at district level in Gujarat. Composite index for Sustainable LSI was considered for three components of indices i.e. economic efficiency index, ecological security index and social equity index. Results indicate that eastern district of the state being dominated by scheduled tribes exhibited low economic efficiency index and social equity index but high ecological security index ranking. These districts had very low rank in educational index, gender development index, health and housing index.
ACF International (2010) identified the main cause of food insecurity and risks to livelihood across a range of settings to identify responses that would save and preserve the livelihood of vulnerable population. Food security component of rapid assessment inquired about changes in food availability and food access following the crisis, analyzed coping mechanism and identified worst affected groups and areas. Rapid assessment included measuring nutritional status. Indicators of household consumption assessed the severity of a crisis with affected population showed wide variations with respect to diet diversity and meal frequency. The results revealed that three zones out of total of five surveyed in Kirotsha, North Kiuu, DRC were ranked the most vulnerable. Across these zones, displaced groups were considered most at risk according to various criterion used.

Roy (2011) conducted a study in two districts of Burdwan and Smaj Dmajpun of West Bengal with 200 MNREGA beneficiaries as respondents to access the impact of MNREGA on livelihood security of beneficiaries. Before and after method was applied to assess the impact of MNREGA on livelihood security. LSI was used developed by Baby (2005) with required modification. Mean score obtained by respondents for food security before and after MNREGA was 6.12 and 8.44 respectively. Change in food habits was noticed. Frequency of consumption of milk and eggs increased after MNREGA. Mean score obtained on income security before and after the scheme adopted was 7.16 and 7.15; habitat security 8.93 and 9.97; economic security was 5.99 and 6.03; health security worked out 3.16 and 3.41; environmental security was 12.62 and 14.15 respectively. Changes had not been observed much for social security where security increased marginally from 3.42 to 3.44. 80.5% of the beneficiaries were found to be under low LSI category before MNREGA but after MNREGA 82.5% had fallen under medium LSI category.

Akter (2012) measured livelihood security in sampled urban areas in Bangladesh. Five livelihood security indices were measured for outcomes of food, economic, education, health and empowerment indices. For food security, food basket characterised 8 food groups. Main findings of the study are that only 2% of respondents could have diet of all 8 types of food. Health security indicated that 82% reported at least one member sick during 30 days recall. Educational security indicated lower
average value. Two regions indicated insecure livelihood for food, economic, health, education and empowerment. Results concluded insecure urban settlements in Bangladesh irrespective of regional differences in opportunities. Access of household to assets and capital endowments should be considered to design programmes. Areas with accessibility of land/housing/ponds, should encourage livestock/fishery based livelihood. Education can help in enhancing suitable livelihood security.

Chinnadurai et al. (2012) attempted to study livelihood security of dry land taluks for different categories of sample households of marginal, small and medium households in Accra, Ghana. Main findings of the study indicate that income derived from agriculture and allied activities formed major share of medium land holding income (86.7%) and lowest for marginal households (42.62%). Livestock supplemented the family income. Rearing of sheep and goat was not considered profitable. Medium category households were comparatively well off than others but it was estimated that their consumption expenditure dropped by 34.2% in lean agriculture. Marginal households had better options during lean agriculture and could fend themselves in a better way as they could switch to non agricultural options but small and medium land holders found it difficult to pursue options other than farming. LSI was high among medium land households (53.6%) as compared to small (46.43%) and marginal. (38.44%),

The analysis is blend of conceptual framework of livelihood security and child nutritional status. In the sample, average income generating activities per household was found to be 1.9 and it was significantly lower for female headed households. 92% of food consumed was purchased for cash, 6% comes from gifts, 1% was given to workers in view of wages and 1% from home production. 32% of food budget was spent. Nearly 40% of their budget was spent on street food, 30% of calories come from street food. Many people surveyed lived in family compounds that they neither owned nor rented. 40% of household were food insecure. Two thirds of mothers were engaged in income generating activities. Mothers perceived that child care was affected when they work but were able to cope up with the problem. More education for women was associated with higher level of household food availability, better care practices, higher quality diets and better nutritional outcome.
The studies undertaken on socio-economic status of women and livelihood securities have been carried out at national and international level and all pointed to the fact that lot needs to be done to ameliorate their overall position in family and community. Very few studies in the literature find place relating to Punjab. No comprehensive study has been carried out to put across the real picture of our rural women in the society. This study is an effort to put across the ground realities of the status and livelihood securities of the village woman in Punjab.