CHAPTER - 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nature has made men and women differently in their bodies and in their mental make up. Therefore, some of their problems are different. That there is equality between men and women in respect of position and status is far from truth.

Women suffer from some disabilities which are absent in men. A married woman goes to her parents-in-laws house to reside with her husband.

The idea that woman was created for the pleasure of man, that she is his property that she should be subordinate to him, is still in vogue. GANDHIJI (1918) said in one of his speech -

"Woman is a companion of man, gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minu-test details of the activities of man and she has the same right of freedom and liberty as he ...." 

A human being is born free that is to say, the individual has the right to a life of freedom. But
the woman's freedom is neglected in the name of religion, honour, family welfare and social prestige. Every woman with a streak of individuality suffers from the painful feeling that she is forced to depend on others in her life.

SWAMI VIVEKANANDA (1996) says about women that this sacred soil of India, this land of Sita and Savitri, among women may be found such character, such spirit of service, such affection, compassion, contentment and reverence, as he could not find anywhere else in the world! In the west, the women did not very often seem to me to be women at all, they appeared to be quite the replicas of men! Driving vehicles, drudging in offices, attending schools, doing professional duties. In India along the sight of feminine modesty and reserve soothes the eyes! With such materials of great promise, you could not, alas, work out their uplift! you did not try to infuse the light of knowledge into them. For if they get the right sort of education, they may well turn out to be the ideal women in the world.

As D'SOUZA (1975) has aptly described the condition of woman saying, "In both the industrially advanced and less developed countries, women are
burdened with cumulative inequalities as a result of socio-cultural and economic discriminatory practices, which until recently, have been taken for granted as though they were a part of immutable scheme of things established by nature.

This fact is made explicit in following lines by MACCOBY and JACKLIN (1974), "The great power of the male to control his own destiny is part of the cultural stereo types of maleness and is inherent in the image of the two sexes portrays on television and in print".

SONTAG et al (1985) explained in similar words. He found in his study, sex differences in ability. He noted that, socialization into traditional feminine roles involves learning traits and behaviours that restrict the performance of girls on cognitive tasks.

Dr. RADHAKRISHNAN our ex-president the learned has to say this about woman." Women are human beings and have as much right to full development as men have. In regard to opportunities for intellectual and spiritual development, we should not emphasize the sex of women even as we donot emphasize the sex of men. The fact that we are human beings is infinitely more important than the psychological peculiarities which distinguish us from one another. In all human beings,
irrespective of their sex, the same drama of the flesh and the spirit, of finitude and transcendence takes place."

The changing socio-economic status and self image of women have been studied by MURRICKEN (1975). In an analysis of several studies of Kerala, he concluded that most women in Kerala live under male-dominance and were hampered by traditional, cultural and religious taboos.

MUKHERJEE (1975) attempted to conceptualize status of women as a multi-dimensional construct. He interviewed 1,872 married women. In four out of six samples, the first factor which emerged clearly was 'self perceived status.' The second factor was 'decision making power' of the wife. Another common factor which appeared in quite a few studies was defined generally by the respondent's education, her employment status and the number of utility items possessed by the respondent.

About the condition of women in modern India he says, "Women's personality characteristics are not fixed by her anatomy but are contingent upon the particular social role that she is playing at different stages in her life-cycle. Indian social
scientist, especially psychologists, have yet to give serious attention to the scientific study of sex roles."

SUKANYA DAS and REHANA GHADIALLY (1988) in their paper entitled "Parental Sex Role Orientation Socialization practice and Sex Stereotypes of Children of personality characteristics and sex role attitudes", contrasted the self description of children of both sexes with parents having liberal attitudes toward women's role in society with those of children of parents holding traditional attitude.

NYRID, BENDERLY, COVER, CUTTURE and PARKER, (1975) stated that culturally related sex role behaviors are particularly apparent in India where religion, culture and tradition have deep roots and have significant influence on the individuals personality and behaviour.

Studies of children and adults in Indian society have demonstrated sex differences in training and behaviour.

MINTURN and HITCHCOCK (1973) report that the play behaviour of Rajput children in India is based on observational learning: "Both sexes have their own type of fantasy play which is modelled on adult work."
The little girls play at cooking and the boys at farming.

In a study of reaction to frustration among Indian college students, DEVI (1967) found that males respond with more overtly aggressive reactions; females report more withdrawal and regressive reactions.

GANDIALLY and KAZI (1980) in a recent study of sex role attitudes, marriage and career among Indian college, men and women have provided evidence to suggest that the role played by males and females in Indian society is gradually changing.

The degree of freedom of movement and operations is also directly related to the contribution of women to the economy. The overwhelming majority of the Indian population follow the patrilineal system of descent. Though the influence of this system on institutes of family, marriage or the place or role of women vary between religions, regions, castes and socio-economical levels, there are some common underlying principles and patterns. Historion ROMILA THAPAR (1963) remarks that "within the Indian sub-continent there have been infinite variations on the status of women diverging according to cultural, milieu family structure, class, caste, property rights and
morals.

In another words, ROOPA VOHRA and A. K. SEN (1985) say in their book 'Status, Education and Problems of Indian women' that "A woman hundred years ago and a woman born in this age, a simple looking clerk without much education, or a lady officer on a special duty, a woman artist or a woman pilot or a woman as a housewife sitting idle at home will have the same story to tell. The character may be different, the situation may be different and time with a gap of century, but the story will highlight the major role of man in the house and outside world as a dominant being,... because the yagana are not performed now, participation of woman has been framed in a different way, so the question of incompleteness so to say does not arise?"

REHANA BHADILALLY (1988) also says that "the roles women play in society and the images we have of them have developed not simply from the exigencies not simply from the exigencies of biology and social situations but are rather deeply rooted in the myths and legends and the religion of the Indian culture."

In a society where men have controlled knowledge and have interpreted the classical texts, it is not surprising. As S. RUTH(1980) points out 'women
have lost the power of naming, of explaining and defining for themselves the realities of their own experience.

SUDHIR KAKAR (1978) in his paper 'Feminine Identity in India' looks at a woman's development and transition through the various stages of her life-cycle from a psycho-analytic perspective. A variety of social agents prepare her for motherhood, a role in which her identity finds completion.

SUSAN WADLEY (1977) speaks in her paper about the duality of women in Hindu ideology. Identified with nature, she is a giver of birth and protector of her children. On the other hand, she is evil and destructive.

In the study of development, economics and economic status of women occupies a significant role. For instance, if women are sufficiently enlightened, educated and liberated from male suppression, they can better understand and appreciate the plus points of small families and become active participants in population planning during the process of economic development.

SISTER BENEDICTA F. PINTO (1989) says in her book "Woman power: Technical education and
development. A woman has a natural drive towards totality and self containment with two-fold direction. She herself would like to be complete human being and she would like to help others to become so. No doubt, the total development of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of both women and men in all fields.

WALSTED (1977) described that - "Women are taught to be subservient helpers who conform to the wishes of those around them rather than to be initiatory and resourceful on their own behalf on the other hands.

HAFFMAN (1972) says, "Women are mostly socialized in traditional ways, they are encouraged to develop feminine sex types attributes. Even parental attitudes towards male and female children reflect their culturally assigned roles. While males receive more effective independence training and encouragement, dependence and conformity is encouraged among females.

ROE (1956) states, "To work because a economic necessity is almost every where considered respectable for a women, if unfortunate, but there are many communities still where women work because they want to and not because they have to, are subject to
some social or other penalties.

Y. D. PHADKE (1989) says in his book "Women in Maharashtra", The status of women in any society is supposed to be true index of its social development. Those who regard the Vedic period as the golden age in India's history have painted an idyllic picture of the life of women in that age.

INDIRA J. PARIKH, PULIN K. BARG (1989) explain in their book "Indian women: An Inner Dialogue" about women;

"Across the centuries, women in India have silently maintained the permanence and stability of society's cultural institutions and the continuities and consistencies of its ethos. In this context, women have been treated as the virtue-holders of society, living a life of roles and doing their duty as daughters, wives and mothers. But the fullness of their persons has never been allowed to break through these bounded roles.

In the pre-Independence period, the women's movement was vary much a part of the nationalist movement. The liberal approach to women's issues and overall middle class urban leadership mark out as significant features of the first phase of women's
movement.

Dr. NEERA DESAI (1983), in her book "A Decade of Women's Movement in India" described the women's movement and says, 'The last decade has been marked by the growth and development of women's movement in India. New methods are used for bringing awareness among women and different structures are appearing to mobilize women and voice their feelings and needs. Infact International women's Decade provided a lever age to women's movement in India.

The development of women and the policies of women's development in our country grew very fast during last ten years. Education and training which can help in occupational mobility have been of limited success in the case of indigenous women. The existing social status of women that marks them the most vulnerable social segment, is likely to deteriorate further, both due to their loss of economic status as well as the need to control social tension in the wake of economic changes. The level of education among women is very low in rural areas, due to early marriage and traditional attitudes that for them to drop out after primary or incomplete secondary education. [This is an extract from - A report on Lokmat Times presented by AJAY PATNAIK.(1996)]
Though modern woman has succeeded in coming out of old-age social bonds and restriction, entered almost all sphere able and efficient than her male counterpart in some field, She is still a victim of man's dictates and torture. be they entrepreneurs, business partners. Workers or even simple housewives,, they have to live under the dictates and whims of men.

ASHOK KUMAR (1989) explained the status of women in his book "Indian women towards 21 century" that the economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a society's stage of development. The recognition of the productive capacities and potential of women in development is very recent though long overdue".

STAIN, SANDRA L. and WESTON(1982), stated that women who were more profeminist in their attitudes towards women's roles in contemporary society would score significantly higher on a measure of identity achievement than women whose attitudes were more traditional.

FITTS, WILLIAN H. et al studied, "The self concept and self actualization", (1971) and discussed the interrelationships among the individuals self
concept, self actualization and rehabilitation. A conceptualization of the self concept is presented that identifies external and internal dimensions of the self i.e. identity, behavioural and judging selves and considers issues in self esteem and the distortion of self perception, including the differentiation and conflict among the subselves.

HERTSGAARD and LIGHT (1984) argued that high school girls have to determine their attitudes toward women as a means of predicting sex role behaviour. They found that the girls held a moderate view toward women's rights and roles. Rural girls tended to be more conservative in their attitudes than their small town and urban counterparts. They also found that the family has an important role in sex-role development.

KAPADIA (1987) explained the status of women in terms of degree of freedom of movement and operations which is directly related to the contribution of women to the economy. A woman's status in the family is also influenced by her husband's social position and his contribution to the family economy.

DESAI and KRISHNARAJ (1987) explained the liberal feminist and states that the feminists began to
extend the concept of equality beyond the earlier emphasis on formal equality in the civil and political sphere. They thus demanded child care facilities, talked about the right of poor women and control over one's reproductive life.

The description of the status of women does not explain the development and strategies of women and their movements. The movements of women's development have not been able to sufficiently obtain involvement of the underdeveloped states of India. Individual groups have been working with all these women, yet semi permanent network has not been envolved, though many a time the need has been felt. In fact this is a serious challenge, before the Indian feminist.

In comparison to the growth of women's group in this country during last ten years Bihar lags far behind other states. Two specific reasons can be accounted for this state of affairs. SHAHEEN gave the following reasons;

(1) Bihar's unique social structure is fully embedded in the feudal way of thinking and their high and middle class caste hail from the background of villages and hence, they project their cultural heritage.
(2) The second obvious reason is that in spite of growth of some industrial towns, there could not be economic development and growth of cosmopolitan culture even in industrial towns; instead a distorted culture emerged which encouraged communal riots and religious fanaticism.

This is the condition of women all over the country then the miserable condition of women in Bihar can be well conceived.

SERJE RAO SALUNKE explained that there are many other factors like the religious influence, caste system, class system, blind faith in custom and traditions and ignorance and the policies of Maharashtra Govt. which is responsible to development of women's status. The situation in Maharashtra in this respect may be somewhat better than the situation in other states of India. This is of course in keeping with the reputation of Maharashtra as a modern and advanced state. Today the women's movement and agitations have become stronger against this background the Govt. of Maharashtra have announced their new policy regarding women.

"Basically the women have an equal right to decide what they would like to do. But when they
ventured in a men's world a lot of questions were raised as to how they would behave and how successfully they would be. The only way to show was by action. They have to try harder because of the prejudices. But more and more women have to come to this field to prove the point. There is nothing wrong in being a housewife. It is also an important job. But it should be choice and not by compulsion". These views were expressed by Ms. LILA PONNAWALA Chairperson and managing director of Tetra Pak (India) Limited [ (1996)- A report by Lokmat Times News service ].

The above brief review highlight the condition of women in the past and the present. In the light of this when women in Bihar are compared with those in Maharashtra, a clear picture can be shown. Bihar is far behind in woman's development as compared to Maharashtra. The picture has not changed much during this century and whatever changes are seen are restricted only to urban areas. But basically the question is whether these so called changes are superficial or real? The results of our study will show what really is happening.