CHAPTER - 9

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS
9.1 Introduction

India is the second largest populous country in the world and the women in the country account for about half of the human resources. But, the vast human potential is still is kept unutilized, under-utilized and misused to a larger extent mainly because of poor access to health, literacy and employment.

Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious being the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the last few decades. Discrimination against girl children, adolescent girls and women persists in all most all parts of the country.


The National Commission for Wome was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard in rights and legal entitlements of women. During five year plans priority has given to women development However, there still exists a wide gap between the goals enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes.

The agricultural sector is a crucial component of the Indian economy. Women are an integral part of agriculture. Agricultural policy is still dominated by the false view that ‘farmers are men’ women are only housewives. Yet very rarely do women get the recognition for their perpetual contribution in agriculture in the rural economy. Their work is concerned as
secondary by and large by policy makers. According to census 20 per cent of the working women are involved in agriculture operations. A large number of these women are burdened with the double burden of work and are vulnerable to exploitation.

Globalization has decreased the control of women over resources, and it has led to displacement. The wages here are so low. Growth-oriented policies have taken away whatever control women had over traditional occupations and denied them better avenues of employment. Empowerment of women for social development is a more complex process than it appeared to be. National Policy for the empowerment of women, 2001 also takes note of the commitments of the Ninth Five Year Plan and the other Sectoral Policies relating to empowerment of women.

There has been a global effort with a strong support from the Untitled Nations since 1975, to understand the discrimination and restore a status to a women through equality, development and peace. Women in most of the countries are subjected to discriminatory restrictions.

In the light of above, the question of Human Rights with its emphasis on the rights of women. Human Rights for women have been defined as the collective rights of women to be seen and accepted.

The constitution of India guarantees certain rights and privileges to women through Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles. The preamble of
the Constitution resolved to secure for all the equality of status, and opportunity to ensure justice, social, economic and political; and liberty and dignity of the individual.

It is evident that women in Indian society enjoyed a high prestige and honors both at home and in the society during Vedic Period.

The enrolment to National Adult Education Programme (NEAP) counts on fifty two per cent (2.89 millions) of total enrolment. Besides 4,62,000 women were covered under the programme for functional literacy, implemented by the ministry of social welfare.

An examination of the status of women in India and the women development programmes sponsored by the government during the Five Year Plans shows that there is improvement in the status of women in country over time, but still there is a lot to be done in this regard.

The present study is a departure from the earlier studies through its focus on urban women at micro-level. Regional studies have more relevance to the policy makers.

The scheme analysis for the present study consists of nine chapters.

9.2 Objectives:

The main objectives of the present study are

5. To examine the status of women in India in general.

6. To examine the gender development in India.
7. To examine the demographic and social and economic characteristics of women through a sample study in Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, A.P. and

8. To suggest some policy measures for improving the status of women in India.

Primary data was collected from Vijayawada Municipal corporation, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh in the year 2006, by using simple random technique.

9.3 Analysis:

Women constitute nearly 50 per cent of India’s population. They have been taking an active part in various fields but gender equality is yet to become a reality in the country. Female infanticide, child marriage, dowry, child labor, sexual harassment etc., are the various social evils that impede the progress and empowerment of women in the society. In this contest there is need to address the gender gap.

There are various dimensions that are associated with the gender gap viz. political, economic, cultural and Personal level (of family, home and relationships). The increase in the education of women contributes to greater empowerment of women, to a postponement of the age of marriage and to a reduction in the size of the families. Women’s access to education can be widened through formal education, non-formal education and functional literacy.
During the post-independence period, the main strategy adopted to achieve equalization of education opportunities has been to make school accessible to every child irrespective of sex.

Since Independence, expansion of educational opportunities for women has been a consistent effort by the government as seen through our Preamble;

There seems to be a wide hiatus between the literacy of male and female. Social and economic development of a country depends on its best literacy rates and better educational facilities. The increasing literacy rate is higher among males i.e., 48.4 points as against 45.3 points among females. The literacy rate is lower in the rural area as compared to urban and also it is lower among females as compared to males in both the areas during 1961-2001.

It serves a bridge between elementary and higher education and prepares young persons between the age group of 14-18 years for entry into the world of work for entry into Higher Education.

Though school enrolment ratios have been raising high rate of dropouts particularly of girls still continues to be a major problem. 50 years of independence, the girls enrolment did not increase much and the girl’s participations in schools remained less than 50 per cent. Educationally women are lagging being even at present times both at national and at state level.
The dropout rate among girls, particularly those who live in rural areas, continues to be very high.

The University Grants Commission (UGC) has been encouraging institutions to take up research projects in the area of women study by providing necessary financial assistance, 22 Universities and 11 colleges have been assisted by the Commission to set up women’s study centres.

The gender ratio implies the number of females per 1000 males. It influences the age at marriage rate, the number of children and the population growth. The male-female composition shows their respective percentages to total population.

Sex Selective abortion is punishable act but who cares is the problem. Some the people kill our children and claim they are civilized. They deny our own child the right to be born.

Decennial growth rate of women is always lesser than that of men except in the period 1971-81. unlike the rest of the country, Kerala shows higher number of females as compared males both in 1991 and 2001.

Traditions socio - religious customs and poverty make a child bride at a very young age which is unsuitable for proper marital life.

Further, the age at marriage is also considered as one of the best indicators for ascertaining the status of women.

Malnourishment combined with early pregnancy results in physical wastage, birth complications, and the delivery of underweight babies, who have reduced chances of survival.
Adolescent pregnancy and high fertility are considered as indicators of poor health and poor quality of life of women. The estimates of mean age at marriage for males and females in India has shown an increasing trend. However, the demographers have succeeded through the use of census data on marital status to calculate the mean age at marriage in India.

Acquiring higher education and greater employment by women have played a role in raising their age at marriage. Such notions, though seem irrational, and are prevailing in our rural agrarian setup and especially among the marginal farmers for whom the male children are their investment for the future in the absence of any alternate security measures.

WHO defines health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and the word does not merely refer to absence of disease or infirmity. On the other hand, infant deaths occurring after the first month are mostly caused by congenital factors.

State level estimates of IMR for this period are not available, knowledge suggest that most of the states with the exception of Kerala would have had the level Close to national average.

The UNICEF Report 1995 reveals that there was substantial decline in CMR by 46.17 per cent in India, during 1960-1991 from the corresponding rate of 236 and 126 per thousand for the said years. The maternal mortality rate in India is around 400-500 per (lakh live birth according to the recent statistics).

The nutritional status of women especially that of the rural poor is far from the desired. Hence appropriate intervention must be sought to address the
nutritional need of women especially adolescent girls. However, the life expectancy is higher for female population as elsewhere due to her natural biological strength.

Women's participation will also be ensured in the planning, superintendence and delivery of the system. The health of Indian women is directly related to the socio-economic status of the state of ill health for most women. Women's health plays an important role in determining the health of the future population. Maternal mortality and morbidity constitute an important threat to women's health. Such measures could include: Reinterpretation and redefinition of conventional concepts of work wherever necessary.

Thus, on the whole, we can say that the status of women measured in terms of education and employment has increased over time.

This concept of development has also undergone changes and at present, HDI is considered as a better development indicator, which takes into consideration the HPI along with health and education. The full benefit of development can only be realized with people's participation and the role of women cannot be isolated from the total framework of development, as they constitute half of the human resource.

A number of terms like Human Resource Planning (HRP), Human Resource Management (HRM) and Human Development came into existence during 1990s. Human resource development is the basic contemporary issue of both the developed as well as developing nations.

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The World Bank in its Report 1980 considered HRD as a complementary approach to development strategies particularly of employment and reduction of inequalities.

The discrimination is there in many spheres, not merely gender-based, but also between the women of organized and unorganized sectors. The disparity is there not only of intergenderal (between male and female) but of intra-genderal (between the female populations of rural and urban areas.)

The HRD Report of UNDP (2005) states that through redistribution the number of people living in extreme poverty drops from 704 million to 446 million – a decline of 1/3rd at the global level.

The basic thesis of human development reports that UNDP has published every year since 1990 is that it is 'people' who matters and the nations must stand for the cause of people’s participation in development' and for the ultimate goal of 'development of the people, for the people and by the people'. Time series analysis of NSSO Rounds from 13th to 50th rounds reveals that, head count ratio remained passive from 1951-55 to 1971-75.

Source of safe drinking water also plays a vital role in determining the health standards. Indian households get drinking water from taps, hand pumps, tube wells, wells, tanks, ponds, rivers, canals, lakes, spring, etc.

Recent econometric studies reveal that there has been systematic relationship between globalisation growth and poverty reduction.
Our world is still a world of difference and one of the most significant differences with in the overall HDI score for any country is between males and females.

India exceeds the low human development economies and the South Asia in all the said indicators of life expectancy, adult literacy, combined gross enrolment and earned income share for women and lags behind that of all developing economies. The summit ended with a commitment to the goal of eradicating poverty as an ethical, social, political and moral imperative of human kind.

The latest data shows that HDI declines in 30 countries in the year 1996 more than in any year since the HDR’s introduction in 1990.

- The GEM was estimated for 94 countries. Four of the tops five in the GEM rankings are Nordic countries – Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland. These countries are not only good at strengthening the basic capabilities of women; they have also opened many opportunities for them to participate in economic and political fields.

The enrolment ratios are also much lower among females as compared to males. So there is every need to develop literacy level and improve income earning capacity of the female numbers. The time allocated for non market activities by women 65 per cent as against 8 per cent by men. It reveals that women work more time the men.
Age is one of the important demographic component and the future growth of population depends upon its age and sex structure. The average age of the respondents is less than the average age of the husbands 47.5 years. Until recent times joint family was commonly prevalent in India and there has been a change during the last two or three decades. Majority belong to nuclear family.

The average number of brothers the respondents are having is 1.44. The average number of male children surviving is 1.46 and female children is 1.16.

It reveals that the migration is more from these three neighbouring and it is nominal from all other districts. It indicates that long distance migration is less and most of the migration stream comes from the short distance.

75 per cent of the respondents husbands got married before their husband attained the age of 28 years. The average age of the respondents at the time of the marriage is 23.6 years. It indicates that there exists a high correlation between women's education and love marriage.

This shows that they do not feel strongly about their decision in taking divorce.

The average age of the first child is 18.16 years. The average age of the second child is 20.94 years.

Home deliveries are more dangerous and hence there is every need to motivate women in favour of hospital deliveries.
Whether it is first or second delivery, it is always safe to have delivery in the hospital. All the respondents should be properly cautioned and educated.

The study shows that the type of marriage of the respondents, out of 343 respondents who are married majority 294 (85.7 per cent) respondents had arranged marriage.

A question is also asked whether they divorce intend to remarry. Out of 14 respondents 12 (85.7 per cent) said they can not say and the remaining 2 (14.3 per cent) answered positively.

The antenatal care is as important as the prenatal care. So there is need to motivate parents towards anti natal care also. Only 57 (16.6 per cent) took maternity leave for the second conception. The average days of maternity leave used is 110 days.

On the whole most of the respondents feel that their health is not upset because of dual work. However, there are 49 (41.1 per cent) who cannot say whether there are double standards or not. So there is no clear evidence to prefer a single male child or a single female child.

Education is one of the important social variables. There exists high correlation between education of the women and her status in the society.

On the whole It can be concluded, that the educational qualifications are more among the husbands as compared to respondents (wives).
It is observed that higher the educational level more the prevalence of nuclear family system. The study also conforms the same. Thus higher educational level having more the asset of the family and vise versa.

However there exists jealousy and harassment among the people with higher educational level. More educated people felt that work is associated with social stigma. Thus we can say that higher the educational level, lower the percentage of people feeling that possession of gold is a social status. Higher the education, more the hospital deliveries and so on. Higher the educational level, more the preference for the nuclear family and so on. The harassment is more among the less educated women as compared to higher educated people.

Almost all in the present days still only a few have such technical qualifications. This a clear gender discrimination and should be eliminated at least in the case of health. However, in some places baby sitters are available, but they are very costly. So they leave job. Hence, after birth of a child the women will leave the employment and look after children till the children attain their school going age.

Asset is an important source of income to the family. More is the value of the asset more is the income capacity and better is the social and economic status in the society. The average value of the assets possessed by the respondents is Rs 3.8 lakhs.

Out of 349 respondents 217 (62.1 per cent) do not possess a house of their and the remaining 132 (38.9 per cent) possess the house, whose value is a
maximum of Rs 10 lakhs. The average value of the house possessed by the respondents family is Rs. 5.3 lakhs.

The average value of the property owned by the respondents is Rs 1.1 Lakh.

However, the differences between the religious groups is marginal. Thus, there exists a positive relationship between salary of the respondents and savings of the respondents.

It is surprising to note that the higher salary level some people did not immunized their children because of Governmental efforts irrespective of income level people are coming forward to immunize their children.

Thus occupations which are associated with unorganized work are associated with illiteracy or lower level of education and all other occupations which are official in nature are associated with higher level of education. The average time taken to get the present job is 2.7 years. The fact that working women suffer certain indignities at work places is altogether a different question. In rural society, women have been working on farms and it was never a stigma.

Efforts are being made seriously to implement reservation for women in parliament and other employment opportunities. Already, $\frac{1}{3}$rd reservations are implemented for women in government service and for elective posts at panchayat level.
On the whole the study reveals that there is an important increase in the women's status in the recent times. But there is every need to empower them in social, economic, and political fields.

9.4 Major findings of the studies:

An analysis of secondary data reveals that sex discrimination exists in the society in a large measure. Women are discriminated on socio, economic, and political grounds in spite of the best efforts made by the government to improve the status of women in India.

The status of women in any country can be measured through education, employment, to spend the income earned by them and the decision making power. In all these aspects Indian women are lagging behind. Even though there are improvements in these variables.

Gender empowerment measure and Gender development measure are considered as better indicators of development of women as suggested by the UNDP.

The empowerment of women is considered to be an important phenomenon for the overall social and economic development of women in the country.

The study reveals that the average age of the respondent is 42.5 years whereas a husband's average age is 55 years. So, the women 7.5 years younger than men.
The study reveals inter-religious marriages are very common. More Christian and Muslim women are getting married to Hindu or Muslim men. The Hindus are better educated as compared to Christians.

The illiteracy is more among SCs as compared to OCs. There has been a change in the type of family in the recent times. Nuclear family is spreading very fast now a days.

The average number of brothers the respondents are having is 1.44 as against 1.47 sisters. The average number of male children surviving is 1.46 where as the female it is only 1.16. The difference is attributed high prevalence of mortality and descrimination of female child.

Majority of the respondents belong to A.P. State and interstate migration is nominal. Among the migrants, Krishna District dominates.

Majority of the respondents are got marry and late marriages are very common. The average age of marriage, the respondents is 23.6 years.

The divorce/separation rate is high, indicating that better educated and employed women do not hesitate to divorce. Most of the respondents though had arranged marriages 14.3 per cent of the respondents had love marriage which is high by any standard. It seems that there exists high correlation between women's education and love marriage. Most of the love marriages are with in the same case or community. The widowhood is very high. The average age at the widowhood is 38 years. Majority of the widowed revealed
that they support to marry a widower. The average age at the time of divorce is 30 years. Majority of the separated respondents are not getting maintenance allowance. Majority of the respondents felt divorce is a last resort to be adopted in there is a problem in marital life. The main reason for divorce is financial problems.

Majority of the respondents said that they are aware of the legal age of the marriage but majority are not able to answer correctly.

Majority of the respondents felt that main purpose of the marriage is companionship. Majority felt that there is not have freedom to move freely in the society. 97 per cent of the respondents are aware of 1/3rd reservation to women.

Majority wanted in two male children and there is one female child. It indicates sex discrimination.

Almost cent per cent of the respondents are aware of the AIDS.

The main suggestions for improving the women in India are education and employment.

50 per cent of the respondents felt they can undergo family planning operation without single male child.

76 per cent of the respondents are aware that they have property right in the family, but they are not utilized.

76 per cent felt giving dowry is a must to a girl to get marry.

85 per cent of the respondents felt woman is first enemy to other woman.
98 per cent of the respondents voted in the last general elections. This percentage is much higher as compared to participation of general population in the general elections.

82 per cent of respondents felt that there is no safety in the society to send the girls for higher education.

50 per cent of the respondents are not using family planning methods. Only 42 per cent felt that India is not over populated.

The average age of first conception is 32 years and the average age of first child is 18 years. The average age of second conception was 27 years and the average age of second child is 21 years. Almost cent per cent of the respondents immunized their children. only 71 per cent of the respondents taken prenatal care.

35 per cent of the respondents giving breastfeed to their child upto 9 months. In modern society not breastfeeding a child have become a fashion.

Majority of the respondents i.e. 88 per cent are spending their salary for themselves. The average annual income earned by the family is 2.6 lakhs.

The average expenditure is 66,437/-. The savings are very low, i.e., only 18,757/-. The average debt of the respondent is 8,798/-. Majority of the respondents i.e., 73 per cent are having white or pink ration card.

The study covered most of the occupied groups which as lecturers, engineers, bank managers and fish, eggs and toys selling people and vegetable vendors. 87 per cent of the respondents in the organized sector had additional technical qualification i.e. computer or typing. The women did not feel working
both at home and office is not burdensome. The average number of years worked by the respondents is 10 years.

The occupational mobility is very less. Majority are dissatisfied with the present job. People with higher education face harassment both either from employee or from colleagues. The percentage of people reported harassment is less educated and low occupational categories. 77 per cent of the respondents are not willing to leave the job after marriage. The employment curve for women the unimodel curve but not a bimodal curve as is observed in advanced countries. Majority of the respondent felt that they are getting whole hearted support from the family members or husband.

Asset is an important aspect of economic empowerment. The average value of the assets possessed by the respondents is only 3.5 lakhs. The average rental value of the house resided by the respondents is 24.20. The average value of the property owned by the respondents themselves is only 1.1 lakh. The high income is associated with more age of puberty and high age of conception and so on. The respondents immunized their children irrespective of their education and income.

9.5 Suggestions:

The education is a key factor for social empowerment. There is every need to provide more educational facilities especially, for women of disadvantaged groups and remote areas and in the urban slums.
The dropout rates are very high among girls as compared to boys, especially after the secondary level of education. So, more schools exclusively for girl in remote rural areas and urban slums to be promoted.

Now a days the privatization is increasing and most of the poor people are not able to spend more on girls education. So more govt. women educational institutions should be started.

Even among the highly better placed women as for as occupation is concerned do not have full positive attitudes towards empowerment of women. Better empowerment of women requires better education, better employment and more freedom to spend their earnings and decision making power, especially in the field of family planning and adoption of small family now.

The assets possessed by the respondents is very low and hence there is every need to encourage women to have better assets. If possible the government can wave registration fees for the property transferred or possessed by the women.

There is lot sex discrimination and it is to be curbed at the earliest. The discrimination is more in juvenile level. The infanticide and feticide is to be reduced.

The average age at marriage is still low. The majority are getting married even before the prescribed legal age of marriage i.e., 18 years. More
women should be encouraged for delayed marriage which has positive impact in reducing the fertility.

Child mortality is very high among girls as compared to boys. Hence more attention should be paid for declining child mortality especially among girls.

The maternal mortality is also very high. Hence there is need to reduce the maternal deaths by encouraging more institutional deliveries and creating awareness among the women for better prenatal and antenatal care. There is also need to improve a nutritional standards of the women and child since poor nutrition is a main cause for high death rates in the society.

Thus the study has policy implications especially to the study area.