INTRODUCTION

Women constitute half of the world’s population, work two third of the world’s working hours, earn one tenth of the world’s income and own less than one tenth of the world’s property.

Women play an important role in the development of human society. According to Census of India 2001, women constitute 48.2 percent of the total population and the women workers constitute 25.68 percent of the total workforce in the country. According to National Perspective Plan, only 14 percent of women are in full employment, nearly 90 percent of these are in unorganised sector, of these 83 percent are in agriculture and construction work. Below 8 percent are in organised sector.

The history of women’s participation in gainful employment is a recent one. After the Industrial Revolution, the social situations changed throughout the world and so in India. The family no more remained a centre of production. Due to industrialisation and urbanisation new social norms and values emerged. Job opportunities, economic hardship and favourable cultural and social situation encouraged women to seek employment outside the homes.

After independence of the country the number of women to come out of their houses for work increased day by day. They also took education. In the beginning women were mostly engaged in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations, as ayahs, nurses, midwives, water women, cooks, domestic servants, as labourers on construction sites, in agricultural farms and on plantations. But now they are increasingly being employed in services, industries, shops, establishments, offices and professional / technical occupations. They are gradually entering into occupations and jobs, formerly considered to be almost exclusively for men. Old distinctions between men’s and women’s work are breaking down. Still there are many restrictions imposed by customs and other factors such as social, economic, biological, and psychological factors on women’s access to positions and occupations. Despite these restrictions women are and will continue to remain in the labour force.
Although entering of women into work force raised their economic and social status yet it gave rise to many problems and difficulties to them. They have to face problems at home as well as at working places. They have to perform dual responsibilities termed “reproductive” and “productive”. The problems and difficulties got multiplied due to their peculiar social, biological and psychological conditions and due to their illiteracy and ignorance.

They may have to accept jobs which they do not like, they may have to work under unpleasant conditions, they may have accept to wages which are not enough for their average way of living. They were taken on labour jobs carrying lesser wages and there was no avenue of promotion to them, nor protection or security of employment. The wages of women are usually fixed at rates lower than those for men for the same or similar occupations. They are not able to get any advantage of social security schemes. The working conditions of women worker in organised sector are also not good. The women workers of the public sector and private sector are all deprived of most of the benefits.

Sexual harassment of women at the work place is a very complex problem, in the organisation either Government or private. It can happen with top executive, supervisor, clients, factory workers as well as with domestic servant. Due to fear of losing her confirmation of service, promotion and jobs many women have silently endured sexual harassment at the work place, considering it to a normal occupation hazards. In totality the conditions of women workers are very pathetic and disgusting.

To undo the aforesaid discrimination and exploitation, there arose a need to provide them some security and protection through law.

The Constitution of India, *inter alia* made several provisions for the protection and security of women workers. These provisions besides the preamble are contained in Articles 14, 15, 16, 23, 39, 43 and 46 of the Constitution. The provisions of the Constitution which are called policy principles for providing protection and security to women workers are implemented through different protective legislations. The protective measures are not only provided through legislations but also being provided through different plans, programmes, policies and schemes of the Government.
On the other hand the labour policy set out in the *Five Year Plans* since independence was based on the belief that the basic needs of the workers for food, clothing and shelter must be satisfied. Various measures for the welfare and benefit of women and women labour are undertaken during different plan periods starting from 1951. The main focus of Programmes, Schemes and Policies of the Government with regard to women labour has been to remove the handicaps under which they work, to strengthen their bargaining capacity, to improve their wages and working conditions, to enhance their skills and to open up better employment opportunities for them.

Increasing attention is being focused at the international level on the problems of women workers. The United Nations Organisation and The International Labour Organisation, which are specialized agencies of United Nations have been devoting attention to subject of interest to women workers.

In the light of different Conventions and Recommendations of the International Labour Organisation, the Government undertook various ameliorative legislative measures to provide safety and protection to women workers. Some of these labour legislations provide special provisions for women workers and other deal exclusively with them.

for equal work, social security, provision of crèches and other welfare facilities etc.

The Judiciary in India under it policy for attainment of social justice has been very attendant to give effect the rights of women workers. The role of Judiciary has been quite significant with respect to women. The Indian Judiciary to a certain extent has taken lead in securing socio-economic justice to women. An analysis of decided cases reveals that there is a new trend in the Judiciary to interpret law so as to provide better protection to women in respect of their rights. The creative thinking that is evident in cases like Kishori Mohanlal Bakshi v. Union of India\(^1\), C.B. Muthamma v. Union of India\(^2\), Air India v. Nargesh Meerza\(^3\), People’s Union for Democratic Rights’ v. Union of India,\(^4\) Randhir Singh v. Union of India\(^5\), are a good sign of judicial activism. The Supreme Court rightly maintained that women are the participants in the mainstream and deserve equal treatment.

The Supreme Court in Vishaka v. State of Rajasthan\(^6\) took a lead from the legislature by declaring sexual harassment at place of work a penal offence.

The judgment in Municipal Corporation of Delhi v. Female Workers\(^7\) has a far reaching consequences. This is a beneficial piece of judgment which will cover a large number of women workers who were till date refused maternity benefit because of the casual and temporary nature of service.

Despite the protective measures, national and international commitment, beneficial labour legislations and sympathetic judicial pronouncements, women workers are still made to suffer discrimination in social and economic spheres and continue to be the most exploited lot. Therefore, much more remains to be done. It is true that laws are made for the welfare and benefit of people but laws and Constitution do not by themselves solve all the problems.

1. **Statement of Problem**

As it has been mentioned above that Government undertook various ameliorative legislative measures to provide safety and protection to women workers but in practice it seems that labour legislations are observed more in breach than in compliance. Employers are not complied with provisions of labour laws. In many cases it has been found that protective measures such as crèches,
separate toilets and washing facilities, drinking waters, recreational facilities etc. are neither provided nor adequately maintained. Other welfare and safety measures are also not being provided. There are virtually no medical facilities and maternity benefits are provided. Labour laws are callously ignored by the employers. It seems that present penal provisions of these enactments are not deterrent to prevent the employer from making violation of these provisions. The machinery for inspection and enforcement is inadequate. Women in many occupations are still being paid less as compared to males. Some of the young women are even subjected to sexual exploitation. There are hardly any significant cases of complaint being successfully argued for the compliance of the Act.

So far as the social and economic position of women workers in Aligarh and Agra districts is concerned, it is not different from women of other parts of the country. Women constitute a significant part of the workforce of Aligarh and Agra. According to Census of India 2001, female worker participation rate in Aligarh is 13.3 percent and in Agra is 7.24 percent. Within the districts there are various industries in which majority of women are engaged. Some women workers are engaged in home based industries and some are engaged in big industries, but unfortunately, the working and living conditions of the majority of the women workers are not satisfactory and they are not getting the benefits provided under different labour legislations. Men are preferred over women in employment. Women are considered inferior to men and are discriminated by the employers at the place of work.

The life of women workers in lock industry, brick kilns industry, footwear industry and construction industry is very tough. Women workers in these industries are not getting any benefit worth the name. Their working hours are not fixed and in regard to wages they are getting less than minimum wages. The wages too are not paid to them on time. Their working conditions are miserable. These women have to perform a dual role relating to production and reproduction. These women are unprotected and are suffering from economic exploitation. Their ignorance about the law, poverty and illiteracy have added to their woes all the more. Although there is an organised machinery which envisages the protection of women workers under the provision of law yet employers have been exploiting
them and women workers are subjected to discrimination and harassment. The working conditions of women in hicks thermometers industry are quite better than other industries and they received most of the benefits provided under different labour legislations. But unfortunately, they do not receive minimum wages.

In totality, the conditions of women working in Aligarh and Agra industries are not good.

Moreover, the women workers are themselves responsible for the problems mentioned above due to their ignorance and lack of awareness about their rights and for evasion of mentioned beneficial labour legislations.

The laws, policies and welfare system that are proposed for women workers cannot be effective unless they themselves are conscious of law and acquire the strength to ensure that laws are brought into force and implemented; unless there are effective means to implement, unless Judiciary played its significant role, unless breachers of the law are punished with deterrent penalties, and unless the organs of public opinion and movement and organisations mount vigil and intercede to ensure that the provisions of the laws and welfare system are acted upon. Today this problem requires a deep and pragmatic research which this proposed study is aimed for.

2. **Area and Scope of Study**

The areas of the study are Aligarh and Agra which are the most important districts of Uttar Pradesh. The present study restrict its attention only to the lock industry, hicks thermometers industry, brick kilns industry in Aligarh district and construction industry, footwear industry in Agra district, because it is not possible for the researcher to study all the industries in Aligarh and Agra due to limitation of time.

In Aligarh lock industry, there are around three thousand units employing 1.25 lakhs workers in the industry. In which around 1300 units are registered with Office of General Manager, District Industry Centre, Industrial Estate, Aligarh. Around 1700 units are unregistered. In the lock industry most of the process has traditionally been carried out under home based production. Home based industries are basically unorganised units, highly dispersed and scattered and include a major chunk of the women working as a part of family labour. The
present study is confined only to home based units of Aligarh lock industry, which are scattered all over the city of Aligarh. Researcher has selected 20 home based units from the area of Jaiganj, Sarai Lavaria, Parao Dube, Delhi Gate, Hathipul, Usman Para, Sarai Rehman, Rasalganj, Shahjamal and Turkman Gate for the study.

Another industry which is selected for study is hicks thermometers industry. In Aligarh only one unit of hicks thermometers industry which is registered with Office of General Manager, District Industry Centre, Industrial Estate, Aligarh.

Besides this, Aligarh district has around 178 brick kilns registered with Office of Zila Panchayat Licence Section Aligarh. Researcher has selected 10 brick kilns from the block of Akrabad, Atrauli, Dhanipur, Lodha and Iglas for the study.

In Agra, footwear industry is selected for the study. It is submitted that there are around 10,150 units in this industry. In which about 10,000 units are home based. Only around 150 units are registered with Office of Assistant Director of Factory, Agra and Office of General Manager, District Industry Centre, Agra. Researcher has selected 15 home based units from the area of Jeewan Mandi, Shahganj, Idgah, Chakki Pat, and Nala Kazi Pura and 5 big units from the area of Sikandara, Industrial Area and Heeng Ki Mandi for the study.

In Agra another industry which is selected for the study is construction industry. It is reported that there are around 181 construction industry, which are registered with Office of Deputy Labour Commissioner, Agra. Researcher has selected 5 construction sites from the area of Sikandara, Tajganj, Atoos Gaon and Paschim Puree Sonali Gaon, Agra for study.

Though this survey is confined only to five industries in Aligarh and Agra districts, it may be able to give an overall picture of women workers in Aligarh and Agra industries. As accuracy of a scientific work depends to a large extent upon the adequacy of methods that are selected and applied to it, the present work too has adopted systematic procedures of research work at every step ranging from the designing of the questionnaire to the interpretation of the collected data.
3. **Hypothesis**

The life of women workers is very tough. They have to face problems at home as well as at working places. Increasing attention has been focused to protect them through constitutional provisions, beneficial labour laws, national and international commitments, protective measures and judicial pronouncements. Despite this, the women workers are still suffer of discrimination in social and economic spheres and continue to be the most exploited lot.

In this regard, numerous questions came in the mind of researcher, which inspire her to made the following hypothesis:

1. What problems working women have to face at home as well as at their working places?
2. Whether constitutional provisions, beneficial labour laws, national and international commitments, protective measures and judicial pronouncement are sufficient to provide protection to women worker or not? If sufficient, then why they are not being effective and problems of working women by way of exploitation, discrimination and dismal working conditions are continued?
3. What is the impact of Indian labour laws on socio-legal status of women workers in lock industry, hicks thermometers industry, brick kilns industry in Aligarh and construction industry, footwear industry in Agra? Besides this, what are institutional deficiencies in the protective legal framework and the functional problems in its implementation which frustrated the implementation of labour laws?
4. Whether working conditions of women workers in selected industries are miserable and exploitative in nature?
5. Whether women workers have awareness about laws and their rights?

4. **Object of study**

To verify the aforesaid hypothesis, the present study has been undertaken with numerous objectives in mind:

(1) The research is aimed to highlight the magnitude of the problems of the working women and to create awareness among women about their
rights. The study shall also concentrate what rights are available to women under Indian labour laws.

(2) To examine the applicability of various labour laws on socio-legal status of women workers in lock industry, hicks thermometers industry, brick kilns industry in Aligarh and construction industry, footwear industry in Agra and to see how far and to what extent they are being observed by these industries.

(3) To examine the obstacles in the implementation of various provisions of labour laws selected under the study.

(4) To investigate and observe the working conditions like health, sanitation, safety and welfare etc. of the women workers in selected industries.

(5) Along with this the research is aimed to test the hypothesis that the existing constitutional provisions, beneficial labour laws, national and international commitments, protective measures and judicial pronouncements are sufficient to provide protection of women or not. If sufficient, then why laws, policies and welfare system is not being effective and problems of working women by way of exploitation, discrimination and dismal working conditions are continued.

(6) To suggest possible solutions to their problems.

5. **Research Methodology**

Research means to search or to find out and examine again. This is the very essence of the process of requiring new knowledge. The research on this topic has been done by adopting both the methods of research namely Empirical Research as well as Doctrinal Research.

Law is a normative science, that is, a science which lays down norms and standards for human behavior in a specified situation or situations enforceable through the sanction of the State. What distinguishes law from other social sciences is its normative character. The fact along with the fact that stability and certainty of law are desirable goals and social values to be pursued, make doctrinaire research to be of primary concern to a legal researcher. Doctrinal research of course, involves analysis of case law, arranging, ordering and
systematising legal propositions, and study of legal institutions, but it does more - it creates law and its major tool (but not the only tool) to do so is through legal reasoning or rational deduction. In the present study, Books, Law Journals, Case Law, Proceeding of Conferences, Doctoral thesis and Dissertations, Reports of Committees and Commissions, Five Year Plans, Census of India, National Sample Survey Organisation, Dictionaries, Statutes, Magazines, Comprehensive Manual and Newspapers are extensively used. For collecting material, surfing on internet has also been done.

As law is intended for society, it operates in society and therefore, knowledge of social policy, facts and social value is essential for the researcher. In present study, researcher gets an opportunity to test his ideas by sociological data, it will certainly add value to his research.

Empirical research is carried on by collecting or gathering information by first hand study of the subject. It relies on experience or observation without due regard to any theory or system and hence it also called as experimental type of research. In this type of research, the researcher attempts to investigate the effect or impact by actual examination or observation of the functioning of the law and legal institutions in the society. It seeks to answer such questions as are law and legal institutions serving the need of society? Are they suited to the society in which they are operating? It also concerns with the identification and creating an awareness of the new problems which need to be tackled through law, conducting empirical research.

In such a research, the researcher first of all accepted a working hypothesis or guess as to the probable results and then proceeded to collect enough facts to prove or disprove her hypothesis. She then set up experimental designs which he thought well manipulate the persons or the material concerned, so as to bring forth the desired information.

The universe of this study is comprised of women workers in 1700 units of home based lock manufacturing industry, 1 unit of hicks thermometers industry, 178 units of brick kilns industry in Aligarh District and 10,150 units of footwear industry, 181 units of construction industry in Agra district.
Out of the universe, 20 units from home based lock manufacturing industry, 10 units from brick kilns, 20 units from footwear industry (home based + big units) and 5 construction sites have been selected for study. In Aligarh district only one unit of hicks thermometers industry, so that unit has been selected. Thus for the purpose of this study, a total of 56 units have been selected. Sample units were selected through random sampling method.

After selecting the sample of industry, lists of women workers employed in each selected units had been prepared with the help of employers of industries and other significant persons concern with these industries. In this process a total of 180 women workers were listed from 20 selected units of home based lock manufacturing industry, 56 in 1 unit of hicks thermometers industry, 200 of 10 units of brick kilns industry, 225 of 5 construction sites and 150 of 20 units of footwear industry. Thus the total women workers listed in all selected 56 units are 811.

After this, a sample of women workers has been selected, following the random sampling method. 50 women from 20 units of home based lock manufacturing industry, 50 from 1 unit of hicks thermometers industry, 50 from 10 units of brick kilns industry, 50 from 20 units of footwear industry and 50 from 5 construction sites have been selected. Thus, the total of 250 respondents women workers from the five selected industries are covered for this study. The decision for selection of 250 women workers from 5 selected industries was approved considering the fact that the sample size of this proportion is fairly a good representative for expressing the overall characteristics of the problem chosen for the present work. The details of the sample units and number of respondents selected for the study have been provided in the Table I.1.
Table-I.1
Details of the Sample Units and Number of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of the industry</th>
<th>Total no. of units</th>
<th>Number of sample units</th>
<th>Total number of women workers in selected units</th>
<th>No. of women workers selected for sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Aligarh</td>
<td>Home Based Lock Industry Hicks Thermometers Industry Brick Kilns Industry Construction Industry</td>
<td>1700</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agra</td>
<td>1 1 178 181 10150 10150</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>1 1 1 1 6 5</td>
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<td>1 1 6 5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>180 56 811 250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Survey.

Empirical study is based on primary data. The primary data has been collected over a period of four years from Feb. 2006 to 2010. To collect empirical data both qualitative and quantitative methods have been used. Quantitative information is collected through questionnaires and qualitative information is collected through observations and discussions.

Data have been collected from the selected respondents with the help of questionnaire specially designed for the purpose. Besides, employers, some significant persons were also consulted to gather further pertinent information concerning the problem. Accordingly on the spot observations and discussions were also used for verifying the information collected from the women respondents in the field.

Questionnaire for women workers was designed and utilized for collecting the data from the field. The questionnaire was very carefully and systematically
designed according to the objective of the study. The framing of questions was done in such a way that the respondents could easily understand and respond. The questions were in English language but in the course of field visits, these questions were translated into Hindi as well as the local dialect of the respondents. In order to avoid redundancy of some of questions in the questionnaire, the questionnaire was pre-tested well in advance. As a result certain modification were introduced in few questions. At times while administering the questionnaire to the respondents, informal discussion on various aspects also took place that proved very effective for the research.

The interview with the respondents was based on the questionnaire. It gave an opportunity to the researcher to have a face-to-face interaction with the respondents.

Observations had been one of the most reliable tool of data collection in the sense that during the inquiry of facts many women workers as well as employer had a propensity to hide the real information. The observations of the researcher were helpful mainly in the issue relating to housing conditions, social practices, work schedule, working environment and the interactional patterns of the women workers in this industry. In order to develop a good rapport with the respondents, the research, at times, stayed with their family, had food with them and even helped them in their work.

After the fieldwork was over, all the questionnaires were checked and some of the information written here and there on the questionnaires were rewritten against the appropriate choices of a particular question so as to facilitate subsequent analysis of this data. After that the whole data of each respondent was fed in the computer for further tabulation and interpretation. Simple statistical method like average, ratio and percentage were used at appropriate place for analysing this data.

During the course of this field work a lot of difficulties faced by the researcher. The most important among there difficulties was the apprehensions and the suspicion expressed by the employers regarding the real identity of the researcher. Most of the employers were not ready to cooperate because they feared that the researcher might be a government employee of the labour department,
sales tax department, the income tax department or industrial safety and health department and might create problems for them. Because of this there was a hesitation in the employers to provide real and true information relating specially to the health, safety and welfare provisions, social security provisions, wage structure, terms and conditions of work of women workers. But it was after much of the persuasive efforts that the researcher could prove his identity and secure their help and cooperation for interviewing their workers.

Yet another difficulty faced during the course of this study was the lack of authentic statistical data regarding the exact number of women workers working in these industries.

Another important problem was posed from the respondents themselves. Many of the respondents were not willing to talk to the researcher because she was stranger to them. This problem has taken a lot of time of researcher to relax them that she was just like a friend of them and talking with her would not create the problem for them.

6. Proposed Chapterisation

To discuss the various objectives in the light of the hypothesis, the present study is planned as follows:

In the beginning, the Introduction has been discussed. It throws light on Statement of Problem, Area and Scope of Study, Hypothesis, Objective, Research Methodology and Proposed Chapterisation. It outlines the problem which prompted the researcher to do deep and pragmatic research on this topic.

Chapter I deals with Extent and General Pattern of Employment of Women. It explains the position of women in vedic age and after that period. In this chapter an attempt has been made to discuss position of women in India, nature and pattern of women employment, women labour in various sectors and also to highlight the factors, which is affecting the employment of women.

Chapter II deals with Magnitude of Problems of Working Women. This chapter highlights the problems of working women at home and problems of working women at workplace. In this chapter and attempt is also made to overcome the difficulties and problems faced by women, some solutions have been put forward.
Chapter III relates with Constitutional Framework. The Constitution of India, which is considered one of the most progressive Constitutions in the world ensures equality of gender by making it a fundamental right. The Constitution of India provides security and protection to women by guaranteeing, equality before law, equality of opportunity in matter of employment, equal pay for equal work, protection against discrimination, protection against discrimination, maternity relief, decent standard of life and living wages. The Constitution of India enjoins upon the State to make special provisions in favour of women. An attempt has also been made in this chapter to give a sketch of the constitutional framework which provides security and protection to women and also to examine the judicial interpretation of the Constitutional provisions relating to women in general and to women labour in particular.

Chapter IV deals with International and National Perspectives. To protect the interests of women workers and to ensure them equality at the workplace and to ensure that women are not discriminated or are denied of the right to work on ground of maternity, provisions exists at both international and national level. The protective measures provided at national level through different Plans, Programmes, Policies and Schemes of the Government. The protection given to women at international level by the various Conventions, Recommendations and Resolutions adopted by the UN and ILO from time to time to provide security to women workers. In the present chapter it is also pointed out why national and international efforts has not been effective so that loopholes has been removed. For this purpose certain suggestions has also been made.

Chapter V deals with Women’s Rights and Labour Statutes. In the present chapter, an humble attempt has been made to discuss the women’s rights which is provided in the Indian labour laws. Along with this a critical evaluation of these labour legislations has also been made. For the sake of convenience the rights contained in the labour laws has been divided in three heads (1) Measures in regard to health, safety and welfare for women. (2) Social security measures for women (3) Wage protection for women. Under the heading of measures in regard to health, safety and welfare for women, various labour legislations: The Factories Act, 1948, The Mines Act, 1952, The Plantation Labour Act, 1951, Building and
Other Construction Workers’ (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996, The Beedi and Cigar Workers (Conditions of Employment) Act, 1966, The Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 and Inter-State Migrant Women (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1979, have been discussed.

Social security is a basic need of all women regardless of employment in which they work and live. To provide social security, various legislations: The Maternity, Benefit Act, 1961, The Employees’ State Insurance Act, 1948, The Employees’ Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, The Payment of Gratuity Act, 1972, and The Workmen’s Compensation Act, 1923, have been discussed. In an economy where even minimum wages are not paid to the women workers, the need to protect the wages earned by them has greatest significance. In this regard the most relevant and important pieces of legislations: Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Payment of Wages Act, 1936 and Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 have been discussed. Beside this, Loopholes in the labour legislations have been pointed out and various suggestions for their rectification have been put forward.

Chapter VI is related with A Socio-Legal Study of Aligarh and Agra. The social and economic position of women workers in the Aligarh and Agra districts are not different from the status of women from other parts of the country. The working and living conditions of the majority of women in lock industry, hicks thermometers industry, brick kilns industry in Aligarh and footwear industry, construction industry in Agra are not satisfactory and they do not receive most of the benefits provided under different labour legislations.

A survey is conducted in Aligarh and Agra to examine the applicability of various labour laws on socio-legal status of women workers in selected industries and to see how far and to what extent they are being observed by these industries. For this purpose this chapter is divided into four parts (1) Area and Scope of Study (2) The Industry Profile (3) Socio-Economic Profile of Women Workers (4) An Empirical Assessment of Protective Measures for Women Workers in Aligarh and Agra.
Although labour legislations provide security and protection to women workers, but it is a matter of common knowledge, that such legislations could not be very effective, so an effort has been made to identify the institutional deficiencies in the protective legal frame-work and the functional problems in its implementation which frustrated the implementation of labour laws and suggestions have been made to make it more effective and result oriented.

Chapter VII deals with Judicial Response. The role and approach of Judiciary has been quite significant with respect to women. The Judiciary is playing a creative role in harmonising and balancing the rights and interests of men vis-à-vis women. There is a new trend in judiciary to interpret laws so as to provide better protection and security to women in respect of their rights. A scanning of numerous ruling reveals, the issues of equality, discrimination, sexual harassment of women at work place, equal pay for equal work, maternity benefits, prohibition of work in hazardous occupations. Several rights of women workers have also been recognised by Supreme Court of India and High Courts in its various judicial decisions. Thus, a critical analysis of various cases have been made, in this chapter.

Last chapter deals with Conclusion and Suggestions. A summarization of the present study is attempted and a few suggestions are proposed therein. It has proposed that in order to raise the socio-legal status of women workers, the labour legislations should be made effective and result oriented. This can only be achieved by removing the loopholes as pointed out and by incorporating the various suggestions made by the researcher.

In the end selected bibliography is enclosed.
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