CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Traditional Indian society is very complex with its compulsions and contradictions. It has recognized the woman as an ideal wife and ideal mother. She is expected to be an epitome of virtue. On the one hand it regards the woman as 'Shakti' and on the other it expects her to be obedient to the head of the family. The very controversial dictum of Manu is a subject of discussion even to this day "na stri Swatantryam arhati" appears to be irrelevant, but it reflects the social conditions of a period when woman was considered to be weak and incapable of protecting herself independently without the assistance of a male guardian. Thus it leads to the popular misconception that woman has to subjugate herself to male domination. As envisaged by tradition always valued womanhood, as a model for the society, no achievement was barred to a woman simply because of her sex. It is also true that the entire Bhakti literature from Bhagavad Gita onwards rightly stresses on the reformist note against orthodoxy and stresses emphatically the equality of opportunity open to one and all irrespective of differences in gender, economic status and caste.

In the case of woman and religion, tradition has misguided and confused the masses in India. This confusion has restrained the freedom and
liberty of the individual. The Indian society has accepted the patriarchal system. Under the guise of protecting women from external forces this system restrains the freedom of women. This is determinant to the very existence of free society. Marathi literature also projects the woman in this way colors and in a very indirect manner restrains her liberty and chokes up her freedom. But a new way of looking at women emerged in the nineteenth century.

The outlook of society regarding woman changed in post nineteenth century India. The basic principle of accepting the woman as a human being, an individual who has her own identity in society, emerged in nineteenth century in India and Marathi literature responded positively to this phenomenon. In fact, the religious and social reforms of the nineteenth century propagated the concept of personal liberty. Modern education also awakened the masses to an awareness of their rights. It was the beginning of an era of struggle for equal status for woman in a male dominated society. The Bhakti movement gave a boost to the woman's movement for a rightful place in the society.

This century saw struggles in various fronts, such as: remarriage of widows, child marriage, education of woman, legal equality, sex education of men and women. Such reforms aimed at giving equal status to women and improving their social status. Literature supported these reformist ideas by giving a fair and just treatment to the problems of women.
In fact, the influence of western literature and the influence of various social reforms have brought a transformation in the outlook on women. The woman depicted in the poetries is "not merely a mystical divine power or an object of sex. She is the real companion of man." The poets have admitted that in family life she has an equal status.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century women came together to fight for their rights. This gave rise to an era of meaningful dialogue that boosted the morale of woman. During the past twenty-five years, the autobiographies of women, the pathetic tales of divorces compiled and published by feminist organizations, the life stories of unmarried women and the abandoned ones shed light on a variety of problems faced by modern women.

In the present context, woman is very careful and cautious about her right that makes her more responsible than before. This results in new problems, but she cannot help it and in every way she is severing her relationship with all the traditional values that would restrain her capability. On the other hand, her male companion also tries to understand her and his masculine and dominance has given way to mutual understanding and acceptance of the reality. It is an eye opener for others in the subcontinent.

The present study is concerned with the status of women. Therefore a brief overview of relevant literature is presented in this section.

Review of Literature
Altekar has stated in his famous book, 'The Position of Woman in Hindu Civilization', that Indian women in the distant past had higher status than in more recent times. Women once enjoyed considerable freedom and privilege in the spheres of family, religion and public life: yet, over the centuries their position changed adversely. This higher position was available to them more specifically in the Vedic age when women played a more active economic role and participated in rituals.

Altekar identifies the period of 500 AD to 1800 AD as one of further deterioration concerning the position of women. During this period the 'Upanayana' rite for girls was completely abandoned, marriage remained the only substitute. At the same time, age of marriage of girls was lowered considerably and finally pre puberty and child marriages became popular. Widow Remarriages were prohibited. Islamic custom of "Purdah" was strictly observed in case of Hindu women also. All these led women to lead a completely secluded life. Hindu theology at this time classified women under the category of Shudras.

Census reports and demographic surveys indicate that fertility rates, income, urban residence and occupation differ for the major religions in India. Still we are not in a position to pinpoint the causes and consequences of these differences and their impact on the status of woman.

Traditional Indian society expected women to work at home and help her family members, if possible in whatever pursuit they followed for the
maintenance of the family. Even today, most of the Indian women hardly work outside their home; however, their contribution to society's economy is substantially high. In recent times, political, economical, educational and social ramifications have necessitated rapid change in women's status from her traditional role of housewife.

In a study conducted by the Madras School of Social Work (1970:18) on working mothers in white collar occupations in Madras, it was found that Christian women had a much higher rate of participation in white collar occupations than Hindu women and Muslim women had a much lower rate. The report states that Christianity places fewer restrictions on the activities of women than other religions and therefore Christian women have acquired more education and training than women of other communities.

Karlekar (1987) has conducted a study on 'Sweeper Women in Delhi'. It is a situational analysis of women employed in traditional occupation in a fast changing environment and the impact of these changes on their social system. The study reveals that the employment of poor women is indispensable for the survival of individual families as well as for the maintenance of the wider socio-economic system. Women contribute substantially to the family income and in addition are largely responsible for the material and non material needs of their children, husband and relatives. All major household jobs such as cooking, cleaning and child care are the primary responsibilities of women irrespective of whether they work two
hours or twelve hours in a day or whether their husbands are clerks or unemployed men. But all major decisions were taken by men in the family.

Thus women are involved in a variety of productive activities in unorganized sectors along with their normal work and are able to turn their domestic labour into productive resource. Women belonging to lower categories work for their family's survival, but not much economic and social value are attached to their work.

There are no studies conducted purely on women belonging to Mogaveera community with fishing background. Even studies conducted by G. V. Krishnamurthy and Mukta Shet, deal very peripherally with the issues of women. In this context, there is need for taking up an exclusive study on the status of fisher women as a case study Mogaveera Fishing Households.

"Next to god we are indebted to women, first for life itself and then for making it worth living." Said Bovee and in a nut shell this applies to Mogaveera women in every sense. No one can dispute the claim that the special greatness and endearing qualities of this community depend much on its women folk.

The Lingayat rule had denied active roles for women in the public places, but from the folk songs of Kodavas it is learnt that in the past they even challenged men in deeds of valour like killing tigers and weight lifting (Ganapathy:1980). In Kodava community women are more powerful than the male members. In the Kodava family there was a bifurcation of duties
between the male and females. The duties of the male concerned the outside work and female the inside management, like bringing up the children, management of servants, arranging household gadgets, cooking food etc (Ganapathy : 1980).

The Kodava woman of Coorg does all the menial work of the family and yet she has a commanding position in the home as well as in society. On many occasions she has risen not only to equal man but in some respects excel him. It is also same in the case of Kerala women.

Industrialization and the technological inventions, which were introduced by the British in Indian society, brought some important changes. Along with industrialization and modern technological changes, changes were also introduced in the postal services, the railways and bus transport facilities. This provided modern advanced industries with better means of communication, trade and industry flourished, urban centers started growing and bringing people together. With the spread of liberal education and growth of urbanization, females began going to schools and taking part in educational activities. On the other hand, women were changing status and expanding their roles; but with in the frame work of existing norms which were already in the process of change. There is no doubt that woman folk are fighting against exploitation and discrimination on the basis of gender. But still they are maintaining the traditional norms, customs and values.
Bhangis do the cleaning job. Hadi women do the midwife job. Bagdi women do the job of threshing and husking rice. Loi women of Khurkaul and Lairam villages of Manipur are known for silk cocoon rearing, reeling, spinning, weaving and printing of fabrics. Loi women of Andeo and Sellemai are known for distilling liquor. Certain jobs in foot wear units are exclusively meant for women like preparation of twisted ribbons, bathik print on leather surface and such fine work which men can’t do because of such work needs greater flexibility of wrist and fingers. Loi, a Dalit community found in Manipur is unique in nature and is one of the most talented and highly creative class people. These Lois do not have a single profession. Lois of different villages was found to have engaged in various skilled jobs producing different products.

Loi women of Andhra village are known to be expert potters and distillers. Lois of Fayang village are known for weaving a quilted cloth known as Laism phee. Laimram women produce best quality silk. Women of Dharker community of eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, women of Bauri, Doms, Hodis, Bagadis community of Orissa and West Bengal, Pariahs of Tamilnadu, Mahars and Jadhavs of Maharastra, Panos of Orissa, Malekudiyas of Karnataka and many other communities all over the country are known for a variety of cane and bamboo products.

This industry is considered to be the domain of women, but men also participate actively. Beautiful Dakra mats are made at home by Dabit
women of west Dinajpur of West Bengal. Women of Nadar Community of Tamil Nadu and Kerala are known for preparing palm jaggery. Men folk tap the palm trees to get neera, which women folk boil and produce jaggery and crystallized candy which has medicinal value and is popular in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal. The women of Podh community of West Bengal and Eastern India extract sugar cane juice, sugar cane Jaggery and sugar cane crystals known as Khandsari (Kalima, Rose: 1992).

The tribal community of Bihar suffers from widespread illiteracy, exploitation backed by the traditional leadership and based largely on superstition. Women suffer due to illiteracy, lack of awareness of the programmes of governmental and non governmental agencies and organized interaction. The process of modernization and basic infrastructure has not touched these remote areas. Pahari women of Dharmpura a hilly area of Himachal Pradesh are responsible for most of the work on the small terraced fields. Wheat, maize and rice are grown in the terraced fields. Most of the time men do the ploughing but in times of dire necessity women do the ploughing too. But it is considered as shameful for a woman to plough. Sowing the seeds, weeding, watering, harvesting, threshing and processing the grain are done by women (Subhash: 1989). Not only in Himachal Pradesh but also in other states of the country women play a dominant and active role in agricultural activities. The rural population of Karnataka is
extensively engaged in agriculture that too mainly women folk. Women folk
toil very hard from the dawn to dusk in the fields. In addition to this women
also bear the burden of all the household work such as cleaning, cooking,
child care and care for the aged and sick.

Scarcity of water is another major problem. Women folk have a long
walk to fetch the water. The problem of collection of firewood and green
fodder is a major one. Women spend whole day for these activities. Young
children may help them. Men folk do not help them regularly and their help
is very rare. Women working as domestic workers are mostly found in the
urban households. This is considered a low status job done mostly by the
women folk. Domestic work is a semi skilled job. In urban centers these
women workers come from different parts. Most of them are all illiterates.
Some domestic workers come for the day and some stay with their
employers. Some domestic workers work in 3-4 houses everyday washing
clothes, sweeping and mopping the dusty floors and scrubbing dirty vessels.

Women are also engaged in vegetable vending. These are the types of
women vegetable vendors to be found. 1) Wholesale 2) Retail and 3) Part
time. Wholesale vendors buy goods on auctions at wholesale markets,
retailers buy goods from the wholesalers both of them are full time
vegetable vendors. While the part time vegetable vendors sell near junctions
or near slums or just outside their homes on the pavement. They sell a very
small quantity which is brought from the retailers. Women vegetable vendors are found in almost every city and town.

Women of Waghris from Gujarat migrated to Mumbai. They are engaged in garlic and masala (spices) trade. Their trade is unique in nature. They exchange garlic for old pairs of plastic slippers. They sell these to scrap dealers. This is a seasonal work and women are the skilled artisans.

Women food vendors are found everywhere specially in Karnataka. North Karnataka is known for food such as maize roti, curd, variety of side dishes and leafy vegetables etc. In cities and towns in the market place or road junction it is common to find women selling dry maize roties, curds, butter, baingan (brinjal) dishes, ghee etc. One may find a number of women selling fruits, sweets on carts around the township areas, slums and market place women are involved in carpet selling, grass selling during the festival of Bakrid. Women also vend pan in pan shops. (SPARC:1989).

Women in Ahmed Nagar engage in chindi stitching (preparing garments and quilts from old waste cloth), stitching garments from the cheap cloth, stitching ready made garments men are also involved. Women also engage in low paid and low skilled work of making petticots, children's suits, saree blouses and undergarments. Women also work in incense stick industries, papad producing units, spice grinding units, chikan embroidering and block printing units. Women also work as hawkers in the railway stations, as cart pullers and cloth venders. A large number of
women and their children are engaged in rag picking collecting used papers, glass, plastic and metal. They collect these things from surroundings, dustbins near market places. They sort, carry on their head and sell to the contractors.

Women are engaged in seasonal agricultural works, construction and digging works and involved in raising animals for milk, butter, eggs, wool, leather, transporting of goods, catching and selling fish. The non paid family labour involved in providing fuel, food crops, processed grains and pulses, water, cloth and clothing is done by women. Women also work as contract workers in the mills.

Women’s income is used mostly for bread and clothes and their house. The more income she gets the faster her family’s quality of life goes up. In the female headed households, in the times of crises, assets are the only things which help them. Women are engaged in many occupations throughout the different seasons of the year. Depending on skills and assets women migrate for several months every year in search of variety of wage work. Poor women often render services in exchange for goods like care for cattle in exchange for the calves and trade home produced pottery, cloth, grains winnowers, rope or tools in exchange for food grains or other goods etc.

In Thailand the Thai culture has come under the influence of Indian culture, and women are considered as inferior to men. The Thai woman was
expected to do the job of child bearing, rearing as well as managing all the household duties and has to remain faithful to her husband. If she is fails she is condemned and divorced by her husband and she is not allowed to set up her own business and trade without prior permission from her husband in the traditional rural households. But in contrast to married women in the rural areas, urban married women enjoy much more freedom and play an active role in business and family affairs, community as well as marketing activities along with managing family finances. The Thai women in urban areas play a very active role. The Thai men respect and treat the womenfolk with kindness and courtesy (Napsari:1989)

Women also engage in rakhee work which is seasonal and lasts for only four months. Women are also involved in packing steel wood which is used for scouring vessels and selling it in the market. Women also work in bag making unit and as labourers in factories. In Bombay and other towns, cities and metropolitan areas prostitution is common. Many women are involved in this flesh trade. It is very heart breaking to note that women folk who live in brothels do so not by their choice but because of circumstances. In fact poverty, helplessness has made them prostitutes.

Training in all aspects of the work including designing, block printing, washing the finished garments and distributing the goods were formerly all male dominated work. But now all the work is efficiently and beautifully done by women.
To improve the social status and economic conditions of the poor and oppressed working class women, many funding and plan implementing non-Governmental agencies have sprouted up. Through the help and awareness given by these organizations, women realize their rights and acquire various kinds of training. This has to some extent helped women to gain better knowledge and skills.

"When women lead the movement of the poor, the growth rate of economy will be as fast as the growth of social harmony and the growth of national integration" said Ela Bhatt, former member of central government planning commission. (Rose, Kalima: 1992). As Ela Bhatt said "...after the work on the National Commission on Self-Employed Women, I saw that women everywhere are ready to take up leadership. In every growth we met, there were women whose eyes were burning with an inner fire. If these women are reached and encouraged, it is they who will be our future leaders".

Women of Singhbhum, Bhagalpur, Munger are engaged in weaving, spinning and pappad production work. Tribal women of Bihar have been engaged in collecting forest products such as tassar silk cocoons. In Delhi women are involved with zari work. Zari work is a fine fancy gold embroidery work on garments. It is a home based work and highly underpaid trade. SEWA –Delhi, organizes these workers under its wing and helps the zari workers to earn fair price for their product. In SEWA, Bhopal
wing, women are trained to do book binding, file making, garment stitching and beedi rolling.

In Lucknow, women do the intricate, delicate embroidery work known as chikan work. The fine white thread is used on delicate cottons, silk, linen. The Muslim women are experts in this work. They live in tiny dark houses, most of these women loose eye sight after 30 years because they work under poor light which ruin their eye sight. In Jain texts, there is also mention about peacock tamers, barbers, acrobats, pole-dancers, hunters, fishermen, washermen, fowlers and cobblers who are engaged in traditional work.

Amongst the social and religious reformers the place of pride must be given to Buddha, Mahavir, saints like Gyaneshwar, Tukaram and Kabir who made a valiant effort to modify the situation and raise the position of women. Industrialization also provided women and people belonging to the weaker section with special facilities for receiving education. Women have been given a legal status equal to that of men in all spheres of life.

The industrial growth both local and foreign has opened up new job opportunities for women not only as workers but also as managers. Women have been accepted in Thailand as equal partners not only in the field of education but also with regard to work participation.
In the past, the position of executives or managers has been dominated and controlled by men in the society. Women folk were considered not fit for such prestigious positions. There was a doubt about and under estimation of the capacity of women. The process of modernization has enabled women to strive for and achieve greater equality in occupational, educational political and social spheres of activity. The participation of women in the non-agricultural sectors has been steadily increasing since independence. There is a positive relationship between educational levels and work participation. Wives tend to have occupations either of the same prestige levels or one step lower than that of their husbands. Women from middle and upper income class have also started entering the labour force. A majority of women are still employed in traditional occupations such as teaching, nursing, typing, social work and as librarians (D’ Souza: 1975). The traditional subordination, low status, subordinate behavior of women has been discussed and challenged in literature.

Higher educational qualifications may impel women to seek employment, especially those who have professional degrees in science and engineering. Industrialization and urbanization creates the favourable conditions for employment of women (Gulati: 1975).
Women in Male Dominated Fields

Science and engineering have traditionally been as male dominated enterprises. Historically science has been the prerogative of men and women is presence in the field science and engineering is almost nil and very rare. Women’s entry into these male dominated fields was considered as an attempt to cross the sex barriers. (Jaiswal: 1993).

Prof. R. Indira’s pioneering study in this regard is very important as it delineate the way women are slowly but definitely moving towards those fields which were so far monopolized by men. (Indira R: 1989)

Now Indian women are encouraged to enter these specialized fields as Physicists, Chemists, Geologists and Geophysicists, Meteorologists, Zoologists and Botanists, Agronomists, Agricultural Scientists, Bacteriologist, Pharmacologists, Mathematicians, Geographers, Scientists, Doctors, Engineers, Space Scientists, Flight Engineers, Mission Specialists in space shuttles and Aeronautical engineers.

On the other hand women also entered another male dominated field of administration as I.A.S officers, I.P.S officers, Ambassadors to other Nations Secretaries to the state and central government departments, holding different positions as Presidents, Directors, and Joint Directors in various private and government offices. Women also entered the Indian Army, Navy, Air force and held good positions. We have women Pilots in both civil aviation as well as war fighter jet planes (aircraft pilots). Women
also work as Architects and Town planners, civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Electronic, Computer, Chemical, Mining and Ship Engineers, Flight navigators, Metallurgists, Ship and Dock officers, etc and they are doing an excellent job. Women also work in space science organizations, an Indian born woman Dr. Kalpana Chawla a space scientist reached the moon and space twice. Women have also worked as nuclear scientist like Marie Curie who dedicated her life to science and invented radium, which is used for many therapeutic uses in many deadly diseases and Industrial research. Thus women have excelled and their strong will has helped them to achieve their goal and find the undiscovered.

Women have also entered politics and become active politicians. In Indian history many queens ruled the country. One woman became the prime minister. We have had women as Chief Minister’s, Governors and Ministers for various departments, M.Ps and M.L.As, Speaker etc. proving that they are good administrators.

Women have also entered another male dominated field that of industries and factories and held various high positions in these sectors. Women have also established factories and industries, catering business, whole sale business, restaurants, food, cosmetics, and leather, spare part industries. They are also running exporting industries. Many have become skilled garment designers, having their own boutiques. They are also
interior decorators doing well in their business. To day we can find women drivers in India railways.

In the field of medicine women have reached almost all fields today. There are many Neurologists, Ophthalmologists, Physicians, Surgeons, Gynecologists, Orthopaedicians, Anesthetists, Dermatologists, Cardiologist, E.N.T. specialists, Dentists, Oncologists; Psychiatrists are doing an excellent job.

In the field of social science, we can found many good Sociologists, Anthropologists, Historians, Archeologists, Economists, Authors, Poets, and Novelists. In the field of entertainment women have excelled as Dancers, Artists, Musicians, and Painters etc. In the field of sports women have participated in many international competitions and won many medals. Including in the Olympics and made the country proud. So, on the whole no field has been left untouched by women. During the struggle for independence women actively participated in the movement. Indian constitution also safe guarded the interests of women's education and empowered women.

In organized sectors like science, technology and medicine women have held high positions and earned good salaries along with high status and respect. They enjoy good economic status and good health, and live in a good environment. But in contrast to this, in the unorganized sectors the income is not definite and unpredictable. Due to the fluctuations in the
income the life condition of women has become miserable they are struggling to make ends meet. They are prone to various diseases due to their working environment, lack of proper food, large number of children, bad habits and lack of medical facilities.

As compared to the women in the rest of India the women of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi district enjoy higher status. The influence of the matriarchal family system and the extensive spread of education may be one reason. For this hence, in any field both males and females are given encouragement and are equally competent. Here the rate of female infanticide is very low. For every 1000 males there are 1023 females. Women of these districts are very good entrepreneurs, administrators and they have excelled in skill and knowledge in every field. Since the past these two coastal districts have had contact with Portuguese and Arab countries and had very good trade relationships through sea.

The Problem:

Human beings during Stone Age and Old Stone Age knew only to hunt animals. Human beings as tribe led a nomadic life moving from one place to another in search of food in deep dense forest. Hunting was full time occupation and they did not cultivate any crops such as rice, wheat, jower or pulses. During these ages there was no concept of class and caste. As human civilization evolved, class and castes were generated on the basis of different criteria. At present there are many castes doing different jobs
such as gold smithy, black smithy, carpenting etc. Likewise those who are doing fishing are known as fishermen in the coastal area. In the coastal area of South Kanara district and Udupi district many castes are involved in fish harvesting occupation among whom the Mogaveera fishermen caste is dominant. Fishing is their traditional and hereditary occupation.

South Kanara and Udupi district lie on the shore of the Arabian Sea and have a coast length of 141 kms. This coast is known for its abundant fish. Here 60 percent of the total catch of fish is harvested and in turn it yields in crores. The coastal cities and towns of these districts are well developed and are influenced by modernization and urbanization. The Mogaveera have also undergone the same influence.

The present study of status the of Mogaveera fisherwomen of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi district attempts to study the changes that have taken place in their occupation, religious and social status.

The west coast of Karnataka is well known for its beautiful beaches and fascinating landscapes, coconut plantations, paddy fields and lush green vegetation. Coastal Karnataka is blessed with Arabian Sea. Human beings have utilized the sea properly for various purposes. They have also exploited the sea very severely. The Sea has many valuable, expensive and rare species and commercial stocks of fish. Precious pearl and coral reefs provide valuable corals and different types of pearls such as pink, white, black pearls etc. Demand for such corals and pearls is high and the profits
from its sale crosses several thousand crores. Spirulina which is a kind of sea weed which grows in the sea has a high medicinal value and is collected from the sea and processed in the pharmaceutical companies and finally therapeutically consumed by the people in the form of pills or tonic, which earns many thousand crores of rupees commercially.

Among other things fish is a very precious which is a gift of sea to mankind. Fish is a very good source of minerals and vitamins and regular consumption of fish, supplements required minerals and vitamins in the human body. A major portion of the world’s population consumes fish as daily food. Fishing was done in the unknown past and has continued since. Today fishing is a very big industry in the country as well as in the world. India is surrounded on three sides by water and one side by land. From ancient times many castes that have been living on the sea shore have been engaged in fishing. For many, fishing is the only occupation they know to support their family. Mogaveera caste is one among such castes residing on the Arabian Sea coast of Karnataka, especially from Ullal to the North of Udupi district. This fishing community of Mogaveera is known for bravery and courage. Mogaveeras are humble and simple. From dawn to dusk and even in the night they are harvesting fish from the sea.

In the past fish catch was done through traditional method and fish catch was more. They were fishing very near to the sea shore. ‘Ramapani’ was traditional harvesting method was the co-operative type which
consisted of 70 to 80 members from the village were involved. This is a very good example for their understanding, unity and co-operative spirit. They may not know the value of precious stones and pearls but they aim only at harvesting fish and least bothered about anything else. The Mogaveera fishing caste is one of the main fishermen castes of the Mangalore coast. Sea fishing is very tough job which needs a lot of courage, strong good health and physical strength. Mogaveeras have to travel a long distance with their boat to harvest fish in the unpredictable sea. They have to fight all the odds and dangers of the sea such as cyclones, attack from sharks etc. Many Mogaveeras have sacrificed their lives while fishing, but it has not prevented them from fishing. Every boat has a prescribed number of members in it and one captain, he is an older man and the most experienced one has the knowledge of finding fish shoals, for which he guess and uses certain methods and his decision on the spot is final and plays a very important role in harvesting fish, he is called as ‘Tandela’. He is respected and his decision is final and not questioned. In every boat the presence of Tandela is a must and he leads the group. Many small boats and big boats are used in fishing. Thus the Mogaveera men bring a variety of fishes to the shore. Fish catching is entirely done by men. Once the fish haul is brought to the shore their value is fixed and sold. The entire post harvest work is done by the women folk only. Mogaveera women do all the processing work, they sort the fish. They sell good fish in the market or they take fish
by head load and sell them from house to house for reasonable rates. It is very tiresome job involving long hours of walking. Mogaveera women like their male counterparts are very hard working. In the peak season that is in summer they are very busy and the entire fish drying is done under the hot sun.

**Historical Background**

Mogaveeras are the chief fishing caste people residing on the sea shore of Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts. Both Dakshina Kannada and Udupi districts were ruled by Alupas from the early Christian era to the end of the fourteenth century A.D. The kingdom was divided into Byndoor Rajya (Kingdom) which is now in Udupi district, and Mangalore rajya (kingdom) in Dakshina Kannada district. Mogaveeras have inhabited these two coastal districts since ages. Writing about Mogaveeras in 1807 Francis Buchanan states that “These fishermen are called Mogayar, and are a caste of Tuluva origin. They resemble the mucuas (Mukkuvans) of Malayala, but the one caste will have no communion with the other. The Mogayars are boatmen, fishermen, porters and palanquin bearers. They pretend to be shudras of a pure descent and assume superiority over the Halepecas (Halepaiks) one of the most common castes of cultivators in the Tuluva; but they acknowledge themselves greatly inferior t the Bunts”. This shows that the Mogaveeras were living in this place from very early times.
According to Thurston in his 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India'...

"...The Mogers are largely engaged in sea-fishing and are also employed in the Government fish curing yards. Some Mogers have abandoned their hereditary profession of fishing and taken to agriculture, oil pressing and playing on musical instrument..." Those Mogaveeras, who left their hereditary fishing occupation, moved to the interior away from the sea shore and picked up other occupation for their livelihood and like other castes started worshiping Naga (Cobra) and Bhuta (Devils). According to the Madras district manual on South Kanara (Dakshina Kannada), "Although Mogaveeras are Tuluva fishermen those in the North Kanara speak Canaries. All however follow the ‘aliya santhana’ rule of inheritance and the habits and customs. The Mogers are taller, fairer and more enterprising than other fishermen of the district. Mogers continuously voyaged to the Southern states like Kerala and Madras ports, later built up good relationship with other boat men and became experts as boatmen. The Keralites recognized their skill and gave them, the title of ‘Marakkhan’, which means headman of the boat". Thurston also states that "The Mogers are the Tulu speaking fishermen of the South Kanara district, who for the most part, follow the ‘aliya santana’ law of inheritance (in the female line), though some who are settled in the northern part of the district speak ‘canarese’, and follows the ‘makkala Santana’ (law of inheritance from the father to son)".
Mogaveeras are one of the oldest communities of Dakshina Kannada. According to Dr. Gururaj Bhat in his “Studies of Tuluva History and culture” states that, the Mogaveera fisher caste became either fishers, hunters, agriculturists according to the locality in which they lived.

Keladi rulers followed the Vijayanagar Empire around 1554 A.D. and were under the sway of the Keladi Nayakas for about two centuries. Haider Ali also ruled Dakshina Kannada after capturing Bidanur in 1763 A.D. and was followed by Tippu Sultan. Abbakka Devi, the famous Queen of Ullal, wife of Banga Raja of Ullal had a strong navy full of Mogaveeras. With the help of these fierce and brave fighters she fought against the Portuguese successfully. Mogaveera is today really proving their rare qualities of honesty, courage and hard work. Approximately the population of Mogaveera community is now 3.80 to 4.00 lakhs.

According to Thurston, “The ordinary caste title of the Mogers is Marakaleru. In Kundapura Taluk, the title Naicker is preferred to Marakaleru”.

The entire fish drying is done by the women folk. These Mogaveera fisher women are poor as they are completely dependent on post harvest fishing work for their livelihood. Fishing is a good income generating occupation but the entire industry suffers in the hands of the middle men. These middle men exploit the fisher folk by not giving them the right price
for the dry fish. Middlemen buy fish from the boat on wholesale basis for a low price and sell it for higher price. These middlemen are also traders they provide finance to the fisher folk. So, in turn this indebtedness leads fisher folk to sell catch to these middlemen for a lower price. Women folk also buy fish in the auction for higher price. These women sometimes buy fish on loan. So, poverty and illiteracy are the main causes of exploitation. These Mogaveera fisher women struggle a lot with the middle men.

According to another opinion the Mogaveeras believe that their original caste name was Marakalas, but not Mugeras. ‘Marakalan’ in Tamil means wood pot owner or wood boat owner. In the past men of this caste spent most of their time in water in the wooden boat or pot. Because of this they came to be known as Marakalas. They trace their descent through the Mahabharatha. They think that their lineage goes back to Virata of Mahabharatha. They also believe that, they were Satyaputras who lived on the seashore and depended on fishing for a livelihood. A boat is essential for fishing. So they cut trees to build boats therefore, they came to be known as ‘Marakollaru’ (tree killers) or ‘Marakalas’.

Mogaveeras are identified by many different names in Tulu, Bovi, Mugge, Pattadaklu, Kadaleera, Molitai etc. They are also called as Marakala, Bangera, Mogera, Muttinava, Mendon, Shriyan etc.

Buchanan states that, the settlements of the Moger fishing community are called Pattana, for this reason the name Pattanadava is also used as
synonym for the caste name. The Tamil fishermen of the city of Madras are in like manner called Pattanavan, because they live in Pattanams or maritime villages. For every settlement, there must be at least two Gurikars (Headman) and in some settlements, there are as many as four. All the Gurikars wear as an emblem of their office, a gold bracelet on the left wrist, some wear, in addition a bracelet presented by the members of the caste for their significant service. The office of headman is hereditary and follows the ‘aliya santhana’ law of succession (in the female line).

In Tulu ‘Muger’ means rabbit so some scholars and Mogaveera elders say that the Mogaveera ancestors must have been hunters who lived in the deep dense forest chasing and hunting animals for their livelihood. Gururaj Bhat also has a similar opinion about the origin of the Mogaveeras. He states that muggers is derived from ‘Muggers’ which means the deep forest.

Mogaveera may have originated from the word ‘moga’ muktha + ar (neer) – Mogar – Mogera. These are the other forms of the same word. This means those who are residing in front of the sea. Fishing is their primary means of livelihood and their residence is a place which is surrounded by water on all four sides called Kudru. Later they shifted their homes to the banks of the sea. There is a belief that Bennekudru near to Barkur of the Alupa dynasty was the place of origin of Mogaveera community. An island (kudru) is formed at those junctions where the rivers join the sea. This water surrounded area is called Mogaru in the local Tulu language.
Religious Life

Mogaveeras are very pious having deep faith in religious agencies. They worship Gods and Goddesses. They have home, village, and caste deities. In addition to these they worship Bhutas. Mastiamma, Mahalakshmi are the main deities of Mogaveeras. Mahalakshmi is worshipped in many forms in different places. Uchil near Mangalore Mahalakshmi temple was built by Mogaveeras. Other Mahalakshmi temples were built at Bagwadi and Bennekdru.

Annually they offer grand offerings to the caste gods, home deity and village God. They take break from the work for 2 days compulsorily. Along with these gods and goddesses they also believe in many Bhutas and offer annually to them. Mogaveeras worship the sea and the boat. The Sea is their bread winner through the help of the boat they can harvest fish so they give offerings to the Sea God and the boat. These two are a part and parcel of their life. Bobbarya is the chief Bhuta in whom Mogaveeras of the west coast believe deeply.

Life Cycle Ceremonies

Like other Hindu communities, Mogaveera families also observe the life cycle ceremonies. From birth to death every important stage is observed with many customs and traditions. Mogaveeras perform all these ceremonies.
First of all pregnancy celebration which is also called ‘Bayake’ (desire) is performed to the pregnant women. Bayake means the fulfilling of the desires of the pregnant woman. It is believed that this ceremony helps to satisfy pregnant woman’s desires so that couple can have a healthy child. Generally it is performed in the sixth or seventh month of pregnancy.

Birth also has its own celebrations in the community. Pollution is observed in the family from the time of delivery. It is observed ceremonial pollution to the family members for seven days and they are not suppose to enter any holy places and conduct religious ceremonies.

When the girl child reaches the age of 11 or 12 she attains puberty. Pollution is observed in the family and any holy religious rituals and ceremonies are prohibited for some days. After the purification ritual takes place, the family members can enter the holy places.

In Mogaveera community marriage is not random but it is compulsory. When both parties are in agreement, after the dowry negotiations have taken place, the engagement ceremony takes place at the bride’s house. An engagement it not supposed to be broken. The marriage lasts for two days. On the marriage day offerings are given to the home and caste deities after words the marriage takes place. Bigamy is not common today. At present monogamous marriages are popular. Divorce is very rare in the community. If any dispute arises the Gurikara settles it.
Death ceremonies are also observed by the Mogaveera community. Like any other Hindu community the body is cremated after death. If the body is of a small child or girl it is buried. Pollution and purification rituals are also observed.

Rice is the main food of the Mogaveeras and fish is a must for them. Along with plenty of fish they also use vegetables. Usually in the morning they have porridge (rice Ganjee) and at noon they have rice, fish curry and vegetables. In the evening they have plain tea, some times with snacks. In the night they again have freshly cooked rice, fish curry. Now a day they eat idli, chapathi, dosa, poori and other varieties of breakfast in the morning. Occasionally they consume mutton or chicken. During some festivals and on fasting days they strictly prohibit the eating of non-vegetarian items such as fish, mutton, chicken etc. On such occasions they eat only vegetables along with rice and other food items.

Mogaveeras dress up like the people of other communities. Women wear sari and men wear dhoti. But now a day, girls wear modern dresses like salwar kameez and boys wear trousers and shirts.

Mogaveera Mahajana Sangha is the caste association of Mogaveeras. Each Mogaveera abides by the rules and regulations of the Sangha. Guilt is fined and punished. This Sangha brings all Mogaveeras under one wing and binds them together to achieve common purpose of unity and entire development of the community.
The Mogaveeras have developed a unique type of kinship system. They follow 'bali' system. Usually 'balis' are followed through the female line. Bali represents lineage. Mogaveeras follow 'Aliyakattu Santana'. The property right belongs to females. But now this thing has changed slowly under the influence of other caste communities. There are many Balis.

Every Mogaveera Pattana (settlement) has its own caste association. According to the size of the Pattana there will be two to four Gurikars such as President, vice-president, secretary and treasurer. A membership fee is collected. These Gurikaras and caste elders' deliver judgment during any decision making situations such as marriage, divorce, family and occupational problems etc.

Since ages the women have been exploited by men. In every caste and religion women are treated very badly. In the Vedic period women were given more respect and they were treated well. But as time passed male domination curbed the freedom of women folk and to establish their identity men kept women inside the four walls of the home and purdah. Since then she has been denied all freedom and has been considered a mere servant to serve her family members. She has been treated as a sex object and as a child bearing machine. Till the 19th century she suffered behind the walls and was not treated as an equal by her male counterparts. All decisions were taken by men. Due to the industrialization and the freedom movement women slowly started working outside the home and took active part in
movements. But in tribal societies females are the head of the household they look after the family members. They dry the flesh of animals and provide animal skin for the use of the family members.

But the Mogaveera fishing women unlike women of other castes shared the burden of family with their husbands. They are equally dominated and equally treated by men in every household duties and responsibilities.

Mogaveeras are sons of the sea most of the time they will be out of their houses involving in fishing. The men do all the fish harvesting work and post harvest work is mostly done by the women folk. They are involved in selling, cleaning curing, drying etc. all the work is done by the females. All the household work is done by them. Very rarely do they get husband's co operation in conducting household activities.

They spend the whole day outside the home dealing with their fish business hence their children are neglected. Sometimes they grow up under the care of other family members. The household decisions are taken by the women most of the time. Since ages these Mogaveera fisher women have dominated the household. Studies conducted on these Mogaveera fisher women are very few less almost nil and very superficial.

In the unorganized sectors the income is not steady and predictable. Due to the fluctuations in the income the life conditions become miserable. The fisher folks struggle to make ends meet. They do not have good health,
housing and illiteracy hinders them from taking up better jobs. They are prone to various diseases due to their working environment, lack of proper food, many children, bad habits and lack of medical facilities etc.

As compared the women in the rest of the country the women in Dakshina Kannada and Udupi district enjoy higher status. The influence of the matriarchal family system and the extensive spread of education may be the reasons for this. Here in any field both men and women are given equal encouragement and are equally competent. Here the rate of female infanticide is very low and according to the census ratio female out number males. For every 1000 males there are 1023 females. Women of these districts are very good entrepreneurs, administrators and they have excelled in skill and knowledge in every filed. From the past these two coastal districts have had contact with Portuguese and Arab countries and have had very good trade relationship through sea. Even though it is a multilingual and multi-religious society the fisher folk have retained their originality. The Portuguese rule in the past has been responsible for exposing these people to western civilization. The impact of Western civilization on the status of woman, spread of education among them, rights of inheritance had them to a sense of security and remarriages of widows all these positive factors ensured the equal status with men. (Singh: 1993)
The term fisheries as commonly employed embraces every method of pursuit and capture, whether for profit or for sport of aquatic animals. Fishing is probably the earliest form of hunting, and as men were surely hunters before they were cultivators and it is actually the oldest industry in the world. But the rapid growth and heavy volume of fishing and fishing vessels may have adverse effect on the aquatic diversity.

Fish is a vitamins and minerals rich sea food consumed in high volumes by the costal residing people. But in the interior and distant places the availability of fresh sea fish is rare so there is a great demand for fish and dry sea fish. The coastal soil and water is rich in iodine so disease like goiter is rare here.

Many industries have been established which depend on the fisheries sector. For many industries fish is a raw material such as pickling industries, pharmaceutical industries and paint industries etc. For many small and big star hotels which serve a variety of items prepared from fish. Fish meal is used as feed for poultry and mixed with the food of cattle and pigs. Fish is also used as a manure or fertilizer in the agricultural sector. Various grades of oil are extracted from fish ranging from medicinal quality cod liver oil to crude oil. Crude oil is used for various purposes such as soap making, tanning, and steel tempering. Fish skin can also be made into fine leather. Glue is also one among the by products of fisheries. Besides these, there are
also many industries which supply the needs of the fisheries sector. Cold storages, ice factories, net factories, boat building yards, machineries, spare parts units, rope and many more things which are essential and must are supplied to the industry. Plastic industries, wooden baskets weaving people, coir industry, etc supply goods to the fisheries sector. Varieties of vehicles are used for transporting fish from one place another. Besides these, ships, aero-planes and trains are used for exporting and importing fish and fish by products. So, fisheries sector has provided employment to many.

The influence of the fishing industry goes farther and deeper. It is not generally recognized how great a part fisheries have played in the destinies of nations. A full history of fishers and even of the fisheries of any one country has yet to be written. When the first man ventured to sea in a dugout, it is probable that his purpose was the better to pursue fish, and not only the modern deep sea trawlers, liners and drifters, but the merchant and fighting navies are the lineal descendents of the prehistoric fisherman in his dugout, Thus fishing may be presumed to have prepared the way for sea trade, without which modern civilization is inconceivable. (Encyclopaedia Britannica. p-294)

**Fishing Methods and Gears**

The methods of catching swimming fish are almost innumerable, but all of them are variations of few radical methods. One, perhaps the earliest, is that of the direct attack by means of a spear and is still in use in some
parts of the world. The next is a trap devised to intercept and capture roving fish. The various forms of fish weirs still found here and there, which work on the principle of admitting fish on the flood tide and trapping them on the ebb, are probably of primitive origin. From the fish weir or dam of stone or clay to a similar trap of wattle hedging and then to fixed nets is a natural logical evolution. Another form of trap is that into which fish are attracted by food examples of which probably of primitive origin are the wicker work traps used for catching lobsters, prawns and crabs. The baited line was probably first used without a hook. This method was improved upon by the introduction of a hook and the earliest form of which may have been the thorn hooks. From these methods the more elaborate devices employed in modern commercial fishing were evolved the most important development being the device of bringing the trap in the form of a net to the fish instead of trusting to the natural movements of the fish or the lure of bait to bring the fish to a stationary trap. In the fisheries of the North Atlantic, which are the most highly developed and commercially organized in the world, the methods of fishing of chief importance are trawling, seining, drifting and lining. Traveling and seining involve the use of a net which is brought to the fish. In the case of the trawl this is done by dragging on or near the bottom of the sea, a bag shaped net the mouth of which is kept open either by a beam across the head or by the pressure of the water upon wooden kites known as otter boards attached to the sides of the mouth or wings of the net.
and in the case of the seine by gradually encircling the fish with a net in the center of which is a bag unlike that at the end (known as the "cod-end") of the trawl. The beam trawl is used only on some small fishing craft; the otter trawl is employed on almost all but the smallest trawlers. It is, having regard to all possible circumstances, the most effective instrument for taking demersal (i.e. bottom-living) fish. The efficiency of the otter trawl was improved by several modifications, one of the most notable of which was the Vigneron-Dahl modification, French invention of about 924, which incorporated wires of up to 50 fathoms in length as the attachment between the otter boards and wings of the net. The Spanish method of pareja fishing, whereby the trawl net is towed by two ships each with a warp to one wing, so keeping its mouth open, is very efficient for catching hake. Seines are used for catching both pelagic and demersal fish. The forms most used in pelagic fisheries are the purse seine and the rather similar ring net.

Both involve first surrounding a shoal of fish with a curtain or wall of netting, the top of which is buoyed at the surface, and secondly, drawing together the bottom of the net by purse lines to trap the fish in a hemisphere of netting. The most efficient form of seine for catching demersal fish is the Danish seine, invented in Denmark, where it is the principal means of catching particularly Scotland and England. This method involved first encircling an area of the sea bed with two ropes of equal length of up to about one mile, which are attached one to each wing of a trawl-shaped net.
and secondly drawing in the rope to an anchored ship so demerse the area of sea bed surrounded. Fish are driven before the moving ropes to the center of the encircled area and are then taken in the net which is eventually drawn up to the ship. Drift nets of various dimensions are used for catching "pelagic" fish that is to say, fish that swim in the upper layers of the water chiefly herring, mackerel, pilchards and sprats.

Fishing by means of lines with baited hooks was formerly of much greater commercial importance than at present. There are two methods of lining, hand-lining and long-lining. In the former method the line is drawn by hand as soon as the fish is felt; in that latter, the line is shot and left unattended till it is time to haul. Hand lines are not, generally speaking, of great commercial importance. A long line is fitted with a great number of hooks attached to the main line by thin strong lines of materials which vary according to the character of the fish and to local custom. Long lines may be set at low water on the sands, but more often they are worked from fishing vessels in deep water. All the deep water lines are anchored and buoyed at each end, the longer ones also anchored and buoyed at intervals along the whole length. On a large steam-liner the number of hooks on one line may vary from 1,000 to 5,500. Deep-sea long lines are chiefly used for cod and halibut. The baits vary according to local conditions, and include mussels, squid and herring. The pursuit of fish is world-wide. No estimate of the output of the fisheries of the world can be wholly reliable because in many
parts of the world where fishing is actively carried on no statistics are compiled. This applies particularly to inland fisheries, many of which are of great economic importance. Mussels, though they immune are capable of transmitting typhoid and other intestinal diseases from which arise the necessity for closing mussel fisheries in heavily polluted areas. (Encyclopedia Britannica: p 296-297)

Since the life histories of fishes, as of other animals must be governed mainly by the factors of their environment, that environment must also be studied. The most important factors of the environment are to express it very generally climate and food, the former naturally reacting to a great degree upon the later. What corresponds to climate in the sea is again speaking in general terms the physicochemical composition and the movements of the water. It is an established fact that all animal organisms depend ultimately for their food supply in the sea as on land upon plant life.

The Present Study

Excluding studies conducted by G.V. Krishnamurthy and Muktha Shet there have been no studies conducted on women belonging to the Mogaveera community with a fishing background. Few studies conducted so far deal very peripherally with the issues of women of this part. In this context, there is a need for an exclusive study on the 'Status of Fisher Women: A Case Study of Women in Mogaveera Fishing Households'.
Unlike their counterparts in other castes, Mogaveera women in fishing households actively participate in economic activity. They help their men folk in fishing and allied jobs like repairing of net, drying, fish and most important is selling fish in local the local markets. They also take care of household chores, care of children and the other work of a woman. They face a number of problems in selling fish in local markets as well in households. Another unusual feature of these women is that they have participated in almost all the progressive movements particularly in protection of environment against MRPL, COGENTRIX, KAIGA and other mega projects. Unfortunately, when they faced the problem of marketing they could generate very little support. They are subject to harassment by corporation officials and middlemen. The automation in fisheries and rapid rate of globalization has adversely affected the life prospects of these women. This study attempts to understand the situation under which they are struggling to survive and make a living.

The Main Objectives of the Study

1. To study the background of fishermen and the causes for their participation in traditional work.

2. To study the nature of the problems faced by women in Mogaveera community in fishing households with regard to their work and to their families.
3. To analyze the role and status, duties and responsibilities, obligations of Mogaveera women in their household and work.

4. To study the position of women workers in the fishing community.

5. To understand their perceptions of future mobility and change and suggest remedies for their problems.

Methodology

The major tools for collection of data were through intensive field work and participant and non-participant observation to substantiate and socio-economic data is collected through canvassing a simple interview schedule and other details ascertained with the help of interview guide and conducted formal and informal meetings, interviews with the community leaders, knowledgeable persons of Mogaveera community.

The Sample

This study mainly depended upon the data generated by interviewing 210 respondents belonging to five different age groups of three representative areas as indicated below:

<table>
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<th>Area</th>
<th>18–21</th>
<th>22–34</th>
<th>35–44</th>
<th>45–60</th>
<th>60+</th>
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<td>28</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udupi</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kundapura</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL 210
Mangalore: Mangalore is a big city from which seventy cases were selected for the study. In Mangalore large scale fishing is done. The fishing harbor is locally known as 'Bandar.' Many mechanized and non mechanized boats are engaged in Arabian Sea water. Here main fishing caste people are Mogaveeras and other castes have also now introduced themselves to fishing. In this fishing harbor to avoid middlemen dominance over the fishermen those who had their own boats have established their own Mahasangha or federation. The harbor is very busy from morning 5 to evening 4 O’clock. All the boats that go for fishing rush back to the harbor with fish. As soon as fish is unloaded from boat the fisher women becomes active. During peak hours this harbor is packed with fishermen and fisherwomen, laborers, middlemen, boat owners and customers. But these fisherwomen are very co-operative and possess helping nature. Good quality of fishes being exported here and exporters are busy in purchasing fishes. Here fish consuming population is more and demand for fish is increasing day by day.

Udupi: The concentration of Mogaveera community is high in Udupi. Udupi is also having fishing harbor called Malpe. Fisher women are engaged in retail selling and large scale fish drying. As the concentration of Mogaveera people is more, 112 cases have been selected for the research purpose.
Kundapura: Kundapura is a taluk where the concentration of Mogaveera people is relatively low. Therefore only 28 cases are selected for the study. Fishing women are co-operative, simple and courageous.

In case of effective sampling it was not possible to find respondents belonging to age group of 60+ years in Kundapura area. And Mangalore and Kundapura respondents belonging to age group of 18-21 years were also not available for the study.

The data generated is presented in simple tables and mostly per cent and proportions are used to explain. We have not used any sophisticated statistical package.

Importance of the Study:

There has been a growing concern with gender related issues and it has been raised through many platforms in recent years. The UN declaration 1975 as 'International Women's year' provided impetus for academic interest on women's issues throughout the world. Further, the women's decade 1975-85 generated volumes of literature on this important theme. The recently held world conference on women at Beijing also successfully hosted women from all over the globe who found an avenue to express their deprivations, grievances and offer their opinion and solutions aimed towards women's uplift and empowerment of women. The 6th world congress on women helped in Australia in 1996 also provided a platform to raise women's issue.
Since then, academic interest has gained momentum and the necessity for incorporation of women's issues in mainstream teaching was felt. It highlighted the major concern to use teaching as an instrument for women's development and improve the knowledge in various disciplines. The lack of conceptual discussion on women's issues enthused scholars, feminists, women's organizations, academicians and government agencies to dabble with the issue.

Women studies have to be recognized that are already being promoted by the University Grant Commission; such as promotion of human rights, population education, developing of women's studies programmes in Indian Universities. These programmes will help to have a balanced understanding of social realities.

A very large section of women in this area still continue to be under the influence of traditional role conceptions, norms, values etc., a new dimension to women's status and role crept into the society. This process of change in the cultural patterns and life styles, urbanization, communication, transformation and over all development of a particular region. This juxtaposition has led to some inner tension which is not explicit in the society. The present study is hoped to fill the major gap in research pertaining to gender studies dealing with women belonging to Mogaveera community.
Mogaveera settlement known as ‘Patna’ are to be found on the shores of the Arabian Sea starting from Majeshwara south of Mangalore to Gangolli in Kundapura Taluk of Udupi district. Mangalore and Udupi are the leading fish business centers of the state. The Mogaveeras are the chief fishing community of the district, others are being Kharvis, Bovies, Mukavans, Besthas, Gangamathastha, Gabits, Harikantha, Daljiths, moplhs, etc. Mogaveeras of South Kanara and part of the Udupi districts speak Tulu and those from Kundapura speak Kannada. The Mogaveeras around Mangalore, Udupi and Kundapura city jurisdiction the modernization, urbanization has influenced in their life gradually. However they still distinguish themselves from rest other communities in their customs and habits, social and religious life.

In Mogaveera fishing households both men and women work equally hard. Men go for sea fishing and womenfolk sort fish, sell, peel, clean and dry the fish. The Mogaveera women are very hard workers and kind hearted they maintain a balance between their occupation as well as their household activities. In South Kanara district female population outnumbers the male population.

The Mogaveera community is very large very few studies have been conducted on them. Till date Mogaveera women have not been brought under the lime light and no studies on them have been under taken. South Kanara and Udupi districts are known for educational institutions and high
literacy levels. Literacy rates are the same for both women and men. Mogaveera women are very industrious, sensitive and shrewd. Their lifestyle is peculiar compared to the women folk of other communities. This interesting feature of the Mogaveera women resulted in the taking up of this study.

Fishing in a turbulent sea is a tough occupation. Those who fish they are called fishermen. In the east and west coast these fishing communities are called by different names. They are scattered and may be engaged either in river or sea fishing. Sometimes they may be engaged in both river and sea fishing. In different regions they were called by different names. Fishermen in Bangalore, Mysore, Shimoga etc are called ‘Bestha’, Ganga matasta’, ‘Ganga Putra’. In some parts of North Karnataka they are called as ‘Killekyata’. In Maharasra they are called as ‘Koli’. On the borders of Karnataka and Kerala from Uchil to Someshwara they are called as ‘Bovi’, ‘Daljith’. From Bhatkal to Karwar they are called as ‘Harikanta’, ‘Kharvi’, ‘Ambiga’, ‘Harikantra’ etc. The fishing communities in South Kanara and Udupi district are called as ‘Mogaveera’ or ‘Marakala’. Depending on the region in which they live differ in their mother tongue, culture etc but all of them are involved in the same occupation.

Fishing is a universal occupation which is conducted around the world. It may differ in nature i.e. river fishing or sea fishing. A maximum number of people are engaged in this occupation. Caste, creed, educational
qualification is not needed and anybody, anywhere, anytime can be involved in this occupation.

Recently fishing occupation it is not confined to traditional fishing caste people only. Any person who is ready to invest money on fishing vessels and the labour and is ready to toil in the sea can proceed with fishing occupation

The sea provides an abundance of resources for human use. But it is also greatly exploited by mankind. The sea has provided occupations to lakhs of people to earn their daily bread. One can do this job with self-respect and dignity of labour. Fishing is an export and import oriented business. Demand for fish is literally increasing day by day all over the world. There is no country where fish is not consumed. It is a multi crore business. It is a big industry which contributes a great deal to the national income. Fishes like squids, prawns, cuttlefish, seer fish, rani fish etc are in great demand and the demand is constantly increasing. It is such a big industry that the government has setup a separate department to manage this sector. In India fisheries department is a unit of agricultural sector.

Fishing is not only an occupation, a commercial industry but also a big food industry. Fish is rich in vitamins and mineral and an excellent source of food. Fish contains oil which is rich in vitamin A which is good for the body and especially for eye sight.
The Outline of the Thesis:

The thesis is organized into five chapters as indicated below:

Chapter-I: Introduction

Introduction chapter includes the concept of women reflected in different stages, review of literature, a general profile of Mogaveera community, importance of the study, objectives of the study, tools of data collection, data processing and outline of the thesis.

Chapter- II: Socio-Economic and Demographic Profile of the Respondents

This chapter deals with the socio-economic and demographic pattern of Mogaveera fishing households regarding dressing pattern, structure of house, Settlement patterns, food habits, hereditary occupation, marriage, religious practices, purity and pollution at puberty delivery & death, types of family, size and headship of the family, housing pattern, awareness about family planning and practices of family planning methods, illiteracy, educational awareness, level of education age wise and sex wise educational status of household members, causes of dropouts, parents aspiration towards their child wise education, changes in mate selection, rules of marriage, place of marriage, age at marriage, dowry, widow remarriage, celebrating community festivals and Gods etc.

Chapter -III: Problems: At Place of Work and Home

This chapter deals with the problems faced by Mogaveera women in marketing place, interaction with their community and other community
people, interaction with the colleagues, problems faced by other men colleagues, harassment by the public as well as the government problems faced in household.

Chapter IV: Status of Fisher Women

This chapter deals with the status of fisher women in the past as well as in the present. In this section an attempt is made to examine socio-religious, political, economical status of the respondents from past to the present in terms of three generations. perceptions of their future and trends of change and mobility in very spheres of life i.e. educational, occupational, and economic independence.

Chapter V: Main Findings and Conclusions

The last chapter summarizes all the major findings of the study and lists the conclusions. It also contains suggestions and recommendations for the improvement of the socio-economic conditions of the Mogaveera fisher women.

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