Chapter 2

A Review Of Literature

The present thesis seeks to examine the status of women migrants from Bangladesh settled in West Bengal and Orissa. Before embarking on this exercise, however, we present a survey of the literature on the status of women in India and the rest of the world in this chapter. Section 2.1 presents the literature on the status of women in developed countries, while section 2.2 highlights works on the status of women in developing countries. This is followed by section 2.3 which reviews the literature on the status of women in India.

Since the present work deals with the status of a group of international women migrants, in section 2.4, works on the status of international women migrants in developed and developing countries have been reviewed, and section 2.5 covers the studies on the status of international women migrants in India, especially those from erstwhile West and East Pakistan, now Pakistan and Bangladesh.

Section 2.1: Literature on the status of women in developed countries

We embark on the literature review on the status of women in developed countries with the works of Pujol (1992), Nyland (1993), and Dimand and Nyland (2003) which provide different theories(Classical, Neo Classical, Feminist etc) on the status of women.

Pujol (1992) investigates some of the epistemological bases for the biases that characterize the neoclassical economics discourses on women, their behaviour, their economic activities, and their place within the modern capitalist economy. The author reviews the approaches of Adam Smith to the economic status of women. It
is pertinent to mention here that Adam Smith’s views on the status of women are not found in ‘The Wealth of Nations’, 1776, but as a section of lectures intended as basis of a never completed companion work on the historical development of law, government and society (Dimand et al. 2004).

Pujol also examines the early insights of Harriet Taylor (wife of John Stuart Mill) and Barbara Bodichon. Pujol’s work contains discussions on the debate by economists and feminists over the question of equal pay for women and men during 1890-1914, feminist positions on equal pay for equal work during World War I, and Francis Edgeworth on equal pay (‘Equal pay to men and women for equal work’,1922).

Nyland (1993) contends that Adam Smith developed an explanation of the social position of women that centred on the means by which societies attain the material requirements of life, that is, on their mode of subsistence. Smith's argument drew upon his belief that societies tend to progress through distinct economic stages as they develop. By advancing this argument, Smith made a contribution to the maturation of the economic analysis of the women's status that was of great importance. It was of importance both because it was influential, and also because it provided a substantive theoretical challenge to the belief that male societal domination was natural, and that women would always remain the subservient sex.

Dimand and Nyland (2003) have collected fourteen papers under ‘The status of women in classical economic thought’ which examine the response of classical economists to the question of why, in all human societies, women have suffered a lower status than that enjoyed by men. Chris Nyland discusses Poulain de la Barre and the rationalist analysis of the status of women. Nyland also writes about John Locke, equality of rights, and diversity of attributes. Other works taken up by Nyland are Montesquieu's relativist analysis of gender behaviour and Adam Smith, Stage Theory and the status of women. There is another paper by Nyland on Women's progress and the ‘end of history’.

Other papers include, Marquis De Condorcet and equality of sexes by Peter Groenewegen, Sophie Condorcet's letters on sympathy by Evelyn L. Forget, Jeremy
Bentham on the status of women by Annie L. Cot, Pricilla Wakefield's ‘Reflections on the present condition of the female sex, with suggestions for its improvement’ (1798) by Robert Dimand.

There are also essays by Forget on Jean-Baptiste Say and his views on women in the economy and society, Dimand on women in Nassau Senior's economic thought, Nyland and Tom Heenan on William Thompson and Anna Doyle Wheeler, David M Levy on Harriet Martineau's economics and Forget on John Stuart Mill, Harriet Taylor, and French social theory.

From this group of writers we next move to other works like those of Jackson (1998) that observe the change over time in the status of women in developed countries, and also the effect of globalisation on the status of women. Other authors who have also written on this, are Joekes (1987), Richards and Gelleny (2007) and, Prieto-Carron (2008).

Joekes (1987) analyses the impact of developments in the world economy on the role and status of women. Part One of the book discusses methodological issues and traces the changing position of women in terms of health and education, economic activity, and certain macro and micro-economic factors. Part Two assesses the impact of international trade and finance and technological change on the status of women. Part Three discusses employment trends for women in the agricultural, industrial, and service sectors. Part Four summarizes the findings regarding the impact of emerging trends in the international economy on women and proposes an agenda for innovative development policies aimed at improving the status of women.

Richards and Gelleny (2007) examine the relationship between women's status and economic globalization. The expectations of both proponents and skeptics of globalization are discussed with regard to women's status, and a series of statistical examinations of this relationship are performed using data on 130 countries from 1982 to 2003. To understand the potential sensitivity of the findings to the use of particular indicators of women's status, the authors use five indicators of women's status from two different data sources to represent the economic, political, and social
spheres of women's status. Also, four indicators of economic globalization are used. The study finds that the relationship between economic globalization and women's status varies by type and era, and in the majority of instances, economic globalization is associated with improved women's status.

Prieto-Carron (2008), however, does not support the theory that globalization benefits the status of women. The author says that the restructured globalized economy has provided women with employment opportunities, but globalisation has also meant a shift towards self-regulation of multinationals as part of the restructuring of the world economy, that increases among others things, flexible employment practices, worsening of labour conditions and lower wages for many women workers around the world. In this context, as part of the global trend emphasising Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in the 1980s, one important development has been the growth of voluntary Corporate Codes of Conduct to improve labour conditions. Prieto-Carron reviews from a feminist interdisciplinary perspective, the broad academic literature on women workers, covering the more classical debate on women workers in the industrialization process, and entering of women workers into the global supply chains and corporate codes of conduct. The main argument is that this research on women workers is crucial to frame the issues of business ethics and in particular CSR and Codes of Conduct in the context of women in the global political economy. When this crucial knowledge is ignored, then the ethical policies of the companies also ignore the real situation of the women workers at the bottom of their supply chains.

Jackson (1998) examines the decline in gender inequality and the rise in women's status in the United States. He considers how the transition to modern political and economic structures has driven this process by shifting social power into impersonal organizations and by redefining interests. He also discusses how the state extended greater legal and political rights to women and how women became assimilated into the economy.

Works on different issues involved in women’s work sphere including wage disparities (Tolkunova et al. 1985, Bergmann 1986, Paukert 1991, Meulders et al.)
Herr (1995) uses a sample drawn from the 1880 Manuscript Census of Colorado, USA to investigate the influence of individual and regional characteristics on the labour force participation rates of both single and married women in areas with different production characteristics. Results show that the determinants of labour force participation differ considerably for single and married women, but they also show strong consistency within each group. Labour force participation rates are also influenced by general economic and social conditions.

Bergmann (1986) traces the origins and consequences of the changing role of American women from that of housewives to wage earners. The book discusses the breakup of the ‘sex role caste system’, focusing on women's place in the labour market, the future of the two-parent family, and the changes in the lives of males. There is also the description of the economic impetus behind the emergence of working women; the influence of social factors like births, schools and divorces; the place of women in the labour market; sex segregation on the job as the root of women's disadvantage; why female wages are low; fighting discrimination through affirmative action; achieving pay equity; the job of a housewife; poverty and single parents; the economics and politics of keeping house and family care; and child care. Bergmann also presents some international comparisons of the status of women in paid employment. She concludes with a policy agenda to address the gender role revolution.

Blau (1997) uses a broad range of indicators to capture changes in American women’s status in family as well as labour market during 1970-95 (for all ages and education groups). She found a gendered equality in labour market participation, wage and occupation distribution. Time spent by husbands was found to increase, also the wages of wives. But it was observed that there was a fall in the economic status of less educated women, especially high school dropouts.
Malveaux’s (1999) paper finds that while labour force participation rates of women have increased in the USA and women work in a wider range of occupations than they did two decades before this, there still remains a gap between the status of men and women as well as between white women and women of colour. Additionally, as female labour force becomes more diverse, there are also differences among women of colour in labour force participation, unemployment and occupational status. Based on projections regarding the future structure of the labour force, it is likely that even as the status of some women of colour improves, many will remain stuck in low wage services and clerical jobs.

Bedard and Deschenes (2003), on the other hand, write on American women’s divorce and the effect on their labour supply. Bedard and Deschenes identify the rise in the divorce rate over the past forty years as one of the fundamental changes in American society. A seemingly ever-increasing number of women and children spend some fraction of their life in single female-headed households - leading many to be concerned about the economic circumstances of these women and their children.

Estimating the cause-to-effect relationship between marital dissolution and female economic status is complicated because the same factors that increase marital instability may also affect the economic status and labour market behaviour of women. The writers propose an instrumental variables solution to this problem based on the sex of the firstborn child. This strategy exploits the fact that the sex of the firstborn child is random and the fact that marriages are less likely to survive following the birth of girls, as opposed to boys.

The authors are sceptical of the contention that marital instability causes large declines in woman's economic status. On the other hand, once the negative selection into divorce is accounted for, the writers found that women who have experienced marital dissolution have considerably higher levels of personal income and annual wages than women who remain married. Bedard and Deschenes go on to show that the higher wages of ever-divorced women mostly reflect increased labour supply intensity (hours and weeks of work) of woman who experienced marital dissolution.
Persson et al.’s book (1998) observes that there are four striking characteristics of the labour market status of women. First, on an average, women earn less than men, often much less. Second, the labour force attachment of women has risen dramatically, and the gap in any measurable aspect of labour force commitment or education between men and women has narrowed considerably. Thirdly, despite the rise in women's labour force attachment, occupational segregation still persists. Lastly, conventional wage equation analyses generally fail to explain a considerable component of the gender wage gap as attributable to measurable productivity-related characteristics. These four characteristics have been well documented for the US, and women's work and wages show that the same characteristics hold for several other industrialized countries.

This book contains ten papers presented in 1995 at the Arne Ryde Symposium on ‘Economics of Gender and the Family’. The papers in this volume are largely empirical. The reported findings are based on micro data for the US, France, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Finland, and the erstwhile USSR. Since these different countries have very different labour market policies that potentially affect the status of women, international studies such as those presented in this volume provide an opportunity to attempt to isolate the causes of gender differentials in the labour market.

The first three chapters in the book provide an overview of the theoretical issues involved in gender segregation and wage differences by gender. Papers by Christina Jonung, George Johnson and Frank Stafford emphasize the importance of considering a general equilibrium approach that recognizes differences in factors such as supply, demand, preferences, and transactions costs in analyzing whether the observed market outcome is due to choice or due to discrimination.

Using data from the USA and Sweden, Francine Blau demonstrates that cross-country comparisons of the gender wage ratio must take into account the degree of wage dispersion within a country. Using data from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and the USSR, six papers analyze the gender wage gap using the Oaxaca-Blinder decomposition technique. This procedure decomposes wage differences between two groups into the component due to human capital and other productivity
characteristics, and a component due to differences in returns to these characteristics. The component due to differences in returns is often interpreted as due to discrimination. However, as many of the authors note, there are several well-known problems with this interpretation. Omitted productivity characteristics may lead to an overstatement of discrimination, but the existence of discrimination may lead women to invest less in productivity-related characteristics, which would then understate the degree of discrimination.

The papers in this book use a variety of data sources from the different countries and control for a wide range of characteristics. For instance, Maria Hemstrom examines wages over time of the graduates of Uppsala University in Sweden. Using data from Norway, Pal Longva and Steinar Strom examine inter-industry wage differentials in addition to the customary human capital characteristics. Michele Naur and Nina Smith examine three cohorts of workers in Denmark. Rita Asplund examines white-collar workers in Finland from 1980 to 1994. Lena Granqvist includes information on fringe benefits of workers in Finland. Katerina Katz uses data derived from a household survey in a city in Russia.

Dominique Anxo and Lennart Flood demonstrate that despite the similarly high rate of labour force participation for men and women in Sweden, households in Sweden exhibit traditional gender patterns of specialization, very similar to those of France with its much lower labour force participation of women. Although the papers in this book do not resolve whether the gender gap in earnings and occupational segregation derives from discrimination, the book provides an informative overview of how gender differences are manifested in the labour market of these various countries.

Along the same tune, Gustaffson et al. (2000) provide a study which observes that interest in sources of the persistent gender disparity in labour market remains strong. The book is divided into three parts, with two papers setting the stage for the chapters that follow, five papers analyzing gender differences in earnings, and seven papers examining gender differences in employment patterns. The overview chapters provide accounts of the labour market status of women in the United States and European Union (EU), respectively, and paint widely different pictures of how
women are faring. Richard B. Freeman discusses evidence on the women in the United States showing that women have made spectacular progress over time on a number of dimensions. This encouraging news for the United States may provide a template for European countries, although Freeman ultimately concludes that it is unclear what the United States has done to improve women's status that can be replicated elsewhere. In contrast, Margaret Maruani documents that although women in the EU have experienced large gains in job growth and continuous participation, these gains have been accompanied by persistent occupational segregation, lower pay, greater incidence of long-term unemployment, and part-time employment.

The other twelve papers analyze narrower issues in order to identify specific causes of gender disparities. Nabanita Datta Gupta, Ronald L. Oaxaca, and Nina Smith use data from Denmark to perform a wage decomposition analysis over time to isolate the wage gap implications of women's greater concentration in public sector jobs. This study demonstrates that gains in women's qualifications have been largely offset by other factors, leaving the gender gap largely unchanged. In contrast to the cross-sectional analyses of most wage decomposition studies, Reija Lilja uses data on Finnish workers over a ten-year period to decompose the gender wage gap at each year of experience. This novel approach examines the evolution of the unexplained wage differential over time for the same workers and shows an increase over time in the unexplained share for more-educated workers.

Using data from Norway, Erling Barth and Harald Dale-Olsen examine gender differences in churning rates. Their analysis implies that men may move for a higher wage while women's mobility is unaffected by wage, consistent with flatter wage profiles for women. Siv S. Gustafsson and Cecile Wetzel estimate the optimal age at which to give birth using panel data from Germany, Great Britain, the Netherlands, and Sweden, and simulate earnings losses accompanying childbirth at various ages. Amadeo Fuenmayor Fernandez and Concha Salvador Cifre argue that Spain's current tax system, which allows joint filing, favours traditional families, and recommend universal individual filing to improve women's labour market status. Hugh Davies, Heather Joshi, Mark Killingsworth and Romana Peronaci use data
from the United Kingdom on time use to examine the joint labour supply and housework time decisions of spouses. Other studies in this volume address wage setting for principals in private and public schools in the United States (Lois Joy), the relation between part-time employment and earnings in the Netherlands (Ronald Dekker, Ruud Muffels and Elena Stancanelli), the relationship between part-time employment and having a relatively low hourly wage in Belgium (Maria Jepsen, Daniele E. Meulders, and Isabelle Terraz), and the determinants of poverty within lone-parent households in France (David Clement and Catherine Sofer). Two papers examine implications of the tied-mover hypothesis. Harminder Battu, Paul T. Seaman, and Peter J. Sloane use data from the United Kingdom, and Felix Buchel uses data from Germany.

The volume of fourteen papers contribute to the literature by providing information on a variety of gender related topics using European and US data. Many papers provide an overview of the social policies in the countries studied in their paper. Sources are well documented, tables and appendices are numerous and the references provide an useful starting point for researchers wishing to gain knowledge about gender policies and data availability in European countries.

Meulders et al. (1993) examine the position of women in the labour market of the European Community during the 1980s. The authors consider the supply side of female labour, including the development of activity rates according to age, family situation, and levels of educational attainment. There is examination of the development of employment and its sectoral distribution, with particular reference to employment in the public sector and in agriculture. The authors also consider the quality of women's employment and analyze developments in the occupational status of women and their presence in atypical forms of employment, such as part-time, temporary, and flexible-hour work. There is an examination of the extent to which community directives and national legislation on equal pay are being implemented. Exploration of developments in unemployment by sex, region, age, and levels of educational attainment are also done. Further, there is analysis of the circumstances behind entry into unemployment and the periods covered by unemployment benefits. Evaluation of women's representation in general
unemployment policies and the effect of measures taken toward equal opportunities are also explored.

How women balance work and family has been addressed by scholars. Gregory et al. (2008) discuss problems of women in the UK in balancing work and family. The authors note that while the gender pay gap has been narrowing for women in full-time jobs, the pay penalty for the 40% of women who work part-time has risen, reflecting the growing polarization of part-time jobs in low-wage occupations. A further dimension is that women often experience downgrading from higher-skill full-time into lower-skill part-time occupations. As women reorganize their working lives around the presence of children, their reported hours and job satisfaction are highest in part-time work, but life-satisfaction is scarcely affected by hours of work. This feature explores these issues and their challenge for economic efficiency as well as gender equity.

Dale et al. (2006) examine the relationship between family formation, qualifications, and employment for women from white and minority ethnic groups in the UK using a life-course approach. Cross-sectional data from the British Quarterly Labour Force Survey (QLFS) for 1992-2003 were used to estimate the relationships. There are major differences between ethnic groups in the likelihood of being economically active, after controlling for life course and level of qualifications. These are greatest for women from Pakistan and Bangladesh and least for Black Caribbean women. However, predicted probabilities of being economically active are very similar-over 90 per cent for all young women (aged 19-34) with a degree-level qualification who have neither partner nor child. For all women, rates of economic activity are lower with young children but again vary between ethnic groups. Employment patterns for Black Caribbean women are consistent with economic migration and norms of motherhood that encompass roles of both breadwinner and parent. In contrast, for women from Pakistan and Bangladesh patterns of economic activity reflect a strongly gendered division of labour where motherhood is associated with full-time care for children.
Other works on developed countries like that by Melkas et al. (1998) describe women's status in the labour markets of Finland, Norway, and Sweden, as manifested in labour market inequalities, and, in particular, occupational segregation by sex over the past two decades. Introducing the labour market characteristics of the three countries, the authors survey some Nordic labour market policies aimed at enhancing gender equality. The authors describe labour market patterns in the three Nordic countries in 1990, using statistics on female-dominated and male-dominated occupations and indices of inequality. They investigated the monetization of household work and provision of public services, and the ensuing differences in the degree of occupational segregation by sex in these three countries. The status of women and men are also examined in certain closely related occupations where there are distinguishable differences in status.

Meyersson et al. (2001) using a new data set covering most privately employed workers in Sweden, compare gender wage differences to those previously reported for Norway and the US. The central finding is that the wage gap is small when comparing men and women working in the same type of occupation for the same employer. Segregation of men and women by occupation accounts for more of the gap in Sweden than in the other two countries. In all three countries, the segregation by occupation explains more than segregation by establishment, and that institutional changes over the past two decades aimed at improving the status of women had little effect on the gender wage gap.

Laufer (1998) writes on the implementation of equal opportunities and positive action in the field of work in France, another important country of Europe. After presenting a few characteristic trends of the evolution of the status of women on the labour market, the author presents the legal and policy framework of professional equality in France. She then discusses the positive action strategies which have been implemented by firms and explores reasons for their relative scarcity. In a final section, she deals with the recent evolution of the labour market. The rapid growth in part time employment could be seen as a possible solution to the problem of reconciling work and family life. However, in practice, the two processes, reconciliation of work and family life and the development of atypical forms of
employment, may combine to restructure the labour market in such a way, that the
inequalities affecting particular categories of women become cumulative.

Gonzalez et al. (2009) observe that important changes characterize the recent
evolution of the schooling of workers in Portugal. The paper investigates the
consequences of those changes in the gender wage gap. In particular, the authors
analyze and compare the way that this process has evolved in the groups of young
workers and older workers. Their findings suggest that the major part of the pay gap
refers to employer discrimination practices for both age group cohorts. In the case of
the younger workers, discrimination plays an increasing role in explaining the wage
gap, whereas for the older workers, discrimination remains stable over time.

Paukert (1991) observes that women whose wages have long been essential to the
family budget in Czechoslovakia, are very likely to be disproportionately hard hit by
the change to a market system. This work first describes the trends and structure of
employment and the role of women in the economy prior to 1989, their working
conditions and male/female earnings differentials. Women workers' situation and
their attitudes to labour market involvement since 1989 are then analyzed. Finally,
some likely future developments are outlined, notably women's massive
unemployment because of their vulnerable position in the labour market and a
widening male/female earnings gap.

Researchers have also studied the status of women in the erstwhile USSR which had
a different type of economic and political setup. Tolkunova et al. (1985) in their
book discuss new legislation and other measures introduced in the USSR to improve
the position of women during the United Nation’s ‘Decade for Women (1976-85).
The authors describe measures aimed at improving women's working conditions,
including a ban on the use of female labour for strenuous physical work or work
under hazardous conditions; a restriction on the use of female labour for night work;
and special protection for working mothers. The book also discusses the effect of
legislation requiring equal pay for equal work, and describes the social security
benefits received by the Soviet women. There are discussions on advances in the
professional and vocational training of women, the participation of women in
management of state and public affairs, changes in the status of women within the family, and participation of the Soviet women in the peace movement.

A paper by Edwards (1994) on Japan, a developed country in Asia, seeks to determine if the Japanese Equal Employment Opportunity Law has had an impact on university-educated women in Japan. The law, which went into effect in April, 1986, prohibits gender discrimination with respect to vocational training, fringe benefits, retirement, and dismissal. It also encourages firms to provide equal opportunity with regard to recruitment, hiring, job assignment, and promotion. The author observed that since the passage of the law, young women have demonstrated a heightened interest in pursuing career jobs. In particular, they have increased their attendance at four-year colleges and universities and have chosen college majors more conducive to a business career. In contrast, the response to the law on the part of firms has been weak. In the future however, an impending labour shortage in Japan will result in enhanced labour market opportunities for educated Japanese women.

We have discussed a number of studies related to the work sphere of women in developed countries. Next, we present research works discussing miscellaneous topics related to the status of women in developed countries.

There has been research on the link between internal migration and the status of women. Erman (1998) writes on Turkish rural-urban migration, Jacobsen et al. (2000) on the negative effect of family on work in the USA, White (2005) on the great American migration and Boyle et al. (2009) on internal migration in the UK.

White (2005) using data from the Integrated Public Use Micro Data Series (IPUMS) examines the economic activity of black and white southern-born female migrants participating in the Great Migration in the USA. Labour force participation and occupational SEI scores are investigated with specific focus on racial differences within and between migrant groups. Black migrants had a higher probability of participating in the labour force, yet their employment was concentrated among the lower SEI occupations throughout the period. Racial differences also were observed among the influence of personal, household, and location characteristics on economic activity such that the positive associations were less pronounced, while
the negative impacts were differentially felt among black migrant women; education was less beneficial, and the deterring effects of marital status were less pronounced for black migrants. Racial differences narrowed at the end of the Great Migration for the southern migrants, reflecting a pattern most similar to non migrant northerners, and more advantageous than that observed for non-migrant southern women.

Jacobsen et al. (2000) examine recent internal migration patterns for the United States workforce and contrast household earnings outcomes for movers and non-movers by sex and marital status. Three aspects of how migration affects the relative economic status of women and men are considered: Firstly, the importance of relative economic opportunities for husband and wife for the decision as to, whether or not to move; secondly, actual economic outcomes for movers relative to non-movers; and thirdly, the effect of moving on relative earnings within married-couple households. The authors find that the decision to move is consistent with a common preference model of household decision-making and that the recently available range of opportunities to migrate has had little effect on the earnings composition of married couples and single male households, but has benefited single women.

Boyle et al. (2009) found that family migration has a negative impact on women's employment status. Using longitudinal data from the British Household Panel Survey they consider two neglected issues. First, instead of relying on the distance moved to distinguish employment-related migrations, they used information on the reason for moving, allowing them to separate employment-related moves stimulated by the man or the woman, from other moves. Second, they considered selection effects and the role of state dependence in relation to women's employment status prior to moving. Moving for the sake of the man's job has a significant negative effect on subsequent employment status for previously employed women. Women who were not employed previously benefited only slightly from family migration.

Erman (1998) draws on data collected in an ethnographic study of migrants in Ankara, Turkey moving from rural areas to cities and examines whether this improves or deteriorates migrant women’s position in the family which was found to depend on affiliation to different Islamic sects.

Curtis’s (2001) study focuses on the health status of women with children, particularly lone mothers, the beneficiaries of many policies. Data from the 1994 Statistics Canada's National Population Health Survey indicate that lone mothers have, on an average, consistently lower unconditional health status than married mothers. However, lone mothers also have, on average, lower levels of health inputs. Once age, income, education, lifestyle factors, family size, and other recognized determinants of health are controlled for, lone mothers are at least no worse off than married mothers when it comes to health status. This evidence points toward promoting policies directed at increasing the education, income and lifestyle factors of lone mothers, if the wish is to improve the status of their health.

Chesnais (1996) observed total fertility rates to be below replacement level in all Western European countries. Mediterranean countries, commonly labelled traditional, Catholic, and family oriented, exhibit the lowest fertility levels, whereas Sweden, the cradle of the modern liberal welfare state and the country in which empowerment of women is most fully realized, has the highest fertility in Western Europe. In seeking an explanation for the fertility differential, this work compares the status of women in Italy and Sweden and contrasts attitudes and policies toward the family in Italy and Germany with those in Britain and Sweden. The evidence suggests that in advanced industrial societies, higher status of women may be a precondition for raising fertility to replacement level.

Lefgren et al. (2006) examined the relationship between women’s education and husband’s earnings. Using US Census data (2000), the authors describe the relation between women's education and marriage outcomes. Women's education is strongly related to husband's income and marital status. This relationship is highly nonlinear.
and varies across the distribution of husband's earnings. Roughly half of the correlation between women's education and consumption operates through the marriage market. Using 1980 Census data and the quarter of birth instruments, it was found that women's education may have a positive causal effect on husband's earnings, though not on the probability of marriage survival.

Dijkstra et al. (2000) assess the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Gender-Related Development Index (GDI). Although the GDI has increased attention on gender equality in human development, it suffers from several limitations. A major problem is that it conflates relative gender equality with absolute levels of human development and, thus gives no information on comparative gender inequality among countries. Using the same indicators as the GDI, the authors construct a Relative Status of Women (RSW) index, which demonstrates how using a measure of gender equality that abstracts from levels of development results in very different country rankings. However, the RSW is not an ideal measure of gender inequality. The GDI indicators are not the most appropriate ones for measuring gender inequality and hence both the RSW and the GDI have limited validity. The paper concludes by offering a conceptual framework that provides the basis for an alternative measure of gender inequality.

And finally, Gauderman (2003) examines an interesting topic rarely discussed, namely, what it meant to be a woman in colonial, seventeenth-century Spanish America, by exploring the lives of women living in the Audiencia of Quito, which was located in the northern section of the Vice-royalty of Peru (now the capital of Ecuador). The work draws on records of criminal and civil proceedings, notarial records, and city council records from the Quito region, supplemented by Spanish legislation and commentaries on the legal status of women. Challenging the patriarchal paradigm in ethno history that assumes that Spanish society was hierarchically arranged around a central authority, the writer also explains relations between men and women in society and the family, and then goes on to argue that Spanish society was instead, highly decentralized, and that this social organization gave women more options for exercising authority than researchers have usually acknowledged. Examining the control of married women over property by analyzing
the constitution of dowries and how women used this property, the writer studied how women used the criminal justice system to protect themselves and family members from violent and unacceptable treatment by men. Gauderman examined Spanish, indigenous, and mestizo women as entrepreneurs in various sectors of the Audiencia's economy. She also investigated the lives of indigenous market women, known as gateras, who provisioned the city of Quito and surrounding pueblos with both staple and luxury goods. The work reflects on women's status in colonial Spanish America.

There is a work by Torun (2010), which talks about the status of women in both developed and developing countries. The author notes that the views available on gender, differ according to socio-cultural and socio-economic development of society. In developed and developing countries, the situation of women are different. Women in developed countries, unlike in underdeveloped and developing countries, are easily accorded more prestige. However, decisions in underdeveloped countries are often taken by men. In the study, the profile of women according to the level of developed and less developed countries were examined, and comparison between the profiles have been made.

In our review of the literature on the status of women in developed countries, a substantial body of the literature was observed to be concentrated on women’s work place, wage inequalities and balancing family and work, but works were also found on internal migration, fertility, lone motherhood, women’s education and husband’s earnings, among others.

It would be interesting now to examine the literature on the status of women in developing countries in light of the various socio-economic and political differences that exist between the two different sets of countries.
Section 2.2: Literature on the status of women in developing countries

The studies on the status of women in developing countries are not insignificant and there are works that are thought provoking, and also consider different dimensions. In this section we document some of the valuable contributions. We begin with works by Duncan (1989), Rahimi (1991), Morgan and Niraula (1995), Leitinger (1997), Murray (1998), Brouwer et al. (1998) and Almutawa (2002) who provide overviews on the status of women in different developing countries. The works focus on women in different developing countries like Afghanistan, Nepal, Pakistan, UAE, Costa Rica, China and Papua, New Guinea.

Rahimi (1991) provides statistical data on women in Afghanistan and reports on their present situation. The paper discusses the status of women in Afghanistan in historical perspective, the place of women in a socio cultural context, their legal status and the history of the women's movement and women's organization. It also provides a social demographic profile of women, considering women's participation in education, economic and productive activity, and political activities, and describes special problems of women and measures taken to address them.

Duncan (1989) assesses the status of women in Pakistan. She examines the interactions between human resource development, women's welfare and productivity, and economic development, and presents a strategy to address these complex interactions. She offers recommendations on ways to increase the participation of women as providers and beneficiaries in education, family planning, and health services; The author discusses approaches to improving women's access to water and sanitation, extension, credit, new technology, inputs, markets and formal sector employment. There are also observations on women's access to education, health services, family planning, and rural water and sanitation. Duncan describes the labour-force participation of women in the rural economy, the economic contribution of rural women, and the constraints on rural women's productivity and employment. The work also examines women in the urban
economy, focusing on the informal sector, the formal sector, female-headed households, and constraints on women's productivity in the informal sector. The study documents valuable information and annexes present statistical tables providing profiles of low-income working women, discussions on government, international donor, non-governmental programs in the productive sectors, household technology and social forestry. Duncan’s work also presents three examples of successful non-government programs.

Almutawa (2002) studies the changes in social values and their effects on the status of women in the United Arab Emirates, an oil-rich country of the world. He considers the general social structure through analyzing the status of women within the national and international social changes, and their effects on the local society. This research is based on field study and makes both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The following conclusions were reached: Firstly, education played a main role in changing many social values regarding women status and their role in society especially in socialization and their ability in problem solving. Secondly, many factors motivate women to work such as economic independence, helping their husbands in life expenses, and finally self-satisfaction. Thirdly, there are many factors hampering women’s political participation such as the educational system which does not encourage social awareness and its dependence on the use of traditional ways of teaching, which is quite different from the current actual social life. Lastly, there is general public opinion toward the positive participation of working and non-working women in society, although there are some social, cultural, or personal obstacles.

Thirty-four short essays collected by Leitinger (1997) in a volume, provide perspectives on the women's movement and feminism in Costa Rica, in Central America during the early 1990s. Papers focus on various theoretical positions informing the women's movement and feminism in Costa Rica; women in Costa Rican history, the legal status of women, aspects of discrimination on the basis of race, class, sexual preference, and physical handicaps, as well as violence against women in the family. There are works on women's organizations and organizations
working with women, the women's movement and feminism in the arts and the evolving status of women's studies.

Brouwer et al.'s (1998) book analyses gender issues in Papua, New Guinea (an island nation situated in the north of Australia), outlining some of the key historical, economic, demographic, political, geographic, socio-cultural, legal and institutional environments relevant to the understanding of the status of women in the country. It addresses issues of women and economic participation, gender problems in agriculture, fisheries, forestry and mining sectors, women and credit, women and political participation, violence against women and health and education of women. The authors discuss the major causes of the low status of women and suggest interventions to address the core structural forms of inequalities between the genders.

Murray (1998) writes on the status of women in China, a country with a different political system. Touching on everything from China's imperial greatness to the Yin-Yang and Fang-Shou cycles in both dynastic and communist China and Maoist theories on contradiction, Murray examines two of China's claims to superpower status - military and economic, implicitly highlighting China's historical and cultural longevity. In this perspective, he examines the status of women in China, their newfound freedoms under Socialism, as well as the limitations that may still prevent them from fulfilling their potential.

Morgan and Niraula (1995) in a study of two villages in Nepal, note sharp contrast in gender inequality, especially in women's autonomy. Autonomy was measured through questions to wives about their freedom of movement and about their role in household decision making. The two settings provide a sharp contrast in women's autonomy by these measures. The authors argue that this contrast in autonomy influences fertility: greater autonomy reduces the desire for additional children, increases contraceptive use, and lowers levels of unmet need for contraception. The empirical analysis supports the arguments of the two writers.

There are some works on the status of women in Africa by Thornton (2006) and Moyo and Hawewe (2002). Thornton (2006) observes that discussions of women's
power in Africa often focus on how much the role of senior women is symbolic, and how much is real. Studying the Kingdom of Kongo, it was revealed that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, women initially exercised power indirectly through influence on male relatives. However, following the beginning of the civil war, after 1665 women began to exercise more open and overt power, taking effective control of some sections of the country and working less through male relatives. However, elite Kongo women never took formal control of the state as they did in Ndongo and Matamba.

Moyo and Hawewe (2002) show that, how in a racialized society, gender, race, ethnicity, and class operate intricately together to relegate African women to the lowest socio-economic status. Even with policies to redress earlier imbalances, women endure all forms of injustices. The work focuses on the informal sector as illustrative of one sector where these injustices continue.

Talking about gender bias, we can refer to works by Tindigarukayo (1996), Gordon (1997) and Gibson and Scott (2004) that identify the gender bias in many developing countries as the reason behind the low status of women.

Gordon talks about structural adjustment policies in Zimbabwe, Gibson and Scott’s paper on Papua New Guinea, discusses the demographic evidence of gender bias in many countries that provides an impetus for finding ways to study the status of women in developing countries, and Tindigarukayo examines why educational superiority has not been achieved in Jamaica.

In Gibson and Scott’s paper, the authors study the case of Papua, New Guinea, a country in which there are many indicators of severe gender bias. Discrimination in the allocation of goods between boys and girls within households in the country, is examined using outlay-equivalent ratio method. Adding a boy to the household reduces expenditure on requirement of adults by as much as would a nine-tenths reduction in total outlay per member, but girls have no effect on expenditure required for adults. Sensitivity analysis shows that bias in rural areas occurs equally regardless of the age of the household head, while bias against girls may be less in regions of the country that have ethnic groups practicing matrilineal descent.
Tindigarukayo (1996) found that unlike in most other developing countries, Jamaican women have made better use of educational opportunities than men, especially at the higher level of the educational system. However, as indicated in this work, such an educational superiority has not yet been fully utilized by Jamaican women to acquire an economic advantage. The paper suggests three possible explanations for this failure. Firstly, discrimination against women, within the Jamaican labour force system, secondly, less impact of education of women on their socio-economic status, and finally, low numbers of women in science-related training, which is a strong requirement in most industrial sectors in Jamaica.

Gordon (1997) observes that Structural Adjustment Policies (SAP) imposed on third world countries may appear to be gender-neutral, but SAPs may impact differently on men and women. This paper examines the effects of structural adjustment on girls and women in Zimbabwe. The data available indicate that cuts in public spending and cost recovery measures have compromised the health and educational status of women, and have eroded much of the progress made in the decade after independence in 1980.

The influence of religion on the status of women has captured the attention of researchers in recent years. For example, Obermeyer (1992) and Beit-Hallahmi (1997) critically examine the theory that, religion (especially Islam) lowers the status of women in developing countries. Obermeyer examines three propositions that underlie many interpretations of the demography of Arab countries. That Arab countries do poorly in terms of demographic indicators, that this is due to Islam, and that the impact of Islam operates through the way in which it defines a low status for women. After reviewing the available data on fertility and health, the author critically examines the claim that the high natality of Arab countries derives directly from religious doctrine, or indirectly through Islam's effect on the status of women. Obermeyer argues however, that simplistic hypotheses linking Islam and the status of women cannot provide a satisfactory explanation for observed demographic patterns, and a better understanding of demographic change must include attention to the political context of fertility and health behaviour.
Beit-Hallahmi (1997) acknowledging the impact of religion on the status of women, however, puts much faith in education as the saviour. Underdeveloped countries are faced with the vicious circle of high fertility, with resulting population growth and economic stagnation. The cultural background of this economic situation is marked by the low status of women, usually sanctioned by major world religions, which enjoy women's enthusiastic support. Religion is often described as a major obstacle to family planning and all other changes in women's status, which are the key to lowering fertility. Economic growth, education, and birth control are all interconnected, and they are all tied to secularization. Education seems the surest way, guaranteed to reduce fertility in most developing societies.

The works of Sathar and Kiani (1998) and Fan and Huang (1998) focus on nuptiality. Sathar and Kiani’s paper (1998) analyses the consequences of nuptial changes on Pakistan’s demographic, social and economic situation. Data for this purpose have been drawn from various Censuses and surveys throughout the 1960s, till the 1990s. As the results indicate, the changes in marriage pattern are affecting women more than men, because changes in nuptiality are enabling women to avail of the additional opportunities in education and employment. This is leading to a change of attitude towards women in society which may lead to a change in the status of women in the future.

Fan and Huang’s (1998) review of historical and social roles of marriage in China is based on statistical analysis of China’s 1990 Census. They found that the transactional nature of marriage undermines women’s status. However marriage also offered disadvantaged women an opportunity to achieve social and economic mobility, far compared to the situation they were in, prior to nuptiality.

Education has been reiterated as an important determinant of the status of women, especially in developing countries, and Fargues (2005), Field and Ambrus (2008), Ozpolat and Yildirim (2009) re-stress its importance.

Fargues (2005) observes that progress in the empowerment of Arab women was low before the 1950s, but girls born after that have been educated longer than their parents, which increased their authority. This factor, and women’s activitism and
civil and political lobbying for reform of personal status is now underway in many Arab countries, challenging the patriarchal system. Fargues echoes Beit–Hallahmi’s (1997) views on the importance of education in Islamic countries.

Examining the importance of education on the status of women by using data from rural Bangladesh, Field and Ambrus (2008) also stress the role of education on the status of women. They explore the hypothesis that women attain less schooling as a result of social and financial pressure to marry young. The authors isolate the causal effect of marriage timing using age of menarche as an instrumental variable. The results indicate that each additional year that marriage is delayed is associated with 0.22 additional year of schooling and 5.6 percent higher literacy. Delayed marriage is also associated with an increase in use of preventive health services. In the context of competitive marriage markets, the authors use the above results to obtain estimates of the change in equilibrium female education that would arise from introducing age of consent laws.

Ozpolat and Yildirim (2009) focus on the contribution of women’s education to growth and society. Education of women in many nations specially developing countries need to attract more attention. Net return of education and training on women are much more than men. Equality of gender in education process affects economic development positively. The paper investigates the relation between women’s education and growth and analyses economic dimension of women’s education and the possible contribution to developing countries.

Women’s work plays an important role on the status of women. Researchers like Hossain (1998), Browning and Chiappori (1998), Minniti and Naude (2010) have examined the importance of women’s work on their status.

Hossain (1998) observes that the participation of women in socio-economic activity has been a theme of considerable discussion and debate. The paper purports to examine the characteristics of the working married women in Bangladesh and the problems and challenges faced by them while striking a balance between their professional career and responsibilities at home. The most important factor that motivates the married women to come outside the confines of the home and enter
the highly competitive job market, is financial need. The study suggests that the working married women are much more likely to be in a better economic position than the non-working married women. It also points to the fact that the gender inequality and presumed inferior status of women are the main obstacles to their involvement in the mainstream development activities.

Browning and Chiappori (1998) observed that position in family decision making depends on the share to household resources. Women feature in lower rungs in family decision making due to limited contribution to household budget and limited outside options. Lower levels of female participation thus limit the intrinsic worth of females within households (ignoring housework done by them) and also reduce the fallback options available to women in case of conflict or dissolution of household. It is when wife’s resources increase, that wife’s position in the family improves, as Blood and Wolfe (1960) observed. Views of other writers like Epstein (1962) and Srinivas (1976), Hashemi et al. (1996) are also in the same tune. Eswaran’s paper (2002) observes that increase in relative bargaining power reduces fertility and also child mortality rates.

In recent years, female entrepreneurship has assumed much importance in the world. Minniti and Naude (2010) emphasise the issue of female entrepreneurship in developing countries in their paper. Recently, the rate of new business formation by women has significantly outpaced the rate of new business formation by men across all ethnic groups in the USA. Similar trends are found across the developing world. However, women still own and manage significantly fewer businesses than men. The explanation for this phenomenon is difficult to offer. The behaviour of female entrepreneurs in terms of traits, motivations, and success rates, and their gender-related distinctiveness are complex and multifaceted. Despite a growing literature, we still need more research on female entrepreneurship - particularly in developing countries, where we are seeing a growing number of initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship and empowering women in the process. The latter tendency reflects a generally growing interest in female entrepreneurship in developing countries, which, in turn, is due to greater focus on the role played by entrepreneurship in the economic development process. Women have been assigned
a special role not only because they stand to benefit from entrepreneurship, being the poorer and more discriminated against gender, but also because they are seen as a critical driver of entrepreneurship in light of their unique role in the household and the rise in female-headed households across the developing world.

Health is an important area of women’s status, and Wickrama and Lorenz’s (2002) work stresses on the importance of improvement of the status of women in developing countries for enhancement of health status of women. In their three-wave study of 72 developing countries, the authors use growth curves to examine how changes in fertility and level of fertility mediate the effect of women's social status on women's health as measured by infant mortality, maternal mortality, and female life expectancy. They found that level of female education, average age at marriage, and the percentage of married women using contraceptives influence attained level of fertility, with controls for economic growth and dependency status. The change in fertility, however, is predicted only by average age at marriage and by level of education. Change in fertility, in turn, predicts improvement in all three women's health indicators, while the level of fertility predicts improvement in maternal mortality and infant mortality. In addition to the mediating effects of fertility, both age at marriage and education contribute directly to reduced level of infant mortality; level of primary education contributes directly to reduced levels of maternal mortality; and use of contraceptives contributes to the improvement in female life expectancy. The policy implication for developing countries is that, greater gains can be made in women's health, particularly maternal health, by improving women's social status, especially in rural areas.

Ahmed et al. (2010) observe that relative to the attention given to improving the quality of and access to maternal health services, the influence of women's socio-economic situation on maternal health care use has received scant attention. The authors examine the relationship between women's economic, educational and empowerment status, introduced as the 3Es, and maternal health service utilization in developing countries.

Similar to developed countries, there has been research on migration and the status of women in developing countries as well. Literature on the status of women
migrants who migrate internally in developing countries is now presented. Williams (1989), Chattopadhyay (1997), Hare (1999), Jatrina et al. (2005), Codjoe (2007), Gubhaju and De-Jong (2009) have studied internal migration in countries like Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Africa, and China.

Commenting on the lack of research on the effect of family’s migration on women’s economic status, Chattopadhyay (1997), using data from Second Round of Malaysian Family Life Survey, observed that, family migration depresses chance of working but does not significantly reduce socio economic status of those who work. However, when a woman migrates with her husband, she has to forego substantial advantage she could have derived, had she moved alone.

Gubhaju and De-Jong’s (2009) research tests the thesis that the neoclassical microeconomic and the new household economic theoretical assumptions on migration decision-making rules are segmented by gender, marital status, and time frame of intention to migrate. Comparative tests of both theories within the same study design are relatively rare. Utilizing data from the Causes of Migration in South Africa National Migration Survey, the authors analyze how individually held “own-future” versus alternative “household well-being” migration decision rules affect the intentions to migrate of male and female adults in South Africa. Results from the gender and marital status specific logistic regressions models show consistent support for the different gender-marital status decision rule thesis. Specifically, the “maximizing one’s own future” neoclassical microeconomic theory proposition is more applicable for never married men and women, the “maximizing household income” proposition for married men with short-term migration intentions, and the “reduce household risk” proposition for longer time horizon migration intentions of married men and women. Results provide new evidence on the way household strategies and individual goals jointly affect intentions to move or stay.

In another work about Africa, Codjoe (2007) observes that the transitional agro-ecological zone of Ghana, Africa located between the richly endowed south and the impoverished north, has attracted seasonal and permanent farm migrants, mainly from northern Ghana, who now live side by side with the indigenous people. While migrants have higher numbers of Muslims, indigenous people are mainly Christians.
Although the majority of the migrants live in migrant quarters with less favourable socio-economic conditions, they are more successful farmers, and therefore wealthier. The author examines the varying effect of fertility determinants among migrants and indigenous females. The data was collected in 2002 among 194 females aged 15 to 49 years, based on which, multiple regression models are used to assess fertility determinants. Results show that although migrant house-holds were wealthier, migrant females were more traditional. They had more children living in foster care, and a lower proportion of them approved of men participating in household activities. In addition, they were less well educated, recorded higher infant mortality, gave birth earlier and used less contraception. Also, a married female migrant would on average have almost one more child compared to her indigenous counterpart, and migrant females who had experienced the loss of a child, would on average, have 2.5 more children compared to their indigenous counterparts. Finally, more affluent migrant females have 0.08 fewer children compared to their indigenous counterpart. On the whole however, the author observed indigenous females though not as well off compared to the migrant women, were more advanced than their migrant counterparts.

Jatrana et al. (2005), on the other hand, in a study positioned in the Philippines, observed non migrant mothers to be more anaemic, younger of age, normally with more than four children, less educated, living in households with no electricity, not taking iron supplements and not getting prenatal care.

Williams (1989) explored the relationship between migration at, or soon after marriage, and the status of women in household in rural central Java, Indonesia. Determinant of decision making process surrounding contraceptive, child bearing, resource control and a variable measuring overall decision making power are explored by the method of OLS regression estimates. The author observed that post marriage, women’s decision power increases due to less frequent contact with both sides of parents.

Hare (1999) found industrial growth in China coupled with economic reforms in the rural areas, has created a growing demand for rural women's labour, though often at substantially lower wages than those earned by men employed in the same sector.
An analysis of data collected in rural Guandong province suggests that households may contribute to the observed male-female market wage differential through their influence in the formation of individuals' reservation wages. Under these circumstances, external employment opportunities, while no doubt serving to increase the household's overall level of income, may, on their own, be a less effective mechanism for raising the economic status of women. On the contrary, market wage signals may serve to reinforce, rather than to ameliorate, sex-based differences that arise within the household.

In the perspective of the various issues that emerged from the survey of the literature on the status of women in developing countries, the next section presents a brief review of the studies on the status of women in India.

Section 2.3: Research on the status of women in India

According to the Indian Constitution, women are legal citizens of the country and have equal rights with men, however, due to the lack of acceptance from the male dominant society, Indian women suffer immensely. Women are responsible for bearing children, yet they are malnourished, and more often than not, in poor health. They are also overworked in the field in addition to completing all of the domestic work, and mistreated inside and outside the home (We Women Today, March 8, 2011).

Regarding their political participation, Uma (2010) observes that the 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Indian Constitution made 15 years ago, brought to the fore one million women in the helm of affairs in the villages of India. Local bodies are the only constitutional bodies wherein 33% reservation for women is ensured. The emergence of women power has caused perceptible changes in our villages in a span of ten years. The agenda of women in office is far different from the agenda of men. While men are keen on building toilets, providing drinking water, improving health status and environmental protection, women in local bodies demonstrated their
capabilities to improve the status and condition of women, children and the marginalised. Still, many political parties are opposing legislation to provide reservation of seats to women in the parliament and state assemblies. The Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and Beijing Platform of Action are instrumental at the international level in focusing on the issue of women in governance. There is an assumption, that once women achieved critical mass in the legislative institutions, they concentrate on development issues.

In this backdrop, this section embarks on a review of the literature on the status of women in India. We begin with Gopalan’s (2001) report on the status of women in India, published in the wake of the publication of the report of the Committee on the Status of Women (1974). The Committee on the Status of Women found marginalisation of women in society, exploitation in the economy, denial of access to power, exclusion from decision making and brutalising within and outside the household. In this perspective, Gopalan’s report published in 2001, examines the changes if any, that have come in the status of women in India since the publication of the report of the Committee.

Gopalan’s Report is divided into twelve chapters covering women’s health, educational development, roles, rights and opportunities of economic participation, women and environment, women and law, political status, mass media and status of women and women’s welfare and development. She found evidence of performances to be mixed. There have been efforts at adjustment and some gains, but also retrogression and barriers to advancement. Major discussions in the Report are briefly presented in the following paragraphs.

In human development terms women continue to have lesser status than men due to cascading discriminations against them at every stage of life, and access of every means of development. Adverse female sex ratio and high maternal mortality are at a disturbing level, male-female disparity in education and enrolment continue (Gopalan 2001).
The economic status of women continues to be significantly inhibited by several customary and legal obstacles including access to land, natural resources, capital, credit and technology. Women continue to be tied down to land as cultivators or agricultural labourers. Regular salaried employment has come down while casual wage employment has gone up, with migrant women suffering more than ordinary disabilities. A significant number of child labourers are found to be girls (Gopalan 2001).

Different communities continue to follow different personal laws, customs and traditional practices for marriage, divorce, maintenance, inheritance, adoption, guardianship and custody and are not under uniform civil court due to the Government policy of non-interference with personal life of communities. The recommendations of the National Commission for Women regarding discriminations are yet to be followed (Gopalan 2001).

Violence against women continue to be rampant with nearly one third of the crimes taking place within households. Molestation inside house and outside accounts for another 25% of the crimes. When crimes take place within the households, legal remedies are difficult to enforce. Landmark judicial pronouncements imply increasing sensitivity of judiciary to gender issues but more attention should be paid to investigation procedures, law enforcement and streamlining for enhancing fairness in dispensation of justice in crimes against women (Gopalan 2001).

Representation in Parliament and State Assemblies is low and be it in political parties or in the Government, women are given low representation in decision making positions as members, party executives or ministers (Gopalan 2001).

Writing on the status of women in India, Kishor and Gupta (2004) are also of the opinion that in general, the average woman in India is disempowered absolutely and relative to men, and there has been little change in women’s empowerment over time. They used data from NFHS–2, 1998-1999 to document women’s empowerment in India as a whole and in each of 26 States (with 1999 boundaries), for ever married women aged 15-49 years. Their observations hold true no matter how empowerment is measured - be it in terms of indicator of the evidence of
empowerment (like women’s participation in household decisions or freedom of movement, non acceptance of unequal gender roles, gender preference of children and educational preference according to sex of children), sources of empowerment (like literacy and education, exposure to mass media, employment) or settings (age at first marriage, residence in nuclear family, spousal age and educational differences and experience of violence). Kishor and Gupta, however, found that there is great variation in the levels of women’s empowerment across different States and different indicators. As for example in Punjab, son preference and low women’s employment combine with high levels of women’s empowerment as measured by almost all other variables including decision making, rejection of wife beating and relatively high education. Delhi and Goa are among the top performers and the States doing most poorly on overall empowerment, are Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, and the two southern States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

In the perspective of the above works on the status of women in India as a whole, we now move to works relating to individual or groups of States of India.

In 1983 a pioneering work by Dyson and Moore on patriarchy, low women’s status and fertility observed essential difference between States of North and South India in the status of women. Rigid sexual stratification in the context of North India results in pro-natalist pressures on women, whereby sons not only represent social security against events such as death of husband, but also provides means of improved position and status in husbands family. Dyson and Moore stress on the link between the young wife’s fertility and improvement of her position and status in the family - a son being her social redeemer.

Women in South India, in contrast are seen to be less subject to familial and personal constraints. Women in the south marry close kins, retain their family network, have greater control over their own mobility, and some are allowed to inherit property also. So they exercise greater power over decisions.

Moore’s theory concluding that Tamil women in the south have more mobility and authority than women in Uttar Pradesh.

Basu (1992a) observed that even in Delhi, slum dwellers who are southern women, continue to enjoy greater mobility and freedom of expression than their northern counterparts. Koenig and Foo’s work (1992), based on a survey of reproductive aged women and their husbands in rural Uttar Pradesh in 1972, attempts to provide a detailed understanding of how subordinate status of women contributes to the persistence of high fertility in a region where traditional gender relations remain relatively intact, namely in rural South Asia. They identify as the key aspect, the fostering of a system of stratification by patriarchy, on the basis of sex, which places severe constraints upon the activities and roles of women resulting in a subordinate role in reproductive decision making. Whereby, the only option left to women, to raise their status is through high rate of reproduction, especially sons. However, a woman’s role changes from wife in a weak position to the mother the strong one as she bears sons (the number also being important). Ironically, a woman is able to control her daughter-in-law’s reproductive behaviour but not her own, observe Srinivas and Ramaswamy (1977). Other authors like Mason (1986), Das Gupta (1995), Jejeebhoy (2000) and Agarwala (2002) have also dealt with this issue.

Ravindran (1999) examines the extent of female autonomy among Tamil women in their personal lives and within households, and gender power dynamics between married couples on the basis of a survey in five districts of the state with 141 men and women belonging to different age and caste groups.

Jejeebhoy (1997) draws on data from a survey conducted in 1993-4 from women residing in two culturally distinct sites of rural India—one in the highly patriarchal setting of Uttar Pradesh in North India and the other in the more egalitarian settings of Tamil Nadu in South India. Her findings show that region rather than religion determines women’s status (whence Muslims in the south were found to be better off compared to the Hindus in the north).

In a later work, Jejeebhoy and Sathar (2001) created four indices of autonomy from a randomly selected sample of about 800 currently married women aged 15-39 from
Punjab in Pakistan and Uttar Pradesh and Tamil Nadu in India. The four indices are related to economic decision making (for example to buy food, household goods and jewellery), mobility (to go to health centre, friends’ and relatives’ houses, market, fair or nearby village unescorted, whence the index value ranges from 0 if the woman is escorted everywhere, to 5 if she can go everywhere unescorted), freedom from threat from husband (index varying from 0 if scared and beaten by husband to 3 if neither, the index capturing power relations between spouses), and finally access to and control of resources (access including say in household income spending, getting cash to spend or purchase some jewellery or gifts, owning some of the family’s assets, having a say in how the woman’s dowry is spent and, whether she can support herself in old age using her savings-index value ranging from 0 to 7).

In Jejeebhoy and Sathar’s work though autonomy was found to be limited in all the survey areas, North India (Uttar Pradesh) falls significantly below the south (Tamil Nadu), strongly supporting the argument that the north-south culture divide powerfully conditions the extent of women’s autonomy. In contrast, there is far less support for the commonly held assumption that Muslim women have less autonomy than Hindu women-Muslim women in the south were found to be more progressive than Hindu women in the north.

In contrast to Koenig and Foo, Jejeebhoy, Jejeebhoy and Sathar, Ravindran and Basu, authors like Rahman and Rao (2004) point out that Dyson and Moore failed to take into account the negative outcomes of endogenous marriages of the south which very often involves splitting time and loyalty between two competing circles of kin, hampering efforts of the woman to forge a new base of power within husband’s household. Also, in case of dispute, there is little outside help.

Rahman and Rao (2004) argue that southern women are not necessarily advanced. In their survey in 1995, of 800 married women of reproductive age from households randomly selected from five districts each in Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh (in each state, two districts economically advanced in terms of infrastructure and wealth, one moderate and two economically backward were chosen), Rahman and Rao observed that although a preference for cross cousins and uncle-niece is more prevalent
among a minority of communities in south, village exogamy is the norm practised by major communities in both north and south India. Dowry paid in the south is just as high as in the north, and purdah among women is quite frequent in both the regions, especially among Muslims.

On the other hand, the authors found that women in Uttar Pradesh have on an average, significantly greater authority over household expenditures than in Karnataka.

This contrast between women’s empowerment of two regions is echoed in a work by Morgan and Niraula (1995) as mentioned before.


Prakash (2003) in her work, defines status of women as encompassing personal rights, propriety rights, duties, liabilities and disabilities vis-à-vis society and a woman’s family, tracing the status of women from the Vedic age (when women’s status was honourable and respectable and healthy from all perspectives – social, physical and psychological) to the post-Vedic age, when she was considered as a machine for procreation. Status of women was further lowered in Mughal times. During the British rule several legislations brought about significant modifications. However, the basic cultural orientation towards men and women in contemporary Indian society is shaped by the authority of classical texts, teaching of religions, factors of historical development and persistence of regional and local traditions like dependence on sons in old age, importance of male children and their better food and health care and education.

Women’s portrayal in their folk songs in North India is found in the work of Srivastava (1991). The author feels that women’s folk songs mirror their common
wishes, unexpressed emotions, unfulfilled desire, hope, disappointment and reaction to social environment against conventional stereotypes of obedient conformism. The songs act as safety valves to express bottled up feelings.

Coonrod (1998) identifies seven factors keeping the status of women low in India. These factors are malnutrition (given the tradition of women in India to eat last and least, even when pregnant and lactating), poor health in comparison to men due to persistent neglect, lack of education in comparison to men (due to social norms and fear of violence which often throttle aspirations), overwork (work at home being largely unrecognised), lack of skill due to control by men, mistreatment at home and outside and powerlessness due to patriarchal traditions which take decisions ranging from choice of marriage partners to inheritance rights.

Writing on the status of women, Ghosh and Roy (1997) stress that legal and constitutional rights in themselves do not change social attitudes. In the longer run, these attitudes are conditioned by economic pressures, which would ultimately lead to improvement in the status of women. In the Indian context, developmental planning and urbanization did not have a specific focus on the role of women in economic change. As a result, development and urbanization led to very uneven results for different categories of women in India. While the poor women in rural India were left behind, the middle class educated women were able to improve their economic and social status as a result of urbanization and development. Again, Muslim women were unable to make as much social progress as did the Christian and Hindu women.

In a discussion on work sphere, Gupta (2007) observes that both the dominant models of the relationship between earnings and housework, economic dependence and gender display, have fundamental defects. Most of the works focus on the effect of women’s earnings compared to their husbands on their housework, and ignore the possibility of an independent relationship between women's own earnings and their time spent on housework. Using a sample of 914 married women employed full time from the second wave of the National Survey of Families and Households, the author shows that women's housework is affected only by women’s own earnings, not by their husbands', and also not by their earnings compared to that of their
husbands. These results do not support the dependence and display models of the relationship between earnings and housework time and suggest that married women have a substantial degree of economic autonomy in the areas of domestic life for which they are normatively responsible.

Nihila (1999) in a study on the leather tanning industry in Tamil Nadu, however, opines that employment generation does not necessarily benefit women, who continue to be marginalised. Liberalisation might have increased employment in India, but it has worsened the quality of employment, especially for women. The article studies macro-level data to analyse employment of men and women. It observes that data collection by official agencies use faulty processes and much of women’s work remains invisible, and a macro-level field study of the leather tanning industry in Tamil Nadu reveals that gender subordination is built into the system.

Dutta (2000) also writes in this vein. Feminisation of one sector in some areas is not improvement according to the author. Dutta analyses the trends and pattern of women employment using the NSS and Census data in India. It highlights the changing pattern of employment in services sector both in the organised and unorganised sectors in the changing economic scenario. Dutta argues that the increasing feminisation of territory sector, especially in urban areas, hardly depicts on overall improvement in the quality of work and the status of women.

Nakkeeran (2003) attempted to study the veracity of the argument that women’s work plays a significant role in reducing gender inequality in a south Indian village, based on a 15 month anthropological study of 120 women between 1995-1997. The author found the agriculture scenario changing, with low accommodation of women in the expanding non-agricultural sector. Coupled with traditional patriarchal social relations, women of different sections share the brunt differently, and thus respond differently. Depending on monetary and non-monetary resources at the disposal of households and differential cultural norm of the respective caste group, the resultant position and response of the women differ widely. With respect to different variables like autonomy, work participation, health status, literacy, leisure etc, women of different sections are placed differently. So it is difficult to talk in terms
of women as a undifferentiated homogenous group. This underlies the necessity of reckoning social and economic differences.

Bhatta and Rao (2003), Ramkumar et al. (2004), Singh (2005) and Barnabas et al. (2011) discuss various problems faced by women at work and the effects on their status in selected sectors. There are also suggestions for improvement. Bhatta and Rao’s paper reports on the results of a survey among fisherwomen in coastal Karnataka. The data collected are on the nature of work, earnings and role of the women in decision making. The study suggests that only 16% of women are fully involved in decision making although their contribution to family income and household work is substantial. There is a social stigma attached to fish marketing activities and the younger generation are not willing to enter the business, and Government support in terms of subsidy does not help increase social status. The paper prescribes that employment generation by providing modern marketing facilities is required to improve the status of fisherwomen.

Ramkumar et al. (2004) look for an alternative path to improvement of the status of women through self employment. The study observes that dairy cattle rearing for milk to be an important source of livelihood for landless women in Pondicherry, increasing their financial security, status, self confidence and opportunity to control their lives (as a preferable alternative to back breaking agricultural labour). The hours are flexible and health facilities better.

Singh (2005), on the other hand, examines the status of women workers in brick kiln industry in Haryana, India, who are casual workers, constituting half the work force in the industry. The paper looks into the socio-economic status of these women workers who have a tough life bearing and rearing children and at the same time engaged in economic activities for survival.

Barnabas et al. (2011) identify the construction sector as one of the largest employers of women next to agriculture, in India. Their article analyses the data from a large sample of men and women construction workers, and proposes ways to empower women workers. Most of them are very poor and destitute, face
harassment at both home and workplace and do the heaviest work. This study suggests training for women as masons to equalise their opportunities.

Tribes are an important component of Indian society that has promoted research on them and authors like Shimray (2004), Virginius (2004), Rao (2005), Jha (2005) and Mitra (2008) have written on the status of women among India’s tribal societies in different parts of India like the North-East, Jharkhand and Orissa.

Mitra’s (2008) paper observes that the Scheduled Tribes constitute about 8.2% of the total population in India and although there is a large volume of anthropological literature describing the characteristics of and differences among the various tribes in India, little inter-disciplinary research has been done to uncover the status of women among the tribal population in India. This paper analyzes the status of women among the Scheduled Tribes in India. Frequent comparisons have been made to the social and cultural practices of the Scheduled Tribes, mainstream Hindus, as well as the Scheduled Caste population. Through this analysis, the author shows the distinctiveness of the tribal cultures and the fact that many women from the Scheduled Tribes face less discrimination than Hindu women and those from Scheduled castes. However she did not attempt to explore the reasons.

Shimray (2004) attempts to understand household work, work force participation, division of labour and women’s position in Naga societies with special reference to the Tangkhul Nagas of Manipur. The average time spent on housework and agricultural activities by men, women and children and the gendered division of labour are examined. Although Naga society is patriarchal, women enjoy considerable freedom and play important roles in family and community life. Women participate in various agricultural activities and share greater burden as well. Men’s responsibility for household activity is shrinking, while women’s work frontier is expanding as they take over work traditionally designated for males.

Another work by Virginius (2004) observed that the value system governing larger Indian society has been in the process of change. Tribal societies in the post Independence era have been witness to unprecedented change with respect to culture, modes of making a living and social differentiations. Their bearings on
women’s status in social and gender relations have been far reaching based on existing ethnographies.

Rao (2005) discusses the strengthening of kinship ties amongst the Santal community in a village in Jharkhand state in India. The context of progressive marginalization from the state and markets has resulted in the Santals asserting their adivasi identity by recourse to customary institutions as well as rigidifying patrilineal rules of inheritance. While this leads generally to an erosion of women's rights to inherit land, under certain circumstances women are supported by kin elders when they bring grievances to the legal courts. Women's relationship to their kinship group thus seems ambiguous: kinship can simultaneously be not only a source of deprivation and suppression, but also a way of staking claims to resources, especially in the face of the inadequacies of formal state mechanisms.

In Orissa’s poverty striken tribal areas, a recent study by Jha (2005) on migration trends, reveal an increasing movement of young women towards urban centres in search of work. This is a growing trend, but salary is poor and the women are vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous agents. Initially 1950 onwards they moved towards Bihar and West Bengal, but from the 1980s, the women are migrating to bigger cities in search of employment (Delhi ,Kolkata, Mumbai). Jha observes that one notable feature is the noticeable number of single women movers.

There are few other works pertaining to the status of women in the States of Orissa and West Bengal (Ganguly-Scrase 2003, Bagchi 2005, Bhowmick 2005, Mohanty and Tripathy 2005). Mohanty and Tripathy (2005) recorded observations on earning differences that exist between males and females working in the education sector in the state of Orissa, and attempted to identify the reasons for the differentials. The extent of differential attributed to human capital endowment and to pure gender discrimination have been estimated through decomposition analysis. A major part of earning differences is explained in terms of male teachers having supplementary occupation, which is rare among female teachers. Women spend more time in unpaid activities. In terms of asset ownership or decision making, it was found that women occupy a lower status in the family, irrespective of whether they earn or not.
However earning has a positive impact on status, the female teachers being better placed compared to housewives. Social factors influence the pattern of expenditure with the women being restrained to spend their earnings as desired.

Bhowmick (2005) writing on the empowerment of rural women based on a survey in Orissa and West Bengal (and also Jharkhand), observed that historically women are denied right of decision and share in family income, and whatever economic class they belong to, women are completely dependent on men, resulting in lack of bargaining power even in matters of marriage, divorce, remarriage, right of land, property, personal or family income.

Bagchi has edited a book (2005), comprising contributions from different scholars on the changing status of women in West Bengal, India between 1970-2000, and she notes that nothing much has changed for the State since the Report of The Committee on the Status Of Women (1974) and Gopalan’s report on the status of women in India (Gopalan 2001) were published.

Various writers have contributed on different topics in the book, ranging from demography (Banerjee and Mukherjee), health and nutrition (Ghatak), education (Bagchi and Guha), economic empowerment (Mukhopadhyay), law and violence against women (Gupta and Chattopadhyay), political participation (Munshi), culture (Bhattacharya) and tribal women (Chanda).

Bagchi observed that the demographic profile of the State shows that child sex ratio still shows a disturbing decline in the 0-6 years group and son preference in its many manifestations appears to stand at the helm of many social evils and dowry stands as one of the prime movers of social injustice and crimes against women.

Women are living longer, note Banerjee and Mukherjee, but this is a mixed blessing since with age comes the possibility of widowhood and loss of status that goes with it in our country. Average age at marriage of women has gone up in the last quarter of the twentieth century though about a third of the women in West Bengal who have been married in the eighties and nineties, have been married before age 19 years.
There is paucity of data on women’s health and nutrition, given the over importance to family Planning on which however data are quite easily available. All healthcare programmes for women are tailored for pregnant and nursing mothers, to achieve population stabilisation, and women’s health and nutritional needs have received little focus. There is a dearth of data on other aspects of women’s health, for example, on mental health situation of women and children, even as mental health problems continue to be on the rise in the country. Ghatak observes that women’s status in the field of health in India is characterised by inequality based on gender, further aggravated by poverty, illiteracy, rural background, lower caste, widowhood, desertion, disability, single marital status or childlessness.

Bagchi and Guha observe girls’ and women’s school education in West Bengal during the last three decades of the twentieth century and make an assessment of supply and demand related factors affecting the gender gap in their education. On employment, women face discrimination in selection, are paid less than their male colleagues, but are forced to accept due to difficulties of getting jobs. Self employment possibilities of women are severely limited due to lack of information, capital, credit, material and marketing. Men also face problems, specially in underprivileged sections of society, but the problem is more acute for women.

Mukhopadhyay writing on economic empowerment comments that much of women’s work is unrecognised and under valued in a society, where status is often equated with income earning power. There has been an increase in number of earning middle class females over the last few years, but the rise has been very small and data required for policies to combat wage discrimination like hours of work, age of entry etc are not available adequately.

Munshi observes that three decades after the International Women’s Year, demand for one-third reservation of seats for women in national and state legislatures is central to major issues for advocacy and campaign. This also includes revision of existing laws to eliminate traces of discrimination against women, revision of law against domestic violence and proper implementation of the Supreme Court directive for elimination of sexual harassment at place of work.
Regarding the changes taking place in the cultural life of West Bengal, like literature, theatre, films, print media, electronic media, advertisement, music, dance, radio programme, visual arts that have bearing on the status of women, Bhattacharya notes that gender stereotypes still persist in the different types of media, print or visual. But on the whole, women in West Bengal have become culturally more articulate that before and cultural life is witnessing radical changes as a result of globalisation. Identity politics-religious, ethnic and linguistic is on the rise, which are shaking up familiar and traditional cultural norms, as women both as producers and consumers of culture, have a growing awareness of this.

Cruelty by husbands and relatives, torture of housewives is on the rise in West Bengal. Dowry deaths have also been rising, there appearing to exist a strange apathy among people who have taken it for granted, that it is inbuilt in the custom of marriage in all communities. However, reporting of crimes has risen over the decades due to increasing awareness, which Gupta and Chattopadhyay ascribe to efforts of women’s organisations. Also reduction in barriers to women participating in public life, especially reservation of seats for women in the Panchayats has made women more visible.

In another work on West Bengal, Ganguly-Scrase (2003) focuses on globalisation in West Bengal. The author observes that, globalisation of the Indian economy has dramatically influenced social life in India, expansion of middle class being its consequence. Based on ethnographic research among lower middle class families in West Bengal, India, she examines the apparent paradox between women’s positive perception of empowerment and overall negative impact of structural adjustment policies on women. Some may argue that globalisation is detrimental to women due to growing structural gender inequality, but many identify greater opportunity to challenge pre-existing patriarchal norms through role models available in globalised media.

While there are increasing inequalities for households, women do not consider these to be gender disadvantageous, emphasising rather on opportunities for greater independence.
It is pertinent to mention in this context, the work of Singh (2010) who commenting on the globalisation of the Indian economy and its impact on women’s autonomy in rural India, calls for development of indigenous methods rather than imported ones. She feels that there is need for newer and more grounded concepts for women’s development, indigenous to the environment in which the women in India live, rather than simply applying methods developed by other countries or available through international literature.

This section ends with a work by Vachher et al. (2010) which draws attention to one of the burning issues related to the status of women in India in the present times. The authors observe that violence against women is a major public health and human rights issue in the world today. They conducted a study to assess the consequences of domestic violence on the mental health of women of reproductive age group. A community-based, cross-sectional study was conducted in Raj Nagar-I, urban locality in West Delhi near Palam. 350 women of 15-49 years age group residing in the community were selected by stratified random sampling. These women were administered an interview schedule adapted from WHO multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence, and were assessed for the presence of it in their lives. Mental health status of these women was estimated by using a self-reporting questionnaire, and a chi square test for proportion and binary logistic regression was applied. 42.8% of the women reported one or the other types of violence. 34.9% of the women reported either physical or sexual violence ever in life. 29.1% revealed information on either physical or sexual violence in past 1 year (current violence). 12% of the women reported mental ill health. Women who had experienced domestic violence were more likely to report mental ill health status and suicidal tendencies as compared to women who had not experienced violence.

So far during the course of this chapter, the studies on the status of women in developed countries, developing countries, and in India, have been discussed. However, since the present thesis focuses on a group of international migrants, namely migrants from Bangladesh to West Bengal and Orissa in India, the following section now presents a survey of the literature available on the status of women who are international migrants.
Section 2.4: Studies on the status of international women migrants


Donato (1992) found women as likely as men to migrate to the USA from developing nations such as Mexico and the Philippines, rather than from European Countries. Donato found women accounting for 44% of legal and 19% of undocumented migration from Mexico to the USA. Women’s substantial presence among legal migrants shows that they are not motivated by sole desire to follow husband (93% of them working for wages).

Buijs (1993) observes that large scale population movement is a prominent feature of modern society, and feels that there is an urgent need to disentangle specific experience of women who are critically involved in process of adaptation to new worlds and way of life. Most women described in this book, tried to retain their original lifestyle and culture at least to some extent, but found that the exigencies of being migrants and refugees, forced them to examine their preconceptions, and to adopt roles both social and economic, which they would have rejected at home. This remaking of self was often a traumatic experience with serious repercussions on the relationship with their menfolk. On the other hand, for some women, emigration also provided a spur to ambition and progress, a means of achieving a social and economic mobility that they would have been denied at home.

Zentgraf (2002) also observes that immigrant women often evaluate their experience more positively than men do, that has led to the speculation that women view their public - and domestic - sphere status and power as having increased as a result of post immigration employment outside of the home. This study, based on in-depth interviews with 25 Salvadoran women who migrated to Southern California in the 1970s and 1980s, challenges the unilinear, integrationist view that sees immigrant
women's status and roles as changing along a traditional-modern continuum. Immigrant women's experiences and their perceptions of their experiences are in actuality, quite diverse and complex. Though for many, paid employment outside of the home is not a new experience, and the household gender division of labour did not significantly change after migrating to the United States, women did report a sense of empowerment, new found freedom, and self confidence as they negotiated traditional gender roles in a new social and cultural context.

Min (2001), based on a survey and ethnographic research in New York, notes the discrepancy between Korean immigrant women’s increased economic roles, and persistence of their husbands’ traditional patriarchy ideology, causing marital conflict and tension. Husband’s role of provider has been weakened due to social segmentation from mainstream society. Other contemporary immigrant groups from non-European and Third World Countries face lower marital conflict, which arises nevertheless, due to women’s economically improved gender roles.

In a similar tone, Franz (2003) found that Bosnian refugee women adapt more quickly than males in Vienna and New York city, which is largely due to self understanding, and the traditional roles and social position they had in former Yugoslavian patriarchal society. Rather than self fulfilment through wage labour, the women take low skill, low paying jobs decided by their families, more so in New York than in Vienna. Most of the women started working in black labour markets due to restrictive employment policies in the host country. Unlike men, women are non selective and take up any available job. On the other hand, men do not adjust well to loss of social status in both the host countries. For the females, family’s future advancement appeared to be of more importance than their independence.

De-Wenden (1998) notes that despite the increasing and inevitable feminisation in urban immigrant population in France since 1974, research has tended to ignore the role of immigrant women, especially Muslims, like those coming from Algeria. These women act as mediators between traditional culture of sending country and modern ones in host country. As tradition bearers and integration proponents, these women eventually shape a new generation of females far away from the traditional
country of origin, though for the time being, suffering inequality of rights for women in the host country.

Rebhun (2008) examines gender differences in employment status among immigrants in Israel, and how these differences vary across origin groups. Analysis of the 1995 Population Census indicates that, all else being equal, immigrant women exert a negative effect on the activity in the annual labour force. As time elapses, the probability of immigrant women being employed improves, but remains considerably lower than that of both immigrant and native-born men. However, after a few years in the country, immigrant women do close the gap with native-born women. Being an immigrant woman has a positive effect on full-time employment. A detailed analysis reveals substantial stratification by country of birth. Thus, the patterns of employment status for immigrant groups can reflect different levels (single, double, and triple) of disadvantage or advantage for women. The author attaches this stratification to cultural background and social values of country of birth, as well as to economic and religious considerations, not fully indexed by the Census data.

Freidenberg et al. (1988) examine psychological adjustment of female Latin American migrants in the USA, focussing on how changes in employment, marital status, family structure and style affect subjective assessment of well being, using qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Joon and Fu (2008) note that the influx of Russian entertainers and sex workers to South Korea exemplifies complex intersections of cultural and economic factors which fuel international migration of women. This study discusses the role of race and nationalism in constructing the ideal type of Western women.

In a slightly different note, Longhurst et al. (2009) observe that, when people migrate, their visceral experiences of food - the tastes, textures and aromas - can tell us a great deal about their emotional and affective relations with their place of origin. Questions of bodies and embodiment are increasingly becoming a focus for geographers and migration scholars. In this article the authors examine how the visceral can shape (and be shaped by) a range of socio-political relations. They
concentrate on food and eating as a central political issue, and illustrate how a visceral approach can push understandings of migrant experiences. They focus on a group of eleven women migrants from South Africa, Singapore, Korea, Iraq, Thailand, Hong Kong, Somalia, Japan, Indonesia, Mexico and India in their 'new home' in Hamilton, New Zealand. Each of the women prepared and cooked a dish that was significant to them in some way. These women migrants are comfortable in their domestic spaces and largely experience cooking not as a burden, but as an important way of staying viscerally connected with their 'old home'. Creating a domestic space where the body feels 'at home', can help resituate and reconstitute the diasporic subject. This kind of visceral approach is useful for informing the development of social policy, opine the authors.

Migration due to marriage is an important constituent of international female migration and in a study conducted in South Korea, and Kim (2010) observes that until very recently, Korea was largely considered to be a homogenous, racially intolerant country that had little or no experience with large-scale immigration. However, this paradigm is in the process of changing. For the first time in the country's history, large numbers of foreigners are immigrating to work and live in Korea, and many are seeking to become Koreans. In particular, international marriage migrations, especially those of women entering the country through marriages to Korean men, have become common in South Korea. This has given rise to serious challenges within the country. Although conventional ideologies portray Korea as a country of a single race, culture and language, the growing number of immigrants has disrupted this homogenous monoculture. Indeed, there are signs that Korea has reached a turning point, with an increasingly permanent and visible migrant population challenging the country's national identity. This article explores the statistics and trends related to international marriage women migrants in South Korea, particularly in terms of their social insecurities and health-related problems. In addition, some aspects of Korean governmental policies for the social integration and health promotion of these women are examined, and some suggestions are made for ways in which public health nursing and nursing education may be changed in response to the current trends.
In this context it is pertinent to mention that care givers have become important migrants from countries all over the world, specially to developed nations. With the aging of the world's population comes the rising need for qualified direct long-term-care (DLTC) workers (i.e., those who provide personal care to frail and disabled older adults). Developed nations are increasingly turning to immigrant women to fill these needs. Browne and Braun (2008) in their article, examine the impact of three global trends - population aging, globalization, and women's migration on the supply and demand for DLTC workers in the United States. Following an overview of these trends, the authors identify three areas with embedded social justice issues that are shaping the DLTC workforce in the United States, with a specific focus on immigrant workers in these settings. These include world poverty and economic inequalities, the feminization and colorization of labour (especially in long-term care), and empowerment and women's rights. Browne and Braun conclude with a discussion of the contradictory effects that both population aging and globalization have on immigrant women, source countries, and the long-term-care workforce in the United States. They raise a number of policy, practice, and research implications and questions. For policy makers and long-term-care administrators in receiver nations such as the United States, the meeting of DLTC worker needs with immigrants may result in greater access to needed employees, but also in the continued devaluation of eldercare as a profession. Source (supply) nations must balance the real and potential economic benefits of remittances from women who migrate for labour with the negative consequences of disrupting family care traditions and draining the long-term-care workforce of those countries.

Care givers are, however, not restricted to Western Countries only, and are spreading to countries of the Middle East, and their living and working conditions are not always as desirable. In this context, Shah et al. (1991) recount the horrific condition of maids from Sri Lanka, India and the Philippines living and working in Kuwait, in the Middle East.

International migration is an important part of migration in India also, women constituting an integral part of it. A review of the literature on the status of international women migrants in India is thus are presented in the following section.
Section 2.5: Literature on the status of international women migrants in India

Reviewing the literature on the status of international women migrants in India, one is struck by the paucity of the literature on it. Women form an important part of international migrants to India, especially since the Partition of India in 1947, whence a large number of migrants have been continuously pouring into India from West and East Pakistan (present Bangladesh). Partition encompasses a mammoth slice of our history and literature, but as far as women’s voice on it is concerned, there is a deafening silence.

Butalia’s (1998) book provides for the first time, the voices of the women in the history of the Partition. The book is all about silence and speech, memory and forgetting, pain and healing. It is the outcome of a decade of interviews and research, and looks at what the Partition intended to achieve, how it worked on the ground, and in people’s lives. Pieced together from oral narratives and testimonials, in many cases of women, children and dalits (marginal voices that have never been heard before), the work is supplemented by documents, reports, diaries, memoirs and parliamentary records - a moving personal chronicle of the Partition that places people, instead of grand politics at the centre. There are untold stories India has not faced for fifty years preceding the publishing of the book. Each account is a bleeding wound, a tragic novel in itself.

The book is divided into eight chapters, the first is on the beginning, and the second chapter describes the process of Partition. Chapter three, divided into two parts, describes the facts of partition.

In Chapter four, Damyanti Sahgal has spoken to several women, all of whom had a lot of stories to tell. Chapter four is also divided into two parts – Part one revealing hidden histories and part two is on the campaign by Mridula Sarabhai on the recovery of abducted women. Abducted Muslim women were more easily accepted back in their families in Pakistan. Many were married. For the Hindu women,
however, it was alright to come back, but not with a child. The result was mass ‘Safaya’ or being sent to ashramas, set up in Jalandhar, Amritsar, Karnal and Delhi.

This leads to Chapter five on honour, the tradition of martyrdom and honour killing or suicide of the women in the Hindu and Sikh families. The chapter includes narrations by Basant Kaur and Bir Bahadur. Chapter six is on children lost, abducted, killed. No history of Partition hitherto says anything on children especially girl children, and Krishna Sobti describes the whole generation of young girls sacrificed to the Partition. The seventh chapter is called margins – containing the voices of Harijans, Dalits and untouchables. The chapter includes the story of Maya Rani, ‘Blood up to the knees’, and Chapter eight concludes the book.

Akin to Butalia (1998), Menon and Bhasin (1998) have presented through the stories of women and accompanying narratives, the impact of Partition on women in Western India: How they have struggled to put their lives together again and how the women found their place in this land of redrawn boundaries. What was nation to them, and religion, community, and freedom itself? The authors have noted that the abundance of political histories on Partition is almost equalled by the paucity of social history of it. Menon and Bhasin’s work is one of the pioneering feminist historiographies of the Partition of India.

Menon and Bhasin observe that hardly ever and hardly anywhere have women written history. The few who have written, have noted this absence and emphasised the importance of retrieving women’s history through oral sources. This is because women have used speech much more widely than written words. Oral history practitioners have found in interviews and testimonies a rich vein to mine and to surface what has so far been hidden from history. To remember, not only oneself but to someone, takes on a greater dimension (Menon and Bhasin 1998).

Menon and Bhasin’s book is divided into six thematic clusters: violence, abduction and recovery, widowhood, women and rehabilitation, rebuilding, belonging.

The book is divided into seven chapters and the first chapter has the women speaking for themselves on Partition history and the history of the women. Chapter two, as touched upon in Butalia’s (1998) book also, is on the honourably dead,
dwelling on the violence against women in the form of honour killing. Chapter three moves a bit away from this- talking about recovering women across the border in the interest of the nation.

The fourth chapter is on ‘A community of widows’, the missing citizens and widows of Vrindavan. The chapter is enriched by narratives by Gyan Deyi and Durga Rani. Chapter five is ‘Picking up the pieces’, which is on women rehabilitating women. The chapter includes oral interview with Krishna Thapar. The sixth chapter is on ‘Learning to survive’ – and contains ‘Two lives, two destinies’. There is Bibi Inder Kaur’s story- ‘I spread my wings’ and Somavanti’s story – ‘We belong nowhere’. The next chapter, which is on the development of the sense of belonging of the women and their nation, includes the story of Kamla and also that of the Lucknow sisters.

Butalia (1998) and Menon and Bhasin (1998) have confined themselves mainly to Western India, but Bagchi and Dasgupta (2003) focus on the Partition of Bengal in the East, thus filling the gap.

For the first time, the book by Bagchi and Dasgupta (2003) lifts the veil of silence surrounding the Bengal Partition of 1947. The lack of overt public discourse has meant that people outside Bengal have tended to believe that the impact was much less on the people of the Eastern region. In truth, the sufferings, loss of life, livelihoods and of shelter were very real, but of a different nature from the fast moving horror of the Punjab. It was more like an oozing wound that seemed not to heal, rather than a one time clear severance of a limb.

The book is divided into four parts. Part one is an analysis and literary evidence focusing on the gender narrative on Partition, an area hitherto ignored, even suppressed. Particularly poignant is ‘Kanta Tare Prajapati’ / Butterfly on barbed wire by Selina Hossain. Rachel Weber highlights the role of women in the development of refugee colonies in South Calcutta. Renuka Roy’s ‘And still they come’, Meghna Guha Thakurta’s ‘Uprooted and divided’, Urvashi Butalia’s ‘The nowhere people’ and Meenakshi Sen’s ‘Tripura, the aftermath’ are some of the other writings.
Part two contains interviews and first hand accounts revealing the displacement, rape and loss of shelter that women experienced. This part contains Nalini Mitra’s writing on Partition and memories, Sukumar Chaudhuri and Ashok Gupta on the Noakhali victims and Bithi Chakravarty on becoming the bread winner.

Part three contains creative and literary texts, translations of poems by Jibanananda Das and Tashlima Nasreen which give a glimpse of the loss of homeland, of its incomparable beauty which the refugees can only yearn after, and the futility of dividing people.

A translation of a short story ‘Not possible’ by Santosh Kumar Ghosh (Hoina) pinpoints the courage and resilience of women against the conventional cowardly response of the patriarchal society. Other extracts are from the play ‘Natun Yehudi’ by Salil Sen that described refugees on Sealdah Station platform as the new Jews, and from Ritwik Ghatak’s screen play ‘Meghe Dhaka Tara’ (the star hidden by clouds) perhaps the quintessential text on the tragedy of the Partition.

Part Four includes documentary evidence in East is East, West is West – a succinct comparison of the grossly discriminatory Central Government policy to Punjab and Bengal, followed by two letters of the aggrieved MLA’s of East Pakistan belonging to minority community, which suggests why Partition and exodus have turned out to be a continuing process in Bengal. Weaving together the voices of many women and incisive analysis, the book provides invaluable discussion on displacement, rape, loss and why women pay the price. It thus traces the strenuous triumph attained in the crucible of suffering.

The book covers the much needed gap in the literature regarding the Partition in the East. But in this study also, like the previous two books, the trauma of Partition is discussed explicitly drawing on interviews with up rooted women, on diaries, memoirs and creative literature.

Bagchi, Dasgupta and Ghosh (2009) published a sequel to their book in 2009 (Volume Two). They continue documenting and commenting on the Bengal Partition, while foregrounding its impact on women survivors – feminist engagement with retrievals of lost and buried histories of the Partition and its
aftermath. Like the first volume, the second volume draws on several different testimonial categories – creative genres, oral history, scholarly commentary and official archives. Where the present volume consciously departs from its predecessor, is in its concerted effort to represent a range of Bengali subjectivities drawn from both sides of the political border as well as from Hindu and Muslim backgrounds. The conscious effort to present a range of subjectivities created through Bengal Partition – the East Bengali refugee in India, the Muslim Bengali who left for East Pakistan and those of either community who stayed back to create minority population in each new Bengal, make this volume a valuable contribution to those seeking a composite overview of the effect of the Partition in the East.

The book is divided into six parts. Part one consists of five short stories by women authors of India and Bangladesh, translated from Bengali-reflecting gender concerns through their common preoccupation on the Partition’s deep impact on the interpersonal sphere of man-woman and familial relations.

Part two consists of five first person reminiscences by women whose family went through the Partition. Among them, Himani Banerji’s ‘Wandering through different spaces’ and Meghna Guhathakurta’s ‘From Partition to liberation and thereafter’ constitute especially valuable self reflections on counter intuitive choices made by Bengali families in the wake of 1947.

Part three comprises six interviews with ‘Women from the other side’ and Part four presents the screenplay of Supriyo Sen’s docu-fictional film ‘Way back home’(2003). The fifth part discusses different issues with three case study type reports ‘from the field’, including Subhsri Ghosh and Debjani Dutta’s reportage from the camps dedicated to East Bengali Hindu refugee women, Syed Tanveer Nasreen’s account of her fieldwork amongst Muslims in Burdwan district of West Bengal and Anusuya Basu Ray Chaudhury’s reportage of the recollections of Shia Muslim women of Hooghly district in West Bengal, who left temporarily for East Pakistan, but subsequently returned. These three accounts offer a specially valuable microcosm of the diverse experiences, trajectories and decisions that Bengali women underwent in the course of, and beyond Partition and 1971.
Finally Part six reproduces under ‘Documentary evidence’, reports from Government archives dealing with interrelated issues of the abduction, recovery and rehabilitation of women as well as the outbreak and management of communal riots in West Bengal.

A book by Ritu Menon (2004) containing writings by women on the Partition of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh is an important addition to the growing body of scholarship revising and reconstructing the history of two critical moments in modern South Asia: the Partition that resulted in the emergence of India and Pakistan as independent nation states in 1947, and the subsequent carving out of Bangladesh from Pakistan in 1971. The book is a collection of essays and testimonies from women who were forced to migrate across new national borders and women involved in state-sponsored rehabilitation efforts. The volume also contributes to enriching our understanding of Partition as an ongoing history, as several of the contributors contemplate the continuing effects of Partition on the lives of women across the nation-states of contemporary South Asia. Manikuntala Sen’s memoir in this volume encourage us to rethink the complex role of women in this history. Her account of the riots in Calcutta in August 1946, a full year before Partition, highlights the quiet heroism of ordinary individuals who risked their lives to protect neighbors and friends of the other community. On the other hand, she also remembers the involvement of women in instigating and encouraging such violence.

Among the most moving accounts in this collection is Meghna Guhathakurta's ‘Two Women, one Family,’ which follows the author's mother and grandmother in the eastern province of Bengal as their lives were transformed by not one, but two Partitions, in 1947 and then again in 1971. Guhathakurta presents a stark account of the material and emotional costs involved in decisions to migrate or remain within new national borders. She also reminds us of individual struggles for alternatives to communitarian identity politics, and of the enormous personal costs of such struggles.

Several of the essays help to re-create the texture of life in the refugee camps established by national governments to deal with the huge influx of migrants. These
essays vividly capture the difficulties of providing infrastructure, relief, and eventually rehabilitation in the camps, as local officials sought to encourage families and women to support themselves by finding employment or starting small enterprises. Jogendra Singh, who served as the female commandant in one such camp, recollects the distinct needs that emerged from having significant numbers of women residents. As she remembers, while some women were molested when they were residents of the camp, particularly as they began finding employment in the outside community.

Together, these essays provide scholars with a rich and complex picture of women's responses to Partition: as victims of rape; as members of families deciding to migrate or remain; as perpetrators of violence along with men; as targets of familial and national pressure to return to ‘their own’ land and family; and, most importantly, as survivors. Thus Manikuntala Sen remembers the numerous women migrants who bore the burden of supporting their entire families, and of the resultant "awakening" among them: ‘They formed the majority of the working women of West Bengal’.

A book edited by Gera Roy and Bhatia (2008) also seeks to bring out differentiated experiences of the Partition and reveals long term consequences of those displaced from their homeland. There are writings by N. Dutta on transcending religious identities, the Sikh experience in films by N.Mooney, the ‘Partition and transcendental homelessness’ (D.M.Leonard), ‘Constructing post Partition Bengali cultural identity through films’(S.Mandal), S.Kamra on the Partition and post - Partition in fiction, ‘Crossing borders in opposite directions (Kothari and Kothari) and a British soldiers story of the Partition (Nixon and Ghosh).

Partition is an important landmark in the history of India and in its aftermath there has been a huge influx of refugees who have permeated slowly into the country. Even after Bangladesh was born in 1971, the flow of migrants has remained unabated. Women constitute an important part of this flow. However till date, no detailed and in depth investigation has been made on the status of women migrants from Bangladesh to West Bengal and Orissa who came during the period 1971-
2001. This is the gap we have observed in the literature review, and the present thesis is an attempt to fill up this gap. It attempts to make a comprehensive analysis of the status of women migrants who have been coming in a steady stream from Bangladesh to West Bengal and Orissa in India between 1971-2001.