1.1. Introduction

1.1.1 Importance of Central Asia

Central Asian region situated in the heart of the Eurasian continent consists mainly of five former soviet republics – Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan. The region expands from the Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains in the west, China in the east, Siberia in the north to Afghanistan, Iran, and Pakistan in the south. Its geographical location has laid prime importance to the region in international politics. In addition the abundant energy and natural resources of the region have attracted the attention of the world powers.

This region is also regarded as the land of ancient civilizations since times immemorial. It was the crossroad for invaders - a place of historic coexistence of nomadic tribes and settled people and the area of migration starting from the Scythians in the eighth century B.C. to Mongols and Uzbeks in the thirteenth to sixteenth century B.C. The Indo-Iranian tribes, who were the ancestors of Iranian people, started mass migration during the second millennium B.C. towards Caucasus, southern steppes of Siberia and Central Asia, with a rise of animal husbandry, horse breeding and the invention of two or four-wheeled vehicle. The second stage of migration started with the emergence of equestrian nomads that gave rise to ethnic image of Central Asia and led to the first syncretistic civilizations (Harmatta, 1996). Between second and third Century B.C., Central Asia was inhabited by a large number of tribes, called Scythians by the Greeks and Sakas by Persians (Harmatta, 1996). This region at the same time plays the role of a bridge between Muslim and non-Muslim people of Asiatic region, as people of different race and religion started residing here. Starting from the Zoroastrianism, gradually other religions like Buddhism and eventually Islam dominated the region. Sufism - an important part of religious movement of medieval India had its origin in Central Asia (Th. Zarcone et all, 2003).
1.1.2 Rationale

Uzbekistan lying at the heart of Central Asia suddenly emerged along with its neighbours from more than sixty years of slumber and external domination. It got its independence on 1st September, 1991. Its highly structured and rigid political and economic system was hard to penetrate. Its survival depended upon the development of new international relationships and facing the new challenges in the post-soviet era. Nevertheless, being located at the core of the Central Asian region, it plays a noticeable role in the processes of maintenance of balance of powers and creates a base for cooperation and stability in the Central Asian region. The growing significance of Asia, particularly Eurasia in the present world order has made Uzbekistan an important player in the politics of the region. Moreover, it’s huge mineral and natural resources, along with agricultural raw materials place it at a top level among its neighbors (Karimov, 1997).

1.1.3 Scope of the Study

Uzbekistan, located at the core of Central Asia is regarded as the most populous state among all Central Asian Republics. Women constitute more than half the population and nearly half of the total work force of Uzbekistan. Uzbek women were liberated from the age old backwardness by the Soviets. They were liberated from the veil system and encouraged to take active part in the economy (Mohan, 1987). Universal education system introduced by the Soviets helped the Uzbek women not only to educate her but to create a position for her in the society. Industrial as well as agricultural development in this region attracted a large number of women to take part in it. By the time of independence, Uzbek women became quite modern and advanced in their approach as compared to the past. However, the collapse of Soviet Union and the breakdown of the economy had a major impact on the status and condition of women. Women who constitute the major chunk of the population of Uzbekistan take active part in the economy. However, their roles in the economy are mainly concerned with the lower strata and informal sector of the economy (ADB Report, 2004). Their participation in the policy and
decision-making is still not evident. Women are preferred to be associated with their traditional roles of homemakers, which generally go unnoticed and have lesser chances to pursue their higher education. Uzbek women have been guaranteed equal status with their male counterparts by constitution, but they are lagging far behind men in practice. Therefore, the present work attempts to study the role of Uzbek women in the development of their society and economy.

1.2. Area of Study

Uzbekistan is situated between the two rivers, Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya. It extends in a south-easterly direction from the Aral Sea along the northern foothills and lower slopes of the Tien shan and Pamir Alay mountains, all along the valleys of the great Central Asian rivers- the Amu-Darya, the Syr-Darya, Zerafshan and also includes the extensive semi-desert plains of the Kyzyl-Kum (Coates, 1951). Uzbekistan has an area of 447,400 sq. km (http://www.state.gov). It is a doubly landlocked country, which lies between Kazakhstan in the north, Turkmenistan and Afghanistan in the south and Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the east. However, this land lockedness has a number of disadvantages for the country. In terms of maritime activities and external trade, Uzbekistan has to depend on transit countries to access international shipping market. Nevertheless, the location of Uzbekistan makes it an integral part of different Central Asian regional cooperation programmes. Vast energy and natural resources of Uzbekistan help to form an important cultural and commercial link between different republics of the region as it served in the ancient period, especially along the axis of silk route.

1.2.1 Topography

Tashkent, the country's capital is situated at the foothills of Tien Shan Mountain. The Tien Shan mountain system is an extensive and complex group of high mountain ranges (Refer Map 1.1). With the gradual retreat of the sea and increasing lateral pressure, the northern and central ranges of the Tien Shan mountain system formed. It extends from west to east for 2,450 kilometers through both the erstwhile USSR and China. Between the ranges of this mountain system, there are mountain
Uzbekistan

Map 1.1

Source: http://www.freeworldmaps.net
basins that are generally flat and characterized by Steppe or desert conditions. Another mountain system, the Pamir-Alay mountain system, begins on the southern flank of the Ferghana basin and reaches up to China and Afghanistan. Another characteristic feature of Uzbekistan is deserts, as they comprise a considerable area of land in Uzbekistan. Kyzyl Kum and KaraKum are the two deserts of Uzbekistan. The deserts in Uzbekistan are primarily sandy and the colour differs from one another. The colour of Kyzyl Kum desert appears to be red, while KaraKum desert is the one with black sands (www.en.wikipedia.org).

1.2.2 Resources

Central Asian region is mostly an arid region and its fertile regions are made arable by vast irrigation systems. Most of the water comes from the mountain ranges of Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan (and to a lesser extent from Afghanistan) channeled downstream to Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan through the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers (http://www.brookings.edu). However, water crisis has emerged as a great problem in the whole region due to lack of coordination among Central Asian republics over the usage of water (http://enews.ferghana.ru). The conflicting interests of these states revolves around the trans-border rivers as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan need water in the summer for irrigation, while Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan use water in winter for electricity production.

In Uzbekistan, Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya are the two major rivers. These rivers are mainly fed by glaciers. Amu Darya, which was historically known as the Oxus has a length of 2,400 kilometer. This river emerges from the Pamir Mountain and finally discharges into the Aral Sea. Another river Syr Darya, which was known as Jaxartes in the ancient period, emerges from the central region of Tien Shan, as Naryn River and later on it merges with Kara Darya and then onwards it is known as Syr Darya. It flows through Ferghana Valley and finally discharges into the Aral Sea. These rivers are flanked by broad, flat valleys, which are extensively used for agriculture. Other important rivers of Uzbekistan are, Zerafshan,
Surkhan Darya, Qashkadaryo and Chirchik River (Refer Map 1.2). The valleys of these rivers are protected from the cold winds by the mountains and are spotted with fertile oases. Along with these rivers, four huge water reservoirs - Balkhash and Issyk-Kul lakes and Aral and Caspian seas keep the humidity minimum in atmosphere. It results in warm spring rains, abundant autumn downpours and formation of snow, which covers the soil up to one meter and allows the soil to preserve plenty of moisture. Such climatic conditions favour production of wide range of fruits and crops like wheat and barley. However, Aral Sea, which was once regarded as the fourth largest lake of the world, is currently facing severe environmental devastation. Diversion of Amu Darya and Syr Darya for extensive cotton cultivation, irrigation purpose and heavy use of agrochemicals during Soviet rule led to the shrinking of Aral Sea to less than half of its 1960s geographical size (Gidadhubli, 1992). This is considered as one of the gravest environmental crises of the twentieth century.

Uzbekistan has a vast stock of fuel and energy resources, which not only fulfill the domestic demands, but allow the country to export energy resources also. Natural gas was first discovered in the early 1960s in western Uzbekistan region (Gidadhubli, 1987). The basic oil and gas fields are located in the regions of Usturt, Bukhoro-Khiva, Southern-Western-Gissar, Surkhandarya and Ferghana (Karimov, 1997). These resources not only attract foreign exchange but foreign investment in Uzbekistan also. Along with oil and gas, Uzbekistan has significant reserve of gold. Uzbekistan has the fourth largest gold reserves (central Kyzyl-Kum region) of the world and is regarded as the seventh largest producer of gold in the world (Karimov, 1997 and http://en.wikipedia.org). Gold deposits of the Muruntau mine have been recognized as the greatest discovery of the second half of the 20th century in the field of gold (Karimov, 1997). New gold deposits have also been discovered in Adjibugut, Bulutkan, Balpantau, Turbai, Samarkand and Tashkent regions. Gold along with cotton is a major source of foreign exchange earner for Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has also large stock of other precious
Water Resources in Uzbekistan

Source: http://www.fao.org
and semi precious metals like silver, copper, molybdenum, lead, zinc, tungsten and uranium.

At the same time, favorable climatic conditions, irrigated agricultural land and the rich soil of the southeastern part of the country creates good conditions for the production of agricultural resources like cotton, fruits, vegetables and other food crops. The largest and most economically important, the Ferghana basin of Uzbekistan, which lies in the southeast part of the country, is one of the most densely settled areas in the whole Central Asian region. It extends into parts of Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan. This valley is well known for its cotton cultivation, which is commonly regarded as the white gold. The irrigated land of this region also creates suitable environment for the production of grapes, pomegranates, silk and wool. Apart from export of fresh fruits, Uzbekistan also manufactures high quality wines from its fresh grapes.

1.2.3 Economy

Agriculture is one of the prominent sectors of the economy of Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan's economic growth was marked by agricultural production under centralized Soviet economic planning. Extensive stretches of land were brought under irrigation particularly for cultivation of cotton. While Soviet's government emphasis was on promoting cotton monoculture in the republic, however, cotton production has shown a decline as importance was attached to the production of consumption goods like wheat post independence (Ruziev et al., 2007). Cotton exports has gone down from 45% of Uzbekistan's total exports in the early 1990s to 17% in 2006, but even at these reduced levels, Uzbekistan produces 3 times as much cotton as all the other Central Asian countries and Azerbaijan put together (www.wikipedia.org). Apart from natural gas and oil, Uzbekistan produces significant quantity of fruits, vegetables, wheat, rice, potatoes, silk and jute, which not only meet the domestic demand but earn foreign exchange for the country (Karimov, 1997).

In addition to agriculture, leading industries of Uzbekistan include cotton cleaning, textile, machine, gas, precious metals, aviation, oil and agricultural processing (Karimov, 1997). Natural gas, oil and precious
metals like gold are the major source of revenue for Uzbekistan as mentioned above. Moreover, silk is also a prominent industry of Uzbekistan. Major textile and sewing industries are located in Ferghana, Bukhara, Tashkent and Andizan region. Among industrial sector, manufacturing machines and farming machines are growing to meet the industrial demands. Chemical fertilizer, fibre and filaments are some of the important branches of chemical industries in Uzbekistan. Apart from these, light industries, the IT industries are gradually coming up in the country.

1.3. Historical Background

History of Uzbekistan can be divided into two broad phases. First phase deals with the ancient history of Uzbekistan till the formation of Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbek SSR) in 1924 and the second phase deals with the establishment of Soviet power in the Central Asian region till the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991.

1.3.1 Till 1924

Uzbekistan's history has unfortunately led to serious problems such as ethnic tensions, economic, political, and environmental challenges accompanied with an uncertain security and foreign policy. Nevertheless, rich vegetation, favourable climate and geographical location of the Central Asian region attracted foreign conquerors during the ancient period.

The most ancient states that existed on the territory of Central Asian region were Bactria, Sogd, Khorezm, Ferghana, Chach and Ustrushana. The Persian king Darius I, founder of the Achaemenid Empire (521-485 B.C.) annexed the whole region and subjugated these states into his empire (Khidaytov, 1997). Persian domination lasted almost two hundred years in this region. Zoroastrianism, one of the most ancient forms of worship, made its appearance in the western part of Uzbekistan during this period.

In 331 B.C. Alexander, the Great of Macedonia marched towards Uzbekistan and defeated the Persian troops. His campaign intensified
cultural contacts and trade among Central Asian region and outside world. However, process of Hellenisation could not move further than Amu Darya, as it was stopped by some powerful branches of Turkic tribes. They were the Yuechi and Kangues from eastern Turkistan and Altai region (Khidayatov, 1997). Kangues settled down in the Ferghana Valley, Valley of Kashkadarya River, Sogd (now Samarkand) and Shash (now Tashkent). The Yuechis occupied Bactria and formed the Kushan Empire, one of the most powerful kingdoms of ancient times. It stretched from India to Aral Sea and from Babylon to Khotan. Kushan Empire promoted trade along the silk route. Gradually, silk route became the basis of international trade and Uzbekistan became the epicenter of it. Big trade centres like Samarkand, Bukhara, Khiva, Kokand and Ferghana flourished in this region and it became a meeting point of various cultures as well. Chinese, Greek, Roman, Indian (Gandhara) cultures flowed in to this region through the silk route. Uzbekistan accumulated all these cultures and enriched its own culture.

Gradually, a variety of religions also flourished around this region. After the Arab campaigns of the 7th and 8th centuries, Islam replaced Buddhism as the dominant religion, and by the 10th century the area became an important centre in the Muslim world. Arabs promoted the formation of the state of Samanids. Bukhara not only became the administrative capital of the Samanid dynasty, but also emerged as a theological centre for the Muslim world. This dynasty produced eminent and genius scholars like Al-Khorezmi, Ibn-Sina, Al-Biruni and Al-Farabi. Subsequently, Karakhanids, Seljuks and Khorezm Shahs ruled over this territory till Chingiz Khan made his appearance. The Mongols, led by Chingiz Khan, invaded this area in the 13th century and caused great destruction. During this time, migrations of nomadic Turks from the northern steppe areas increased. In the late 14th century, Timur (Tamerlane) created a vast empire with Samarkand as its capital. As he started conquering new lands to his kingdom, he sent the best architects and artisans back to the capital because he recognized the value of cultural preservation in addition to the importance of scientific inquiry. Though his empire did not remain intact for long after his death in 1405, it
left a rich architectural history, much of which still survives intact in Samarkand. After the independence of Uzbekistan in 1991, his legacy was promoted as part of an effort to create an indigenous non-Russian historical narrative. Once considered a brutal nomad, he is now praised as a wise and compassionate and national hero of the country. Babur, another Turkic-Mongol warrior, who took birth in the Transoxiana region, was the father of the Mughal dynasty of India (Chandra, 2003). His memoirs, written in a variant of Turkish, not Persian or Arabic, hold an acclaimed place in Uzbek and Indian literature.

By the 15th century, Uzbeks established several states in this region. Out of these states, the khanate of Bukhara became the most powerful. The khanate controlled the Fergana Valley, the most fertile region of Central Asia. However, new trade routes and modes of transportation around the Cape of Good Hope lessened the commercial importance of the Silk Road. Poor economic condition also made it more difficult to maintain standing armies for indigenous leaders to maintain their influence and expand their empires. Along with it, the Sunni Uzbeks’ strained relations with Shi’ite Iran isolated them from the Muslim world. Invasions from Iran, as well as incursions by the nomadic tribes in the North, weakened the khanate. Thus on the eve of the October Revolution, Central Asian society, particularly Uzbekistan was ridden with various social and economic difficulties.

1.3.2 From 1924 to 1991

Russian forces annexed the entire Turkestan, Bukhara, Khiva and the Steppe region after the October Revolution of 1917. Apart from aiming to protect their lands from possible conquest by the British, who were developing colonial interests in the Asiatic region, Soviets were also keen to consolidate the Central Asian region and construct a proletarian society (Panda, 2005). In 1924, following the establishment of Soviet power, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Uzbekistan (Uzbek SSR) was founded from the territories including the Khanates of Bukhara and Khiva and portions of the Ferghana Valley that had constituted the Khanate of Kokand. Tashkent became the administrative centre of the Turkestan. The Soviet
Government helped the people of Uzbek SSR in overcoming their century's old backwardness with the objective of initiating faster rate of socio-economic growth in this region.

Uzbek Republic became the supplier of cotton for the textile mills of Russia, which were mainly established in the central part of it. To further the growth of cotton cultivation, special emphasis was made on irrigation and transportation. The Ferghana Valley, one of the most important cotton, silk and fruit growing areas of the Soviet Union received much attention in expansion of irrigation. Canals like the Great Ferghana Canal, the Mikoyan Northern Ferghana Canal, and the Andreev Southern Ferghana Canal were built to meet the demand of the textile mills of Russia. Use of massive quantity of fertilizers and pesticides for production of cotton highly polluted water bodies like Amu Darya and Aral Sea, one of the world's worst environmental disasters. Before the demise of Soviet Union, against a national average (former USSR) of 1 kilogram of pesticides used per hectare, in Uzbekistan 22.5 kilograms were used (Mir, 1997). It resulted not only in contaminating the fresh water supply but also affected the health standard of people. Women and children were the most affected because of the poor quality of water and food. Such pollutions not only affected the health of pregnant women but the unborn child also. In 1995, mortality rate among women and children in the Karakalpakstan region became highest among all Central Asian Republics (Mee, 2001).

Soviet Government took special care of rail and road transport for smooth supply of natural and agricultural resources to the central part of the Union. Shallow rivers and the desert ridden zone of Uzbek Republic, led to the construction of rail and road ways. Important roads like Stalino-Kosh Tepe-Sarpi road in the Andizhan oblast and Zerafshan road in the Kermininski region were built mainly to facilitate the transport of cotton to other areas (Report (a), 1955). Construction of Turkestan-Siberian was a landmark achievement of the Soviets. A number of railway lines were constructed in Karakalpakstan, Khorezm and Tashkent region to smoothen the transport of agricultural and industrial raw materials.
Soviets led emphasis on industrial development as well. However, production of non-consumption goods over consumption goods was the main target of the Soviets to satisfy their own needs. Heavy industries like steel, iron, energy accounted for almost half of the industrial production. Along with it, one of the most abundant natural resource i.e. gold of Uzbekistan accounted one-third of the Soviet gold production during 1980s (Ruziev et al., 2007). As the main concentration was on the production of heavy industries, chemical, petro-chemical, fuel, power and machine industries were mostly for domestic use (Ruziev et al., 2007). Economic development along with modernization was achieved a great success in Uzbek Republic during Soviet era.

1.4. Ethnic Composition

1.4.1 Till 19th Century

The territory of Central Asia, which consists of vast expanses of steppe land, desert, semi-desert with fine seasonal pastures led to the development of nomadic cattle breeding. A number of nomadic tribes settled down in this region. Many Greek writers referred to all the tribes of Eurasia as Scythians and the Persians designated them as sakas. These broad classifications were made on the similarity of culture and the way of life of all tribes who spoke Iranian languages (Harmatta, 1996). Achaemenid Empire under Darius I subjugated the territory of Uzbekistan, namely Sogdiana, Chorasmia and the Saka, except the Ferghana valley (Negmatov, 1996). As a result the Iranian speaking people became more localized and stable in this region. However, by the second half of the fourth century B.C, Sakas and Chorasmians emerged as independent states. Chorasmians emerged on the southern Aral part and in the Amu Darya delta, Sakas arose in the lower region of Amu Darya and Syr Darya and upper part of hilly areas of Syr Darya and a northern branch of Sogdians were settled on the left bank of middle Syr Darya (Negmatov, 1996). These tribes intermingled with other tribes of Uzbekistan and it is virtually not easy to distinguish them as their clothing, head gear, armaments etc were similar. However, process of Hellenisation could not move further than Amu Darya, as it faced tough resistance by some powerful branches of Turkic tribes, such as Yuechi and Kangues from
eastern Turkistan and Altai region (Khidayatov, 1997). Kangues settled down in this region but Yuechis moved further and built one of the greatest empires of the ancient period, i.e. the Kushan Empire. Turks gradually inhabited the whole region of Central Asia.

During the 15th century the Uzbeks occupied the area between the lower Volga and the Aral Sea after the invasion of Shaibani Khan Uzbeg (Wheeler, 1964). In the 16th century they came towards south and conquered the settled regions of Bukhara, Samarkand and later of Urgench and Tashkent. As the earlier settlers of this region were Old Iranian elements, located mainly in the valleys of upper Syr-Darya, the Zerafshan and the Amu-Darya, Uzbeks gradually mixed themselves with these people (Pierce, 1960). The Uzbeks formed the Khanates of Khiva, Kokand and Emirate of Bukhara.

1.4.2 Post 19th Century

After the colonization of Central Asian region by Russia, another ethnic element “Slavs” was added to the indigenous local population. “Slavs” mainly comprise of Russian, Ukrainian and Bylorussian nationalities (Sharma, 1979). The Steppe region of Central Asia was occupied by the nomadic Turks. These nomads gradually settled there and lived a peaceful life. In the beginning of the twentieth century, Uzbeks constituted half of the population in the Bukharan Emirate with Tajiks being 31 percent, Turkmen 10 percent, Kyrgyz 6 or 7 percent, and the rest being Arabs, Persians and Bukharan Jews (Mesamed, 1996). In this period Uzbeks maintained inter-ethnic contacts with the neighbouring Tajiks, Kazakhs, Turkmen, Kyrgyz, Karakalpaks and the Bukharan Jews.

Especially in Bukharan Emirate, Uzbeks dominated others in economic and political spheres. Despite the fact that Uzbeks were superior in numbers, Tajik language, also called Farsi language held a stronger position on the eve of Russian colonization. Colonization of Uzbekistan by Tsarist Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century changed the ethnic composition of this region. Migration of the Slavic people was encouraged by the Russian government. These migrants were professionally superior to the native people and thus constituted a
majority of the skilled workers, professionals and specialists. After the
establishment of Soviet rule, noticeable changes occurred in the ethnic
composition of Uzbekistan. The industrial development in Uzbekistan
attracted a large number of workers from central part of Russia, Ukraine
and Bylorussia. At present, the maximum concentration of population in
Uzbekistan is in the south and east of the country. Uzbekistan constitutes
nearly half the region's total population (geographyiq.com, 2002) with
Uzbeks being the main ethnic composition constituting nearly 80 percent
of the total population. Other major ethnic groups are Russians, Tajiks,
Kazakhs, Karakalpaks, Tatars and others mainly include Ukranian,
Uighurs and Germans. The following table I.1 and (Map 1.3) gives a
picture of present ethnic composition of Uzbekistan.

Table I.1

Ethnic Groups in Uzbekistan

(1996 Estimates)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Different Ethnic Groups</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uzbeks</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tajiks</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karakalpaks</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatars</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: www.wikipedia.com
Spatial Distribution of Ethnic Groups (1996 Estimates)

Source: www.mappery.com

Map 1.3
1.5 Uzbek Women

1.5.1 Soviet Period

With the establishment of Soviet power in Uzbekistan, Russians took great interest in the socio-economic development of this region with a special emphasis on women. In addition to economic development, Soviets tried to revive the position of women through spread of education, better healthcare facilities and abolition of old practices like polygamy and child marriages. The Soviet Government also made efforts to get women into the labour force and party structure in addition to their traditional role of mother and wife.

In 1927, the Soviet Government launched a campaign which was named "hujum" in Uzbekistan against all traditional, patriarchal social practices, including the marriage of under-aged girls, bride price and the most visible symbol of oppression i.e. the veil. Education among girls was given importance, as in 1928, 120 girl schools were opened in Uzbekistan (Report, 1972). Eight years of school education became compulsory in the Soviet Union and Uzbekistan was not an exception to it. Higher educational institutes were also set up to further the growth of skilled labour force. The first higher educational institute, the National University, was opened in Tashkent in April 1918. In 1930, a number of pedagogical institutes were established in Samarkand, Bukhara, Namangan, Andizhan, Khorezm region. As a result of which, a new class of women doctors, professors, writers and artists came into existence.

Free health care was guaranteed to the people of Uzbekistan by the Soviets. Special attention was given to mother and child welfare. There were no crèches in the whole central Asian region before 1917. A few orphanages were there in larger towns only. With the coming of the Soviets, efforts were made to set up a large number of crèches in the whole region, which not only resulted in better care for the children but also provided employment to a large number of women. Maternity homes, Women clinics, mother welfare centres were also built to lower down the infant mortality and maternal mortality rate. Diseases like, plague, smallpox and cholera were completely eradicated from Uzbekistan.
during the Soviet era. Establishment of medical institutes in Uzbekistan led to a rise in number of doctors also. In 1940, there were only 30 hospital beds and 3 doctors for 10,000 populations in Uzbekistan, which rose to 43 doctors and 112 hospital beds by 1979 for the same population (Mehta, 1987).

During Soviet era, women constituted a large part of agricultural work force, as the cotton cultivation required high labor force input. Women constituted fifty percent of the total collective farmers in 1980 (Table I.2). Girls were also trained to become agricultural machine operators. However, they constituted less than three percent of the mechanized agricultural workers as they were mainly engaged as manual workers in state farms. Women were also not engaged significantly in heavy industries. They were preferably engaged in light and food industries, but mainly occupied low-skilled jobs as compared to their European counterparts (Lubin, 1981).

Table I.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uzbekistan</th>
<th>Women in Total Collective Farmers (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1970-88)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of women</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Patnaik, 1996

The traditional culture of Uzbekistan exerted strong pressure on indigenous women to avoid occupations where interactions with males would be greater. Therefore, women employment level in trade, housing, community services was extremely low (Patnaik, 1996). Despite these shortcomings, the Soviet rule marked a distinctive improvement over the past not only in case of economic development, but in emancipating women also.
1.5.2 Post Independent Period

Women constitute more than half the population of Uzbekistan (50.1%). Almost half the working population (44%) is also women having to combine at the same time their working obligations with their household duties. Their percentage of participation is almost equal to their male counterparts. Hence their active participation in the economic and social life of the society is an essential factor of the Uzbek society.

The constitution of Uzbekistan guarantees equal rights between men and women (Article 46) and ensures equality before law without discrimination to sex, race, nationality, language, religion, social origin, convictions or individual and social status (Article 18), yet, the socio-economic status of women is diminishing due to the existing patriarchal attitudes, traditional practices and beliefs concerning the position of women and their role within the society.

In Uzbekistan, post independence, the rural women who are an integral part of Uzbekistan’s agriculture have been the most marginalized. The collective farms are replaced by joint-stock farming companies and private farms, which require far less people than the collective farms. Hence most of the rural women fell back to household production. Moreover the demand for female farm laborers varies from place to place depending on the size of the farm, pattern of land tenure, commodity produced etc. Women’s contribution to agriculture is greater in small farms for domestic production rather than for exports.

Additionally, 64 percent of the total population of Uzbekistan lives in rural areas. As agriculture is considered as one of the main occupation of rural Uzbeks, women contribute significantly to it. Rural women are mainly engaged in cooking, house cleaning, taking care of families, looking after livestock, poultry, delivering water for domestic and drinking purpose and agriculture fields. They mainly get covered as disguised unemployed, as their household and domestic chores are not considered as work.

Contribution of women in the industrial activity and trade is comparable with their male counterparts (Refer Table No I.3). Women are still
dominating in social sectors like health, education, culture and fine arts, as these sectors are more convenient for the women to balance their roles as job seekers and that of a wife/mother. However women mainly constitute among the low profile jobs like labourers, agricultural workers and looking after cattle breeding.

Table I.3

Gender Distribution of Workers (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture and Forestry</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and Communication</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade, Catering, Distribution</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing, Communal Services</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare, Sports and Social Protection</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education, Culture, Fine Arts</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance, Credit, Insurance</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sectors</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (in %)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure I.1 shows the domination of women in social sectors like health, education and fine arts as mentioned above. Women are mostly preferred for jobs, where high level skills are not required. Managerial positions occupied by Uzbek women are also quite less as compared to men i.e. 28.8 percent (Statistical Bulletin, 2000-2004). Women are mainly confined to the jobs in agriculture, forestry, healthcare, education, fine arts and culture. In rural areas of Uzbekistan, women and children are mainly engaged in plucking of cotton, as this kind of work does not require high level of technical skills. It is evident that the number of women representation in various decision making policies and posts are very few. Percentage of women’s participation in executive posts is 3.4 % as compared to 96.6% males (Statistical Bulletin, 2000-2004).

The “Quota System” for women which was introduced by the Soviets disappeared with its collapse. However, after December, 2004, the number of women elected to the parliament has increased from 9% to 16%, as the quota system was reintroduced by the Uzbek Government (Statistical Bulletin, 2000-2004). Despite this, the number of women representation in decision making bodies like the cabinet as well as in top positions.
economic positions is nominal. This limits their real power to take part in the decision making policies.

Hence the present scenario of the Uzbek women is different from that of the soviet period. The patriarchal society of the present Uzbekistan does not recognize the role of women in the development of the economy. Women are still held responsible to hold the family values and traditions high. The present situation of Uzbek women is a serious cause of concern. They are still under the garb of social maladies like domestic violence, trafficking, poverty, unemployment etc. They have limited access to markets, productive services, education, health care, and politics (Mee, 2001). Revival of Islam is also an additional factor of subordinating woman's position in the society. They need to recover from these social and economic hindrances and achieve the equal status vis-à-vis their male counterparts.

1.6. Social and Economic Background

1.6.1. Soviet Period

1.6.1.1 Population

Central Asian republics were regarded as the most populous republics during Soviet rule. Increase in population had been very high as compared to other parts of the Union. Uzbekistan as a part of the former Soviet Union also showed a trend of growing population before its independence. Factors such as poor family planning, early marriages, low employment among Muslim women in organized sectors of the soviet economy, and an extremely high ratio of rural population seemed to contribute to the high growth rate among people (Shams-ud-din, 1987). As the level of urbanization was low, it helped in maintaining a high concentration of rural population (Patnaik, 1996).

Table I.4 shows a clear trend of the growing population among the Central Asian people. Uzbeks showed a drastic increase in the population growth during the soviet rule.
### Table 1.4

**Ethnic population of Former Soviet Central Asian Republics**

*(1959-79)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>1959</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1979</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uzbek</td>
<td>6015.4</td>
<td>9195</td>
<td>12,456.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kazakhs</td>
<td>3621.6</td>
<td>5299</td>
<td>6556.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tadzhiks</td>
<td>1396.9</td>
<td>2136</td>
<td>2897.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turkmen</td>
<td>1001.6</td>
<td>1525</td>
<td>2027.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kirghiz</td>
<td>968.7</td>
<td>1452</td>
<td>1906.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Shams-Ud-Din, 1987*

In the Uzbek Republic, main population was concentrated in the rural areas. By 1970, 23 percent Uzbeks were in urban areas where as 77 percent were settled in rural areas as people were mainly dependent on collective farms to earn their livelihood (Shams-Ud-Din, 1987). High population growth is still continuing in Uzbekistan even after fifteen years of independence. A slight declining trend has been noticed over the last few years.

#### 1.6.1.2 Education

Education system of Uzbekistan saw a dramatic improvement during Soviet rule, as Soviets were aware about the need for educating the masses to uplift the socio-economic condition. Soviets under the leadership of Lenin took the task of eradicating illiteracy from the Uzbek society. Under the new education system, Latin alphabets replaced Arabic alphabets, Russian schools replaced the Maktabs. A mass campaign, known as “Kultpokhod” was launched in 1929 to wipe out illiteracy (Gidadhubli, 1987). In just two years, millions of people, mainly peasants were taught how to read and write. Literacy rate which was as low as 3 percent in 1917 became nearly universal in 1950 (Mehta, 1987).
Soviet education system was divided into three parts such as preschool, basic and secondary school and higher education. Preschool system was constituted of crèches (from three months to three years) and kindergartens (three to five years). A large number of Uzbek women were trained as preschool teachers during this period. Next, the primary and eight year secondary education was aimed at giving general education to students. The major curriculum for higher secondary education included technical, vocational, humanities, sciences, literature and military training (Europa World Year Book, 2000). Regarding higher education, Academy of Sciences, Higher Educational Institutes (VUZY) and higher Party schools were responsible for imparting knowledge (Lane, 1985). A number of universities were opened in all Central Asian Republics. Uzbek Republic was the first among all to be blessed with the National University at Tashkent in 1918. Later on, other higher education institutes were opened in Samarkand, Bukhara, Namangan, Khorezm and Andizhan region (Report (b), 1955). In addition to it, vocational and technical schools were set up to produce mining engineers, geologists, hydrologists, architects, chemical and mechanical engineers etc (Report, 1956). Hence, Soviet period played a great role in educating and modernizing the Uzbek society. Uzbekistan is still maintaining the universal access to primary and secondary education since independence, which was inherited from the Soviet period.

1.6.1.3 Health

As healthcare was minimal during Tsarist period in Central Asia, the Soviets laid emphasis on assuring free healthcare to all. Healthcare standard improved after the establishment of Soviet rule in Uzbekistan. Expenditure was increased for the betterment of healthcare service (Wilber, 1969). Measures were taken to control the most prevalent semi-tropical diseases like malaria and other parasite borne diseases. Universal vaccination for smallpox was adopted in Uzbekistan and by 1936; it was completely eradicated (Report (c), 1955). Plague and cholera were also eradicated as well. Anti-tuberculosis institutes were built at Tashkent, Samarkand, Kokand and Andizhan region by 1926, to fight with the prevalent tuberculosis disease. B.C.G. vaccination for children became
universal. However, health services were not efficient in rural areas as compared to urban areas. Hospital beds and doctors were not in adequate numbers to serve the people. Hygienic condition in collective farms was also a cause of concern. Rural people were lagging far behind in getting the subsidized healthcare service, which was provided by the Soviet Union. Nevertheless, Uzbekistan acquired a relatively better healthcare system during the Soviet rule.

1.6.1.4 Economy

Restructuring of Uzbek economy started under the leadership of Lenin. Soviets aimed at transforming the economy of the USSR from a privately owned to a publicly owned socialist system of economy. Therefore, the first step was started in 1921 under the New Economic Policy (NEP). Under NEP, land, natural resources, factories, large state organized agricultural enterprises as well as bulk of dwelling houses in the cities were nationalized (Rumer, 1998).

The next phase of development was marked by the introduction of Five Year Plans (FYPs) in Uzbek Republic by Stalin. Not only agriculture, industrialization was also given importance as well. Irrigation along with transport system was taken special care of. Mechanization of agriculture was introduced to increase the productivity of the agriculture through new Machines and Tractor System (MTS) (Report (a), 1954). Soviet Government gave special focus on cotton production. Uzbekistan had already become the heart of cotton production among the whole Central Asian region from the Tsarist period. Cotton, which was considered as “White Gold”, became the primary agricultural crop and efforts were geared up for its production. Sown area under cotton cultivation was increased from 19 percent (1913) to 50 percent (1989) (Ruziev et al., 2007). Production of cotton increased from 1500 kg per hectare (1940) to 3130 kg per hectare (1979) in Uzbekistan (Mehta, 1987). Uzbekistan’s cotton production achieved a remarkable progress during Soviet era.

In the post world war II period, the process of reconstruction was started in full swing in Uzbek Republic. Mechanical industries became one of the leading industries of Uzbekistan after the war. Industrial goods, textile,
agricultural machinery, chemical and mining equipment, electrical equipments etc were imported by a number of foreign countries (Report (b), 1954). Tashkent, Samarkand, Ferghana were the major industrial centres in Uzbekistan. Apart from agriculture and industry, mining of precious and semi-precious metals such as gold, silver, copper and natural resources like oil, gas and coal became prominent.

Labour and capital productivity of Uzbekistan increased along with Gross National Product till Gorbachev introduced Perestroika and Glasnost (Openness) in 1985. Soviet government promoted decentralization and enterprises had to self finance. As a result of which, unprofitable enterprises were closed down as they had to cover their expenses such as wages, taxes, debt services etc (www.en.wikipedia.org). Initially this new economic system was accepted but gradually it showed negative result. Socio-economic condition of the people became worse and finally Uzbekistan got its independence from Soviet rule in 1991.

There is no doubt that, Soviet rule transformed Uzbekistan from a primitive economy to a modern one. However, the country suffered from a shortage of wide range of consumer goods, which virtually made the country dependent on imports from other countries (Ruziev et all, 2007). Uzbekistan became mainly a producer and exporter of raw material to the central part of the Soviet Union. Similarly highly skilled labour forces engaged in industries were mainly the Russians (Gidadhubli, 2002). Therefore, Uzbekistan has entered in to a new phase after its independence as it is trying to transform the socialist form of economy in to a complete market economy.

1.6.2. Post Independent Period

1.6.2.1. Population

Uzbekistan has emerged as the most populous of all the Central Asian Republics with a population of 27.3 million people in 2008 (http://en.wikipedia.org). Density of population has also shown an increase in trend i.e. from 52.4 in 1996 to 58.6 in 2006 (www.statistics.uz.com). However, the population distribution is unevenly
spread over Uzbekistan. Maximum population is concentrated towards the south and the eastern part of the country, because of the rich and fertile soil. Cotton, silk along with variety of fruits and other agricultural resources are generally produced in this region of the country. Almost a quarter of the total population of Uzbekistan is located in the Ferghana Valley and Samarkand region. Other densely populated areas include those of Tashkent, Andijan, Qashqadaryo and Namangan (Table No. 1.5 and Figure No. 1.2)

**Table 1.5**

*Population Distribution in Uzbekistan (2006)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regions</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Karakalpakstan</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,619,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andijan</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>26,032,30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukhara</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,619,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djizak</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10,412,92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qashqadaryo</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28,635,53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navoi</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78,096,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Namangan</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>23,429,07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarkand</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31,238,76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surxondaryo</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>18,222,61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirdaryo</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78,096,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashkent</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28,635,53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferghana</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>31,238,76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khorezm</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15,619,38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uzbekistan</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>26032300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Dutta*, 2009
1.6.2.2. Education

Uzbekistan has inherited the educational system from the soviets as it still maintains the universal access to basic primary and secondary education, with literacy rate of almost 100 percent. But the percentage of students' especially female enrolment in higher education is less as compared to primary and secondary education. Introduction of tuition fees, inability to afford the cost of study, part time employment during cotton harvesting mainly in rural areas are the major contributing factors behind the lower participation ratio of women in higher education. Women also tend to take up study courses like health, education and arts, which confine them to some particular sectors of the economy. Share of women in vocational education has also decreased from 49 percent in 2000 to 26 percent in 2003 (ADB report, 2004). Table No I.6 gives the picture that a low percentage of women students are in higher education as compared to their male counterparts.
Table I.6

Gender wise Enrolment in Education

(2004-05)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Education</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Secondary Education</td>
<td>48.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary Special Education</td>
<td>47.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>40.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNDP Report, 2005

1.6.2.3 Health

At the beginning of transition, poor economic condition of Uzbekistan had a direct impact on reduction of expenditure related to health care. Nevertheless, the Uzbek government has introduced a series of healthcare programmes with the help of non-government organizations like “Soglom Aviod Uchun”, “Kamolat”, “Ecosan”, “Tashkent Centre for Public Education” etc (UNDP Report, 1999). These organizations promote healthy life style among younger generation at national and local levels. The Government has also taken steps in organizing workshops for the protection of reproductive health of women in the Tashkent, Surkhan Darya and Kashka Darya regions. The year 1998 was announced by the Government, as the “Year of Family” and 1999 as the “Year of Women” to throw special attention to mother and childcare.

1.6.2.4. Economy

Uzbekistan went through a transitional phase as its economy took a turn from a soviet model to a market economy, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. High inflation, low Gross Domestic Product (GDP), increase in unemployment and fall in national income, migration of skilled agricultural and industrial workers as well as highly qualified technical experts such as doctors, engineers and teachers to other countries made the situation
more serious (Ruziev et all, 2007). To improve the economic condition, main focus was given on importing consumption goods and production of goods for domestic needs (production of wheat rather than cotton), as the Soviets paid less attention to the production of consumption goods.

Uzbekistan’s economic reform path can be divided into three phases. First is the period of slow and limited reforms (1992-93), second is the period of accelerated reforms (1994-96), and third is the period of stalled reforms (1996-2001) (Ruziev et all, 2007). During the first phase, state-owned housing as well as small and medium size state enterprises was privatized but government kept a control over energy products and consumption goods to prevent any negative impact on the living standard of people. Large scale privatization was not initiated during the first phase as president Karimov maintained that Uzbekistan would not rush into a drastic reform programmes and privatization, but would rather proceed slowly towards reform and development (Hunter, 1996). However, mounting financial difficulties led the Uzbek Government to seek loans from international financial institutes like IMF (International Monetary Fund). Consumer prices and trade were liberalized, new taxes were imposed, and new laws on foreign investment were enacted. Other reform programmes include, reduction of Government’s support for state-owned industries, free market prices for all industries including energy and food resources and strengthening the ‘sum’ (currency of Uzbekistan) and making it convertible by the end of 1995 (Hunter,1996). Therefore, these changes accelerated the growth of second phase of reform process in Uzbekistan since 1994. During the third phase i.e. from 1996 to 2003 reforms were stalled due to growing restrictions on trade and access to foreign exchange. Moreover, Uzbek Government refused to adhere to IMF’S reform programmes and it led to suspension of IMF’s agreement with it. After 2003, the Uzbek government has given emphasis on agriculture and foreign exchange market to give a boost to its economy. Its official growth rates have been over 7 percent for the period 2004-06 (Spechler, 2007). Nevertheless, high degree of centralization over the
economy, especially with large scale enterprises and the old style of practices of monetary management by banks still come in the way of progress of the economy.

1.7. Civil Society Organization

The growth of women NGOs is one of the remarkable features of the present Uzbek society. Their main objective is to enhance and accelerate the political, economic and legal status of Uzbek women. These NGOs (Refer Annexure I) work at grassroots level with the aid and assistance of international funding agencies and other organizations. A number of international organizations like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO) are providing a helping hand to the Uzbek Government for a better social as well as economic status to Uzbek women. UNDP is playing a major role in Uzbekistan by publishing various reports, organizing seminars, workshops and awareness programmes in different provinces to address the issues related to Uzbek women and suggest measures to empower them. UNDP is a major partner of State Statistical Committee of Uzbekistan, in publishing statistics and data related to women. UNDP is also actively producing its reports highlighting the progress in achieving MDGs in Uzbekistan. UNDP has also provided a helping hand to the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan (apex organization of the Government to deal with women issues) in providing micro-credit and capacity-building support (ADB Report, 2004). Additionally, the other above mentioned international organizations have also been active in providing financial assistance and leadership training to local NGOs and highlighting issues such as poor health condition of women, Spreading of HIV AIDS and human trafficking. Civil society organizations and their role are dealt separately in detail in the sixth chapter.
1.8. Objectives of the Study

The present study has the following objectives:

1.8.1 Assess the levels of socio-economic development in Uzbekistan post independence

1.8.2 Study the women’s contribution in the economy of Uzbekistan

1.8.3 Evaluate the present status of women in Uzbekistan

1.8.4 Highlight the prevailing domestic violence against women

1.8.5 Analyze the governmental initiatives for Uzbek women

1.8.6 Identify and document the non-governmental and international organizations working for the Uzbek women

1.9. Hypotheses

1.9.1 Uzbek women are the major catalysts of change for socio-economic development.

1.9.2 NGOs and Civil Society Organization are instrumental in empowering the women in Uzbekistan.

1.10. Data Base and Methodology

1.10.1 Data Base

The present study is based on both primary as well as secondary sources of information. Secondary sources of information include numerous books and articles relevant for this research work. In addition, secondary sources also include reports and documents of international organizations like, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank and Human Rights Watch. The secondary data base also incorporates government statistical abstracts such as the governmental action plans, Census of Uzbekistan and other government websites and internet sources.
1.10.2 Methodology

A primary survey was conducted as part of this research work in the different provinces of Uzbekistan for a period of thirty days in Nov-Dec 2008. Areas covered under the primary survey include Tashkent city, Ferghana, Margelan, Samarkand, Bukhara and Kokand region. Survey was undertaken with the help of a structured questionnaire from different strata of population, across age and gender.

The below mentioned table I.7 gives us an idea about the areas covered under primary survey as well as the women and men interviewed. It also mentions about the number of organizations including NGOs visited during the survey.

Table I.7

Areas Covered (Field Visit)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas Covered</th>
<th>NGOs Visited</th>
<th>Women Interviewed</th>
<th>Men Interviewed</th>
<th>Organizations Visited</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Age Group Wise)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Below 25</td>
<td>25-50</td>
<td>Above 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bukhara</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferghana</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kokand</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margelan</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Samarkand</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tashkent City</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on Field Visit, (Nov-Dec 2008)
Note: N.A. = Not Available
A number of interviews and discussions were held with academicians, NGO officials and other officials from the Indian Embassy, Tashkent. Interviews were conducted with students of Ferghana State University and University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Tashkent, National University of Tashkent. Besides, a number of women from different sectors of economy starting from small textile factories up to high level officials were interviewed.

A literature survey was conducted on the existing material both at the NGO offices and secondary sources of information. With the help of simple statistical techniques a comparative analysis and findings were deduced. Cartographic and pictorial representation of data has been presented for better understanding.

Certain constraints and limitations were encountered while collecting data. Time frame was a big obstacle during the survey, as the field visit was only for a month. In addition, people were reluctant to reveal things in just one or two meetings. Language was another major hindrance during this survey, as local people spoke only Uzbek. Moreover, in many cases, important Government data required for this study have also been unavailable. Government data or reports on domestic violence and abuse were rare. Local authorities like Mahallas are the main deciding factors regarding such disputes and police generally do not interfere in these affairs.

1.11. Organization of the Study

The study consists of seven chapters

CHAPTER I – INTRODUCTION: The first chapter deals with the background of the area of study highlighting the society and economy of the region from Gender perspective. It states the objective, hypotheses, database and methodology along with the organization of the study.
CHAPTER II - LITERATURE SURVEY: A detailed literature survey and reviews have been presented thematically. The position of the women has been discussed over different time periods. An attempt has been made to study the status of Uzbek women during the Soviet era and in the post independence as well. This chapter analyses a wide range of literature and sources of information regarding present condition and role of Uzbek women in the society and economy and the initiatives taken by the Uzbek Government for their betterment.

CHAPTER III - LAWS, POLICIES AND THEIR IMPLEMENTATION: This chapter focuses upon the various laws, policies and initiatives adopted by Uzbek Government. Indicators like education, marriage, economic participation, have especially been taken into account. In addition the Millennium Development Goals and Uzbek Government's effort to achieve these goals have been focused on. This chapter also focuses on violence against Uzbek women as well as the social norms and customs of the patriarchal society.

CHAPTER IV - WOMEN AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT: This chapter analyses various processes adopted towards various social development and contribution of women into it. Special emphasis has been given towards indicators like healthcare and education.

CHAPTER V - WOMEN AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: This chapter attempts to study the contribution of women’s work in agriculture, industry and other sectors of the economy. An attempt to study the spatio-temporal analysis of the levels of economic development in Uzbekistan has been made.

CHAPTER VI - INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, NGOs AND CIVIL SOCIETY INTERVENTIONS: The sixth chapter highlights the significant contribution of different international organizations as well as non-governmental organizations and civil society, supporting the cause of women in Uzbekistan. Impacts of
interventions from different non-governmental organizations as well as international organizations have been analyzed in great detail. This chapter is mainly based on secondary sources of information, which is further authenticated through sample survey conducted during primary survey.

**CHAPTER VII – CONCLUSION:** The seventh chapter presents the major research findings.
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