CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is an existing task calling for deep knowledge and perspective of investigation. No researcher can think of understanding a study without acquainting himself with the contribution of previous investigations. Information about what has already been done in that particular area is very essential for a researcher. Therefore the researcher should undertake the survey of literature related to the problem because it is an eye-opener for research work. In this chapter, academic journals, conference proceedings, Government reports, books, published and unpublished theses were reviewed.

The review of past work enables us to have a clear picture of what has been done in the particular field in the recent past. This would help in avoiding duplication of work. Many researchers have examined the Public Distribution System and the Women Agricultural labourers in different contexts. This chapter makes an attempt to review some of those works.

DEFINITION OF THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

It is difficult to define the Public Distribution System as a general concept because of contextual nature of this concept. However, one broad definition that can be considered for the present study is as follows: the Public Distribution System is the whole or a part of the distribution system, in principle owned and controlled by the public authorities on behalf of the general public and run by them for the good of the general public or of a
specific group thereof. Generally speaking, the Public Distribution System operates as a complementary system to the private trade which exists side by side.

**Janarthanan (1968)** examined the rice levy scheme in Tamil Nadu and worked out the procedures and methods of procuring paddy and rice up to the level of rationing commitment by the State Government. He emphasized that the levy scheme should be progressive and rational and should also satisfy all the four canons of taxation (canons of equity, ability, certainty and convenience). A scientific assessment of marketable surplus was made for working out the levy rates and the total quantum of feasible public procurement in Tamil Nadu.¹

In his work, **Bhatia (1970)** has covered the aspects of India’s food problem and price control. He has mainly dealt with the food policy without laying adequate emphasis on the problem of the Public Distribution System. He considered that the boards of food policy were intended to safeguard the interests of low income consumers and to ensure that the producers obtained reasonable prices with an adequate incentive for increasing production.²

**Chakaravati (1972)** pointed out in his work that a strong co-operative sector should be developed as a balancing sector between the Private and Public Sectors. Consumer co-operatives play a significant role in the economy of our country to increase the agricultural production. The co-operative sector plays an important role in the protection of the consumers from unjustified trade practices such as hoarding, speculation, underweight, etc., done by
Private retail sellers. He identified the co-operative as an important agency of the Public Distribution System.³

**Singh (1972)** had clearly stated that the Central government had sufficient power to fix the prices of essential commodities under the Essential Commodities Act, 1955. He further stated that the Central government had asked the State governments to take fresh measures to strengthen the Public Distribution System, with a special emphasis on the protection of the vulnerable section of the society.⁴

**Singh.V.B (1973)** has made an evaluation of the fair price shop adopting an empirical method but his study was confined to the functioning of the Public Distribution System in urban areas where owners about the low income were of the view that unless they involved in malpractices they could not increase their income.⁵

**Sinde (1973)** observed that co-operatives have a great responsibility to make the Public Distribution System successful, especially in the present situation. He pointed out the role of society which is to protect the consumers and safeguard the producers. He suggests a very active instrument of government in the consumer co-operatives to strengthen the Public Distribution System.⁶

The study by **Ramamurthy (1974)** examined the levels of poverty and destitution in Tamil Nadu vis-à-vis the trends in the production and distribution of wage goods (cereals, pulses, sugar, tea and cotton) for the period from 1960-1961 to 1970-1971. Ramamurthy emphasized the significant role that the Public Distribution System could play in the
eradication of poverty and destitution in Tamil Nadu after establishing that the Public Distribution System is superior to all other anti-poverty measures.  

George. P.S (1974) analyzed the public distribution of food grains and their income distribution effects in Kerala. He estimated the impact of rationing on the income of the consumers. The results for Kerala suggested that the system was economically viable. Further, more the ration rice, according to this study, accounted for a major share of rice consumption of consumers belonging to the low income groups. 

Bhal (1974) advocated in his study that the operation of the Public Distribution System is to achieve a limited objective of assuring equitable availability of supplies to the economically vulnerable sections of the society. Stabilizing the price of the goods will mainly depend upon the relative stabilization of the price of various inputs and other factors such as freight cost, direct and indirect tax, etc. which go into the determination of the ultimate cost of such finished goods. 

In line with Sinde Doss (1974) emphasized the need for co-operatives and strengthening the Public Distribution System to bring down the price of essential commodities. 

Gulati and Krishnan (1975) in their study gave a brief report which covered all the people under poverty, both from the rural and urban areas on a permanent basis with an assured supply of 100.80 kgs of grains per person per annum. The quantity required to feed such a large number of people had at about 30 million tons in 1973. The estimates of food grains made in this study
were found to be so high that they could not be mobilized either from internal production or from imports or both.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{Gupta (1975)} was of the opinion that the benefits from schemes like the Public Distribution System should not be snatched away by the powerful section. The vulnerable section of the community and the lowest income group including the agricultural labour that care should not be ultimately deprived of their earnings.\textsuperscript{12}

In his study \textbf{Bahl (1976)} inferred that the consumer co-operative societies have a great responsibility to provide a remedy against malpractices, exploitation, higher price and adulteration. He stresses on correct weight, better quality and setting a standard of honest dealing. He strongly recommended the involvement of the consumer co-operatives in the Public Distribution System as they are primarily concerned with economic Programmes.\textsuperscript{13}

\textbf{Batral (1976)} observed that the National Co-operative Development Corporation has played a vital role in the development of the consumer co-operative activity which is a major programme in co-operative sector in the context of the Public Distribution System.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Chandha (1977)} in his research work said that a problem for the Food Corporation of India is that of the turnover of stocks with the new wheat put into the market by Private traders the off-take through the Public Distribution system would go down.\textsuperscript{15}
Jain (1977) was of the view that in India where the population is spread in over 5 lakh villages, the regular supply of essential commodities to the masses was not an easy task. The low purchasing power of the people leading to frequent buying and a steep rise in the price of various commodities, especially the food products, has clearly demonstrated the need for the formulation of a comprehensive Public Distribution System. Today, although the Public Distribution System has improved, still the quality of the commodities distributed through the Public Distribution System is very poor in many states.\(^{16}\)

George (1979) examined the impact of the Public Distribution System from different angles and perspective for the food-deficit state of Kerala. The analysis of the impact of the ration system in Kerala showed the following important beneficial effects (i) improvement in the consumption levels, especially of the Economically Vulnerable sections (ii) contribution to the positive income redistribution, both among the producers and the consumers; and (iii) benefits that the State Government obtains from the Central Government through food subsidies. His study indicated that the gains that accrued in Kerala were much greater than the expenditure incurred by the Central government in terms of consumer’s subsidy.\(^{17}\)

Shubh Kumar (1979) also studied the impact of the Public Distribution System on the levels of food consumption and nutrition of the Economically Vulnerable Sections in Kerala. The study specifically brought out the welfare implications of the scheme. The relationship between the food consumption levels and the levels of ration distribution revealed that roughly
the ration rice contributed to 34 percent of calories and 33 percent of proteins in the diet.\textsuperscript{18}

**Chopra (1979)** identified in his study that the Food Corporation of India (FCI) is actively engaged in supplying food grains throughout the country to the Public Distribution System and the Public Distribution System has never been allowed to breakdown. He found that the FCI played a key role in assuring the availability of food grains to the vulnerable sections at reasonable prices all around the country throughout the year.\textsuperscript{19}

**Saxene (1979)** having explained in his study that the Public Distribution System is a scheme of social justice attempted to reduce the overall cost and provide maximum benefit to the public at large. He suggested that the Public Distribution System in developing economies like India must have a permanent structure in its food policy for providing essential commodities to vulnerable sections of society.\textsuperscript{20}

**Subba Rao (1980)** estimated the food requirement for the state of Andhra Pradesh under certain assumptions. While working out these estimates, he assumed a supply level of 12 ozs. (340 grams) per consumption unit. He concluded that ultimately the benefit of the Public Distribution System is the zero or negligible.\textsuperscript{21}

**George (1996)** has conducted a study on “Public Distribution System, Food Subsidy and Production Incentives”. The objectives of the study were to examine the Public Distribution System and food security for the vulnerable segments of the population. The study also examines the budgetary allocation of food subsidy incurred by the Government of India on a vulnerable section
of society. The study was based on the secondary data collected from the Economic Survey for 1995-96, India’s Agricultural Sectors, and Food Corporation of India’s (FCI) Annual report. The author found that many poorest of the poor people opted for the Public Distribution System. Procurement of food grains were got directly from the farmers or from intermediaries such as traders or millers and were taken up either under the support price obligations or to meet the requirements of the Public Distribution System.22

Madhura Swaminathan (1996) has conducted a detailed study on “Food Security: Policy Option for Tamil Nadu”. The main objective of the study was to examine the problem of the food security in the context of the Public Distribution System, with its focus on Tamil Nadu, and also the study examines the performance of Public Distribution System in Tamil Nadu. The author had conducted a study based on the primary data collected from the cardholders (consumer households). The findings of the study shows that Tamil Nadu is being better managed the Public Distribution System with the better subsidized rice and wheat, and the households benefited more from the Public Distribution System.23

The Tata Economic Consultancy Service conducted a study in (2000) to find out what amount of Public Distribution System supplies were diverted from the system. In the national level it was found that there was a diversion of 36 per cent of Wheat supplies, 31 per cent of Rice and 23 per cent of Sugar. In the case of Rice in Bihar and Assam the extent of diversion was as high as 65 per cent. In the case of Wheat the diversion was estimated
to be 10 per cent in Nagaland and 69 per cent in Punjab. The report found no
correlation between the frequencies of the use of Enforcement Acts and the
extent of diversion. In Northern U.P there was a higher amount of diversion
of Rice and Sugar despite a higher number of raids and convictions.  

Protab Mukherjee (2005) has compiled a study on “Levels, Pattern
and Determinants of food insecurity in Urban India”. The objective of the
study was to examine the overall urban food insecurity index for major states
in India. The study also examined the levels and determinants of urban food
insecurity at the household level. The author has collected secondary data
from National Sample Survey Organization (NSSO 61st round) for 2004-05
and the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3) for 2005-06 and Planning
Commission (2005). The findings of the study shows from household level
analyses also validate the reasons of disparity in urban areas among different
states. The reasons for vulnerability in urban areas were deepened on
households and all policies were address the issues and need to be
implemented properly. States move towards the proper actions to improved
livelihood conditions of food insecure urban areas and effects of actions
would be penetrating in households. Sustainable approach in urbanization
process, there was a need to include all dimensions that relate to food
insecurity scenarios in urban India. The author has concluded that there was a
regional disparity in the overall urban food insecurity among the states and
livelihood and small household size have been come out as important
determinants in explaining nutritional security.
Deepak Ahluwalia (2007) has conducted a study on “Public Distribution of food in India: Coverage, Targeting and Leakages”. The objective of the study was to examine performance of Public Distribution System on the distribution of food grains. The study was conducted based on secondary data collected from the National Sample Survey (NSS), Planning Commission, 2007 and Government of India. The author found that in recent years the coverage and performance of the Indian Public Distribution System on providing food grains was considerably low. And in the North-Eastern region of India the leakages in the free market were facing serious problem, due to the weak targeting of the food programme. On the other hand the popular perception of the Public Distribution System though rural coverage, given the low parameters under which the programme operates, was high comparable to urban coverage.\textsuperscript{26}

Shikhajha and Srinivasan (2011) have conducted a detailed study on “Taking the PDS to the Poor: Direction for further Reform”. The focus of this study was to examine the operation of the Public Distribution System (PDS) for food grains in India. With also examines the benefit and the cost associated with the procurement, storage and distribution of food grains in India. The study was conducted based on the secondary data collected from the Food Corporation of India (FCI) and the Economic Survey, 2010-11. Findings of the study shows that the benefit-cost ratio for the Public Distribution System increases when subsidies are targeted at the poor and indirect benefits are accounted for, even in a scenario where the Public Distribution System food grain is procured at market prices.\textsuperscript{27}
Reetika Khera (2011) has conducted a study on “India’s Public Distribution System: Utilization and Impact”. The objective of the study was to examine the effectiveness of India’s public distribution as a food security intervention for the households. The study was conducted based on primary data from the field survey of 388 households, in the State of Rajasthan. The author has found that access of Public Distribution System was limited and only about one-third of the households had access to the Public Distribution System. In view of ‘utilization’ of public distribution system, BPL (Below Poverty Line) was low in the purchase of food grains. Only 13 per cent of BPL households (sample of 388 households) were purchasing their full quota of grain. And nearly one-third of the BPL households were not purchasing any grain from the PDS. The author has concluded that the access and utilization of the Public Distribution System in Rajasthan state was very low and many households were not ready to purchase from the Public Distribution System.28

FARM WOMEN SECTION

Sikka B.K., (1990) studied the participation of women on the farm and other related activities and their contributions to the farm income on the studies have been conducted with the following objectives:

1. To study the socio economic profile of sample households.
2. To analyze the participation of women on the farm and other related activities and
3. To examine the comparative involvement of men and women on the farm and non-farm activities.
This study observed that, an average female labourer works more per annum than that of a male labourer on various farm and non-farm activities. The contribution of women labourers to the income on the farm was found to be more than 50 percent on all sizes of farms.  

**Ghose (1993)** studied the impact of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) on rural women in the Bibhum district of West Bengal. It was reported that about 33 per cent of the respondents had benefited from various training programmes and their status had increased. But 67 per cent respondents were of the opinion that there no change in their status.  

**Herrmann (1994)** in their study found that in most developing countries women are paid a lower wage than men doing the same task. This apparent discrimination is due to the premise that men have greater productive capacity than women because of differences in physical strength. In the case of introduction of powered machines, the men usually took over the job. This was due to cultural norms and gender discrimination.  

**Alagumani, T. (1994)** made an attempt to analyze the women’s role in household decisions on consumption, production and investment and identified the entrepreneurial potentiality of women in 15 villages in East Madurai, Periyakulam and Thirumangalam blocks. The study revealed that nearly 73 percent of rural women were involved in household consumption. The extent of participation varied from 76 percent in East Madurai, to 70 percent in Periyakulam and about 73 percent in Thirumangalam. This study also revealed the involvement of rural women in decision making and showed that they could be motivated and assisted in undertaking entrepreneurial activities.
Singh and Ram (1996) had estimated the average agricultural daily wage rates for male and female wage workers at the All India level. The important findings of this study were: (i) the female workers’ wages continue to be lower than male workers’ wages (ii) substantial cross-state differences continue to exist in the wage rate of the female agricultural wage workers, (iii) although the overall male-female earnings gap has declined over a period of time, quite large differentials continue to exist across the major agricultural regions of the country (iv) some of the regions with a relatively high level of yield and agricultural development are also characterized by a combination of relatively lower female agricultural workers’ wages and higher male female wage differentials than those of the poor states with comparatively low agricultural yields.33

Jiggins and Janice (1997) in their work on “improving women farmers’ access to extension services” demonstrated that throughout the world both rural women and men, engaged in a range of productive activities essential to household welfare, agricultural productivity, and economic growth. Yet women’s substantial contribution continues to be systematically marginalized and undervalued in conventional agricultural and economic analyses and policies, while men’s contribution remains the central, often the sole, focus of attention.34

Bhuvaneswari and KannanKavitha (1999) studied the extent of women’s participation and their role in the decision making process in both farm and off form activities and the impact of specific programmes meant for increasing the participation of women in agriculture as also the generation of
employment opportunities for them. This study identified the farm women’s active participation in these operations was due to effective skills and knowledge gained through the training organized by the non-governmental organizations (NGOs). It stresses the need for educating and empowering women so that they could take part in the decision making in all farm operations in the near future.³⁵

Dhaiya (1999) studied the participation of women in both farm and nonfarm activities vis-à-vis such participation by men in labour force in rural areas of the low, mid and high hill zones of Himachal Pradesh using sampling techniques. This study identified that the participation of women was consistently higher vis-à-vis men in labourers force in the farm sector because of men’s shift towards the secondary and territory sectors, as also the low literacy rate of women and poor skill levels of women. Social taboos and household work also prevented women from continuing in the primary sector occupations.³⁶

Devadass (1999) found that the major cause for the less significant contribution of women in agriculture is due to the dual role of farm women on the farm and in the home leading to drudgery. This has resulted in both inappropriate and cumbersome methods of work and practices related to household chores of food preparation, fuel collection, water fetching, resource management and child rearing. With regard to dissemination of agricultural technologies, sex bias is often seen reflected in farmers having access to technologies.³⁷
Gunamalai.A (1999) attempted to numerically estimate the visible and invisible contributions of women in rural areas and the impact of women’s visible income on their families. This study was based on the data collected from a random sample of 100 households which depended on the money earned by women in Thoppupatty village which was 30 km. away from Dindigul on the way to Karur. This study identified that with the empowerment of women in earning pursuits, there is a need to create awareness among them about the need for increased saving and investment with the help of voluntary organizations. This study focuses on women empowerment in general and farm women in particular.38

Mishra, P.K. (1999) in his study attempted to examine the extent and proportion of women labour participation in paddy cultivation and the gap in wages between men and women labour in Kymore plateau and Satpura Hill region of Madhya Pradesh. The findings of this study conclude that the participation of women labour was higher in the transplanting of paddy, interculture and harvesting while operations like preparatory tillage, sowing, manuring and fertilizer application, irrigation and threshing operations were performed jointly with men. The results of the study showed that lower wages were paid to women for all the operations as compared to men and this suggested that diversified farming such as dairy, poultry, etc. can help increase the employment opportunities. Thus, this study stresses the need for diversified farm activities in order to improve the employment opportunities of farm women.39

Pugazhendi and Jeyaraman B. (1999) made an attempt to document and evaluate the performance and role of informal groups and self- help
groups (SHGs) promoted by non-Governmental Organization (NGOs) in the empowerment of rural women through participation and employment generation. According to this study poor access to financial support from formal institutional sources was the major cause for the low economic status of women in the rural society. Despite many of the poverty alleviation Programmes for the Development of the Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) and an exclusive Programme for women in 1982-83 as a sub-component of the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) many of the poor women in rural areas continue to lead an impoverished life.

Rajesh R and Kombairaju S. (1999) attempted to understand the role of the technological changes in the economic status of female workers of Kovilpatti and Aruppukottai blocks in Virudhunagar and Tuticorin Districts of Tamil Nadu. Specifically, it attempted to analyse the female labour participation and examined the impact of technological changes on female labour employment in rain fed agriculture. This study found out that the economic status of the female labourers remained far behind compared to their male counterparts in dry farming areas, although the effect of technological changes seem to be favorable to both sexes of the agricultural labour force.

John Christy. R and Thirunavukkarasu. M (2002) analyzed the association between the socio-economic characteristics of farm women and the extent of their participation in livestock farming. The study was conducted in the Villupuram District of Tamil Nadu since it had the highest cattle population and 92.56 of the women population resided in rural areas. Using
multiple regressions this study found that the variables such as the educational status of the female head, number of large ruminants in animal units significantly influenced the average time spent by women in maintaining of large ruminants. In brief, farm women had a close association with livestock farming in the State.\textsuperscript{42}

\textbf{Kumar (2003)} in his study has examined the shifting employment pattern in the rural India. The study revealed a declining trend in rural farm sector employment. With continuing population pressure, small and fragmented agricultural holdings, highly unequal land distribution structure, increasing application of labour saving farm production technologies etc., Agriculture alone cannot provide the ultimate answer for rural unemployment and under employment. Nonfarm as well as off farm activities have backward as well as forward linkages, which can enhance the overall productivity as well as income and employment in rural areas.\textsuperscript{43}

\textbf{Renuka Devi and Lakshmi Devi (2003)} in their study found that (i) the economic status of households with female earners was better than those households without female earners (ii) the contribution of women to family maintenance was more than those of men in both rural and urban areas, and (iii) the proportion of savings was higher in households with female earners compared to men in both rural and urban areas. This study did not include the level of education and this is a major drawback. The nature of employment and such variables are important in studies relating to the status of women.\textsuperscript{44}
WOMEN STUDIES OF THE UNORGANISED SECTOR IN INDIA

A review of the studies of women at large and the women workers in particular is of great significance. The major concentration of these studies is based on the trends of work participation of women whereas their family life, the working conditions and conditions of work have been excluded. But this study intends to explore a wide range of issues ranging from the socio-economic conditions, the family life, and the impact of working relationship of governmental policies on agricultural women labourers and the interwoven relationship with subsidized free distribution of Rice in Tamil Nadu.

Pillai (1952) studied the methods of recruitment and the working conditions of the quarry workers and found that the recruitment was both by direct method and indirect method. 45

Ruikar. M (1953), while studying the working conditions of females in textile, mining and bidi industries of Madhya Pradesh found that out of 1,27,324 workers, 28,200 were females. The employers in the bidi industry had contended that the bidi industry, was a cottage industry, and therefore the provisions set out in The Factories Act, 1978 were inapplicable to them. 46

Kutty (1957) in his study on women labour in cashew industries identified the reasons for females taking up the employment and the ways in which this employment affected their social and personal lives. This study found that there were various social, psychological and economical reasons which motivated them to take up this work. As women labourers they earned more money and added to their resources to raise their standard of living. In addition to this, they were exposed to a complex process and learnt many new
things. Their contact with different kinds of people and their participation in union activities kept them abreast of political and social trends in life. The employment, however, affected the health of their children as they were not able to devote much time to their wards. In many cases the children suffered from various diseases and died.\textsuperscript{47}

\textbf{Janakiram (1959)} in his study on women workers in the Kerala Coir Industry found that the earning of the females was more than the males and many female workers did not complain about the poor working conditions at all.\textsuperscript{48}

\textbf{Chakravarty (1975)} studied the women participation in the agricultural development in Haryana and found that women of this State participated in most of the agricultural work. Their contribution in terms of agricultural operations was between 50-60 percent of the total operations. He concluded that although the women in Haryana had contributed significantly, their situation was miserable as most of them were either agricultural labourers or small or marginal farmer households. The situation of the scheduled castes and the backward castes was even worse both because of illiteracy and low income.\textsuperscript{49}

\textbf{Randhawa’s (1975)} study on the women workers in agriculture reveals that women do all kinds of field labour except driving the plough or the cart. He finds that the general reluctance on the part of men folk to encourage female education was partly because they apprehend that women would not work hard once they get educated.\textsuperscript{50}
Chakravarty (1985) highlights the women farm labour in the rural areas and says there is neither recognition nor appreciation of their role. He underlined the need for society to recognize that women had as much to contribute to the family and the community as their male counterparts. They need more time to take care of the children, their cleanliness as well as the sanitation of the house they lived in.\footnote{51}

Ramesh, Sidhu and Kaul (1985) in their study on the impact of agricultural modernization on women labour in Punjab found that modernization had resulted in an increase in employment per hectare of the cultivated land for all kinds of female labour. This study further found that the wider application of new agricultural strategies had resulted in reducing the differences in the wage rate of men and women. The share of women in agriculture had increased due to modernization of agriculture.\footnote{52}

Malik and Giri (1986) in their study compared the wage and the output of the female labour vis-à-vis male labour. They found that the wages paid to the female labourers for different operations were lower than the males. However, the difference in wages was marginal in operations like harvesting and threshing. They opened in the study that female labourers were paid in commensuration with their work efficiency.\footnote{53}

The 1987 survey of women workers whose report was submitted as Sharmshakti (1988) by the National Commission on Self-employed Women and Women in the Informal Sector, based on 1.5 lakh questionnaires found that 35 percent of the respondents earned less than Rs.3000 a year. The survey brought forth that each women was doing four kinds of work-for insurance,
laboring in the field for wages, working with the family plot, rearing livestock and processing agricultural produce for sale. The work contributed roughly towards 40 percent of the total family income.\textsuperscript{54}

**Kalsi (1989)** analyzed the various anti-poverty and employment generating programme, designed to improve the living and working conditions of women in the unorganized sector and emphasized that these programs had given the women in the unorganized sector an opportunity to participate in productive activities. The main programs reviewed under this perspective were NREP (National Rural Employment Programme), RLEGP (Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme), TRYSEM (Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment), IRDP (Integrated Rural Development Programme), ARWSP (Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme) & Minimum Needs Programme (MNP).\textsuperscript{55}

**SudhaKumari (1989)** examined some aspects of the women working in the unorganized sector in India. She found that the unorganized sector provided employment to the tune of 96.33 percent of women workers. The working conditions of women workers in the unorganized sector was still far from satisfactory. The unorganized sector gave to women only insecure and unproved employment to women. She revealed that work done by the women were not only increase in the employment-but were also discriminated in wage payments. Their wage for the same work was lower than that of the male workers.\textsuperscript{56}

**Omovedt (1992)** observed that the problems of women in the unorganized sector cannot be limited to the economic level only. They also
suffer from sexual assault, violence and their health was affected in specific ways, partly due to their role as child bearer and partly due to their social oppression as women. He has listed their problems relating to remuneration, conditions of work, health, safety, education, sexual exploitation, lack of access to property and caste discrimination. Remuneration was usually given into the hands of the men as the head of the family. Women worked from eleven to fifteen hours if domestic tasks were included. The problems relating to health, safety and education in the unorganized sector were in the form of rape, beatings and murder largely by local goondas, landlords, rich farmers and other men of their community.  

Saba Anjum (2010), in his study concludes that globalization is the cause of shrinking in the organized sector. This has been accompanied by the expansion of the informal sector which is a vast sector with a preponderance of women. This sector is highly insecure and temporary in nature. The activities that women perform in this sector are quite un-motivating in terms of wages and job satisfaction. Women are generally found in low-income activity that barely guarantees survival. This is likely to be in self-employed job or in casual and seasonal paid labour, with low productivity, long hours and little opportunity for upward mobility or for acquiring or improving skills. Their employment in this sector has not helped them gain economically and raise their subordinate status in society. 

Arul Kamaraj (2012) in his research article correlated productivity with the employee’s complete involvement in his job. The involvement of a worker in his job is dependent on his psychological identity. The job
involvement is interrelated with ethics, moral character and a sense of personal responsibility. The organizational conditions are also responsible for influencing the job involvement. His study is meant to find out the job involvement of women workers in match industries as well as to analyze the association between personal and organizational factors with job involvement.59

THE ROLE AND STATUS OF WOMEN IN AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Nath (1968) in his research work studied the work performance of women in the rural areas and the reasons for upward and downward mobility of the women agricultural labourers. Within the two types of agricultural employment, viz., cultivators and agricultural labourers, there is a general pattern of downward movement in the agricultural labourers category. There is upward mobility only for a very small number caused by improved productivity, but the downward trend is quite visible apparently caused by the rising land values and declining ownership. Modernization of agriculture has also displaced women more than men from their traditional jobs.60

Boserup (1970) in his research work discussed certain issues like what happened to women who are socially and economically the productive members of society, when a nation begins to modernize its agricultural and urban life. Her analysis of the farming system in Africa indicated that development frequently causes decline in the productivity and the status of women. Men have come to monopolize the new agricultural methods and use
them for cash crops while women are not encouraged to go to school or even given the chance for doing an agriculture course or extension service.\textsuperscript{61}

Chaudhary (1973) reported that school going adolescent girls participated in crop farm activities only occasionally. The participation of such girls from nuclear families and those from the families of the lower socio-economic status was relatively more.\textsuperscript{62}

Acharya (1979) in his work noticed that the discontinuities in employment along with break in services for bearing and rearing children is the reason why women are unable to acquire skills otherwise acquired by men. This leads to gender specific wage differentials. Wage differentials are also attributed to the voluntary foresight of women in choosing jobs requiring lesser skills as they envisage service breaks and shorter work time for themselves.\textsuperscript{63}

Deepali (1979) stated that the participation of the rural women in agricultural operations varied on the basis of caste, age, education and extension contact.\textsuperscript{64}

Jain (1980) in his work brought out that women in Gujarat are generally associated with animal husbandry activities which are performed at home viz., cattle feeding, milking, fodder preparation and cleaning of sheds. While the men are, generally, engaged in tasks which are performed outside the home, women are given the work of collection of feed fodder for cattle, pasture-grazing and offering water to animals.\textsuperscript{65}
Sinha (1980) opined that technological development in agriculture has resulted in intensive cultivation, occupational diversification, and improvement in the level of living of the landlord. Though, there has not been any significant change either in the wage rates or in the living standard of poor women peasants, there has been a marked change in the level of their social consciousness like family planning awareness and education. The technological development in agriculture has displaced women from agricultural to non-agricultural activities.  

Haragopal, Nageshwar Rao and Kumar Swamy (1984) made a study on “Female Agricultural Labour in two districts of Andhra Pradesh viz., Medak and East Godavari. It highlighted that the female participation in the work in the poor households is quite high. This study pointed out that the caste variable played an important role in determining the decline in workforce. The low payment of wages to the female labour in the rural sector reveals surplus labour. 

Neeraja (1984) in her work pointed out the factors that were responsible for the low-level of the economic position and its possible effects on human life. At the end, he opines that the awareness of the existing socio-economic set up which is exploitative in character alone can draw them together to overcome the socio-economic injustice perpetrated on them.

Bharadwaj and Mohabty (1986) in their study on Women Participation in Indian Agriculture studied about the female workers, their occupational status and other related issues. Their findings showed that in 1961 - 71 there was a negative growth rate in rural female work participation
but showed a positive growth rate during 1971 - 81. But the study could not provide any suggestions to improve the occupational status of rural women workers.  

Neelam Kunwar (1986) in his research work made an attempt to analyze the role and performance of rural women in Uttar Pradesh. The author stated that for a speedy development process, several technologies had been introduced and the ideology behind their introduction was that all the problems of the human beings would be solved by this appropriate application. However, the technology is appropriate for women if it reduces their drudgery, improves their skill and enhances their comfort. This study identified the appropriate technology which would improve the plight of rural women.  

Leele Gulat (1994) conducted a study in 1974-75 where she examined the case of women agricultural workers from Kerala who belonged to the Scheduled Caste in the State and engaged in the cultivation of Rice, the country’s principal agricultural crop. The study concluded that more economically developed villages were associated with a decline in the female labour force participation rate of women (including agriculture labour) and an increase in the wage differentials between men and women workers relative to the less developed villages. Men migrated to the developed areas in search of jobs and displaced the women. Modernization has also meant a decline in employment opportunities for the children of agriculture labourers. Many of these children now attend school. In Kerala, in spite of a reduction in family
size, unemployment is on the increase. Increased literacy and lowered birth rate are found along with increased poverty among agricultural laboures.  

**Hirway, Indira and Roy Anilkumar (1999)** attempted to discuss the two issues, related to rural women viz., (i) how to measure accurately the role of rural women in the economy, and (ii) if rural women are so vulnerable, why they have remained so and what can be done to help them. Two sources of data viz., Census of population and National Sample Survey (NSS) were used to explain the two issues. Their findings were that though women participation in the labour market was much lower than that of males, rural females had a much higher participating work rate compared to urban females, and the rural female workforce shows a much faster increase in the recent decade.

The diversification of rural women’s work was unlike that of men, more in the secondary sector and less in the tertiary sector. There was a clear decline in the percentage of rural women working in the traditional household industries. There was, however, an increase in the share of women workers working in non-household industries in both rural and urban areas. In other words, women had got better access to non-traditional industries. Thus, rural women are in the worst position in the labour market in terms of occupational diversification, employment status and wages.  

**Maithreyi Krishnaraj and Aruna Kanchi (2008)** their study is a significant study that brings to light the ever increasing role that women are playing in the agricultural and allied sectors in India, while the stake of the
men folk has been dwindling day by day. Even though, the study argues, ‘the face of the Indian farmer is a women’s face’, women continue to get discriminated in this sector as seen through the lopsided manner in which their role is viewed both by the public perception and the policy makers. The present pioneering study is likely to trigger a debate about the ‘invisibility of women farmers’ in India and the resultant social, economic, political and cultural complexities—the issues that have largely remained outside the mainstream intellectual discourse.\(^{73}\)

**Prem Dass Gera (2011)** pointed out in his study that, “Agriculture is of prime importance to a country’s economy. In India it is one of the major sources of earning of people in rural areas. With the passage of time agriculture has transformed into a giant corporatized sector, with the coming of contract farming, lease farming, product specific farming and various government schemes supporting the growth of agriculture. With the increasing scales and professionalism there arises demand for qualified professionals who can handle the in and out of the industry. This study is meant for agricultural enthusiasts, students, entrepreneurs who aim at achieving great heights in this field. This study equips you with the knowledge on management of farm, machinery, basic seasonal trends, marketing and agency contracting areas of agriculture.\(^{74}\)

**Chhina.S.S. (2012)** in his work concluded that, “The agriculture produce sector comprehensively explains the geographic dispersion and statistical distribution of household incomes and purchasing power but the
sector itself is under unprecedented stress. India is one of the largest agrarian economies of the world. Its agriculture sector is at the core of the economy’s purchasing power. The agriculture produce sector is the most important component of the Indian commodity sector. This study has explored the various issues related to agricultural labour in India.”

_Ravi Prakash Yadav (2013)_Women constitute about 48 percent of the nation’s population. About 42.30 crore workers are working in India. The share of women in total employment is about 29 percent (12.27 crores) compared to 71 percent of men. Out of 12.27 crores women workers in India, over 95 percent women are in ‘Informal (Unorganized) Sector’ and only 5 percent (61 Lakhs) in organized (Formal) Sector.

In rural areas, amongst rural women worker 87 percent of employed in agriculture – as labourers and cultivators. In Urban areas, about 80 percent are employed in informal sectors like household industries, manufacturing, petty traders and services, domestic work, building construction. They are engaged in ‘Labour Intensive’ tasks. Informal women workers are usually ill paid compared to their male counterparts. They are vulnerable because their work is insecure, irregular, low paid, menial and most casual in nature. They are in hazardous and arduous occupations without any advantage of social security and other privileges. Majority of informal women workers are unskilled.
WOMEN LABOURERS PARTICIPATION IN CROP PRODUCTION AND ANIMAL HUSBANDRY ACTIVITIES

Desai (1984) conducted a study on “Economic Opportunities in Women” found that working women in large cities, particularly in the case of young mothers who often got no help or supportive services such as day care, community, foster day care etc. their difficulties got further eventuated when they had to commute long distances. Under these circumstances the traditional pattern of mutual help by in-laws, friends, and neighbors had been found to be extremely helpful whenever available.  

Lalitha K.Nair (1984) conducted a study on the two roles of women. She found that women’s occupational status had always been closely associated with the home and the family. There was a clear conflict between the socially approved status of women as a house wife and a mother of children on the one hand, and their status as more productive workers on the other.  

In an article "Inter gender involvement in farm, home and dairy operations", Charulatha (1990) identified the involvement of farm women in paddy cultivation, household and animal husbandry activities was more than that of men. Women devoted more time than men in these activities irrespective of socio-economic status. More the time spent by women in agricultural activities, higher were the wages earned by them especially in transplanting and harvesting operations.
Chawhan and Oberoi (1990) in their study conducted on the Gaddi tribal women of Bharman tehsil of Chama district found that the role of the tribal women worker in the farm operation was of immense importance. The proportion of women participation was more than 70 per cent. The participation of women in almost all farm activities except ploughing of fields, marketing of grains, irrigation and application of pesticides and fungicides implied that our technology transfer projects should take care of the remaining major crop production activities where participation of farm women was ensured so as to achieve successful results.\textsuperscript{80}

Rajender Chauhan (1992) conducted a study on women sanitary workers. According to her, for 45 percent of respondents the decisions were mostly taken by their husband, 29 percent of respondents took decisions themselves and of this 26 percent of the respondents took a joint decision.\textsuperscript{81}

Girija Khanna and Mariamma Varghese. A (1997) made a study on Indian women and their role in the family and society. Data was collected from five different zones in India – East, West, North, South and Central. From each zone. The finding was that women were more educated and employed. They were allowed to play a greater part in decision making in the family.\textsuperscript{82}

Badiger (1999) tried to find out the amount of participation of men and women in agriculture and allied activities. The findings revealed that participation of women was cent per cent in removing stalks and stubbles, weeding, picking, sieving, processing of milk, making cow dung cakes, preparation of feed and feeding activities. Majority of the women faced the problem of low wages and lack of training.\textsuperscript{83}
In his research paper Chauhan (1999) examined the contribution of the Gaddi tribal women to both the farm and the household economy. The findings of the study revealed that the contribution of women was more than that of men in the activities performed nearer to their dwellings, which is reflected through more labour days put in crop production, cattle rearing and handloom weaving. The share of women in farm and off-farm income was to the extent of 27 per cent and 12 per cent of the total household income respectively, making an overall contribution of 24 per cent on an average in the household income which did not include their contribution as homemakers.  

Panghal (1999) in their paper studied the efficiency of men and women labour in performing different crop operations in major crops of Haryana. This study found that women labour participation was quite high in operations like transplanting, weeding and picking. Women labour was also found relatively more efficient than men labour in these operations. There was no participation of women labour in irrigation and ploughing operations in all the zones of Haryana whatever be the crops.

Kumar (1999) in his study examined the role of women in the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM) technology in cotton, based on primary data collected from the tribal belt of Kinwat, Nanded district of Maharashtra. The study showed that two-thirds of farm operations in cotton were done by farm women.
Saraswati (1999) conducted a study on the time utilization pattern and participation of women in sericulture enterprise in non-traditional areas of Karnataka in the year 1998-99 with a sample size of 173 farm women spread over Dharwad, Hubli and Kalaghatagitaluks of Dharwad districts. This study evaluated the works performed by men and women in agriculture. It was found that a majority of indoor activities like storage of leaves, feeding, harvesting and cleaning and storing of cocoons was carried out by farm women, while disease management, temperature and humidity maintenance were looked after by men.  

Ghanekar (2000) examined the characteristics of the agricultural labour market and the economic status of the labourers. After the introduction of the lift irrigation scheme in 1980s, the villages exhibited a trend towards increased commercialization and monetisation, structural changes such as increased numbers of female workers as agricultural labourers and increased casualization of the labour force along with the increased individual bargaining capacity of the labourers.  

Bora (2000) in his work has examined the role of farm women in animal husbandry activities in the selected villages of Arunachal Pradesh. The study identified that woman performed eighteen roles. They were fodder gathering, feeding the animals, carrying fodder to the home, cutting and boiling of fodder, watering and grazing of animals, grinding of feed, bathing of animals, cleaning of sheds, cleaning of mangers, grooming, milking of animals, selling of milk, care of new born animals, care of sick animals and vaccination of animals.
Kachroo (2005) in her study has examined the economic contribution of the female labour in both farm and non-farm sectors towards the family income in rural Jammu and Kashmir State. Women’s contribution towards the non-agricultural income was found to be 1.55 and 2.37 percent respectively in RS.Pura and Bishnah. The overall contribution of females towards the household income was 21.24 per cent in R.S.Pura and 27.18 per cent in Bishnah.⁹⁰

Most of these studies on the Public Distribution System found fault with the improper functioning of the Public Distribution System. The Studies like… also recommended measures to root out the defects in the system.

The Present study is significant in this sense that after the subsidized distribution of Rice through the Public Distribution System, a sizeable portion of Rice is misused through different channels and therefore it is made clear that the purpose for which the system was introduced is not met. This research work is methodologically studied in an in-depth way to explore this actual situation of the function of the Public Distribution Service.

To conclude, although women agricultural labours are productive by nature, their work is not recognized by society. Their contribution to the society as well as to the economy is not considered. It is expected that a research work of this type would definitely bring home the real situation of such women agricultural laboures. The overall review of literature on the research problem brought out certain important facts.
This review of literature has covered a number of Indian states both in the North and South on the issue of women agricultural workers and the Public Distribution System separately.

Many studies carried out by scholars like Mallik, Giri, and Sudha Kumari pointed out the wage differentials between men and women agricultural workers. Some of the studies by scholars like Omovedt worried about the longer working hours of women workers.

While reviewing literatures on the Public Distribution System, it was found that the Public Distribution System was not functioning properly.

Researchers like Chakaravathi (1972), Bahl (1976) and Sinde (1973) opined that the consumer co-operatives sector plays an important role in the protection of consumers from unjustified trade practices.

So far no study has related the Public Distribution System with women agricultural labourers and thus the present study has become an entirely new area of interest for research.

Having reviewed a large volume of literature in this area, the present study proceeds to present the real research problem by adopting an appropriate methodology.
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