CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Coverage of Women Engaged in Fisheries

In order to get a better insight into the current issues and future prospects of women fishing hamlets, an attempt is made to study some literature available on fisheries, women related to fishing, community participation, gender sensitivity, women empowerment and the role of media resources. The objective of the review is to identify the gap in research on the topic, which would help in raising issues for a detailed discussion in this study.

Obviously the review of literature will examine all the materials referred to in books, articles, reports, websites and personal interviews. This will pave the way for a discussion apposite to the framework.

2.1.1 Reach, Access and Utilization of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in the World

2.1.1.1 Reach of media resources by fisherwomen in the world

Karen Waterman (1994) brings out the challenges of social communication and its role to empower women in Asia. First of all it deals with the challenges and the problems of communication today. The article says that the communication of the ruling classes drowns out the voices of the majority, particularly the voice of women. The fact of the matter is that they are not voiceless, their voices have been drowned. Further it states that the women need to be brought to the global village of communication by education. The article proposes that every middle-class, literate feminist needs to be constantly vigilant to ensure that they do not impose their communication on other women.

Adeokun, Olowu and Adekoya (2002) sources of Information used by women involved in fish industry in Lagos State, Nigeria in African Journal of Livestock Extension, examine the sources of information available to women involved in fish industry about modern technology and innovation in fisheries in Lagos State, Nigeria. Three hundred and fifty respondents had been selected through
multi-stage random sampling technique. The study shows that 42 percent of the women obtain information through local women’s association. The results further indicate that the mass media are not efficient in information dissemination to the women involved in fish industry in Lagos State. Hence, the study proposes that the government may have to make investments to build the necessary physical infrastructure for media technology so as to reach the poor people.

Cootes (2003) in Young Women’s Participation in International Conferences in the New Information Society, speaks out that the information society, driven by the new ICTs has a dangerous potential to further marginalize young women from voicing their concerns. The author concludes that young women who attend these conferences are likely to be the ones who are part of the ‘correct’ networks and who in general contain knowledge of the issues, and the enthusiasm and capability to work with that knowledge. Therefore it has a greater impact if young women are given a chance to speak about their problems.

Cheunwattana Aree (2003) in Mobile and outreach library services in Thailand brings out effectively that, mobile and outreach library services have an important role to play in bringing books and information to the scattered and often disadvantaged fishing community. A number of well-established and more recent initiatives are described and finally the author concludes that communication in Thailand is very fast and the people from all categories are involved in using the tools.

**2.1.1.2 Access of media resources by fisherwomen in the world**

Corneliae Nauen (1989) states in his article on, Women in African Artisanal Fisheries that woman have a dominant role to play in the post-harvest sector. From landing the fish to processing and selling in the market, women are often in charge. Interestingly, the study notes that the Nigerian fisherwomen in the village of Gabon for example go fishing. However, according to this study females still often suffer lower social status than males and on the average have inferior access to food, formal education and health care. Hence, he suggests there has to be social awareness in the society by empowering women through self-help-group. Efforts must be made to educate men in this regard.
Elson (1992) most women involved in fishing lack access to tools and credit, a voice in decision-making and opportunities to receive training. Women also have less time available to adjust to take advantage of the growing opportunities. Women's time is less flexible because of their family responsibilities; Compared to the activities that women do in fishing, studies on women's access to resources and decision-making is less. It is a well-established fact that women are not represented in community fishing management committees. Based on the wealth of research on women's participation in agriculture, it is anticipated that a similar situation regarding women's access to training, credit and other production resources exists in women's participation in fisheries.

Lilian Fay-Sauni (1998) in Women’s Fisheries Involvement in the Pacific Islands; Specific Reference to Kiribati and Fiji explains the involvement of women in fisheries in the Pacific islands. However, their role in fisheries in their countries have been underestimated and overlooked mainly due to the fact that fisheries are commonly assigned to men. The fishing activities of women are mainly confined to shallower, inshore and reef areas even though some do have accessibility to fish offshore using motorized crafts and canoes. The study concludes that the country needs to provide a sound basis to understanding the consequences of women’s participation and timely contribution in managing marine resources where it deems necessary.

Gallagher, Lynne and Benamrane (2001) have made a special study on the internet and internet society. The paper on, rural access by radio and internet helps close the digital divide, states that convergence of the Internet and broadcasting is a critical priority in developing countries and is already happening in many areas. Strategies to bring the power of communications to rural communities marry the power and reach of radio broadcasting with the power and interactivity of the internet. Radio delivers information to many listeners. The internet enables the community to send back information, as well as to ask questions, request and seek information, and communicate with specialists. Radio will be the last mile that can localize, repackage, translate, and broadcast content from national and international sources. The radio broadcast system planned for Niger and the networks described in this article show the promise of such convergence for rural populations.
Pauline et al., (2002) conducted a study on Media accessibility and utilization by Kenyan rural women. The study revealed that women require only health related and agricultural information because of low literacy and majority of women cannot comprehend radio transmission in English and Kiswahili which are not their vernacular language. Despite rating the radio relatively high (27%) as the leading media for information compared to other media, several social and economic barriers including lack of time to listen to radio programmes were mentioned. The study recommended that alternative media resources like women groups folk media, religious gatherings and exhibitions be promoted and extension service be improved.

Siason (2002) Gender Issues in Small Scale Inland Fisheries in Asia: Women as an important source of information provides an overview of current studies that focus on women in fisheries and discusses the challenges faced by them in bringing gender perspectives into fisheries. The main thread of the argument of this essay is that most Asian women involved in fishing lack access to tools, credit, and voice in decision-making or opportunities to receive training. Therefore the research recommends increasing women’s participation in decision-making in the community and other organization. By improving women’s participation in decision-making bodies’ women’s contribution to fisheries activities, the specific problems they face and their needs would be better highlighted. The second suggestion is to monitor the changes in women’s control over resources and their position in the household. It is important to monitor the impact that fishing activities are having on women’s control over resources and women’s position in the household.

Choi (2003) in Women's Networking through the Internet and Empowerment. Mass media has historically been a male designed and male-operated sector. The study found that without a gender perspective on the issue, noted disparities will continue to develop rapidly and in a direction that is bound to alienate women. The concept of empowerment, defined as value empowerment, internal strength and self-determination, was explored from a feminist perspective. However it concluded that, in terms of networking, women will need to broaden their access to power by joining women’s networks. In this way, women can use the internet as a tool for empowerment and gender equality.
Kiran Prasad (2004) in an article discusses how the mass media are regarded as powerful intervening factors in the process of modernization and social development. The researcher concludes by stating that women’s empowerment is a multi-dimensional concept which includes greater access to knowledge and resources, greater autonomy in decision making, greater ability to plan their lives and freedom from shackles of oppressive traditions and customs. The researcher proposes that women must be encouraged to enter the mass media in professional capacities which will help to restore a gender balance and sensitivity in communication. Women journalists in all mass media must endeavour to identify the gender gap in development policies and programmes and highlight women’s perspectives in their writings. Freedom of communication will be an important resource and the key for self-expression of women’s choices in their development and empowerment.

Meckikronen and Alitivunisea (2005) in Fishing impact and Food security – Gender differences in fin fisheries across Pacific Island countries and cultural groups discuss the issue on how men and women are believed to be different socially and to what extent fishing strategies may affect both the groups. For this study a number of variables from the socio-economic database were selected and conclusions have been drawn. The study very interestingly brings out that fishermen, as compared to fisherwomen, are flexible and able to fish during daytime or night-time, which increases the chances of a higher catch and provides access to a larger target group of fish. Based on the major findings the authors also give some valuable suggestions; that fisheries management strategies need to take into account, cultural and also gender differences in view of their impact, fishing strategies and habitats fished. Also in terms of fishing objectives, fisherwomen across all cultural groups play an important role in securing protein and food supply through finfish for their families and their communities.

Steve Buckley (2008) in ‘Community Broadcasting’ good practice in policy, law and regulation, presents the vital role of community broadcasting shows how it witnesses the courage of coastal people whom he considers as ‘community radio activists’. He suggests that community broadcasting should be recognized in the policy and the law of the land as having distinct characteristics and be guaranteed
fair and equitable access to the radio frequency spectrum and other broadcast
distribution platforms, including digital platforms. According to him, India has put
in place regulatory arrangements for community broadcasting but there has been less
effectiveness in actually implementing them. Political will is also required to
implement legal and regulatory provisions in a manner designed to encourage and
not restrict the growth and development of community broadcasting.

2.1.1.3 Utilization of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in the World

Mallika Wanigasundara (1981) on Women in Sri Lankan Fisheries in Bay of
Bengal News, shows that 8% of women from fishing families did any work
connected with fishing industry or for that matter any income generating work at all.
Apart from their domestic work, they mend the nets. It is found that the quality of
their life needs drastic improvement. The study suggests that specific programmes
have to be directed at them as target group, to raise the income of women and to
improve their living standards.

Nandeesha et al., (1994) Role of Women in Small-Scale Aquaculture
Development in South Eastern Cambodia observes that in small-scale aquaculture,
women have been found to contribute more than men in almost all activities. Most
of the housewives play a major role in fish culture and the success rate and
maintenance of data are better wherever there is any involvement of the housewives.
The study suggests that though women have a big role to play in the profit making
of the aquaculture yet their social status is very insignificant. Hence they must be
given adequate recognition in the society.

Rasanayagam (1999) Women as users and victims of marine and coastal
resources in the south and west of Sri Lanka, explains women’s role in fishing, their
control over income and the degree of independence they enjoy widely. Though
women play an important role in processing fish, they do not generally work on
boats, for this reason women have frequently been overlooked in fisheries
development. The study concludes by stating that requiring further elucidation
however is the extent to which commercialization has altered the gender division of
labour or gender roles in the households and fishing communities particularly along
the coastal areas of India.
Mitter (2001) in Asian Women in the Digital Economy: Policies for Participation, draws on the experiences at grass roots level and on recent empirical research in this field, this monograph documents show the emergence of the digital economy is transforming the lives and work of women in Malaysia and some other countries in Asia. The monograph highlights the opportunities and threats that the information technology presents to women; at the same time it indicates the way the new technologies themselves could be used to transcend the digital divide around gender. The monograph emphasizes the importance of participation of all three stakeholders, the state, the private sector and the NGOs, in a policy framework that explores the use of information technology for women’s empowerment and livelihood. A case is made for an exchange of information among the policy makers and NGOs in the region.

Rana and Choo (2002) Women in fisheries in the European Union gives a brief historical background to the status of women in Europe the authors state that women in Europe were known to have participated actively in the fishing sector as far back as the 19th century. The findings go so far as to say that although women participate actively in activities such as administration, book-keeping, accounts and auctions related to the fisheries sector, only a few are involved in actual fishing. Even in the European Union where women have greater basic human rights than their counterparts from developing countries, the former to a large extent still play an invisible and subservient role and are largely excluded from fisheries management systems. To ensure sustainability of development projects the research strongly suggests that more recognition should be given to the fisherwomen for their role and contribution to the fisheries sector.

Shelley and Cista (2002) in the Role of women in Aquaculture in Bangladesh report that women play an important role in the fisheries sector of Bangladesh. This role encompasses social and economic activities and duties, both within and outside the family, including marketing, processing and also harvesting fishery products. Development initiatives over the last few decades clearly show that sustained improvements in productivity and in people’s lives depend upon the recognition of the crucial role women play in production, processing and marketing in the small-scale fisheries sector in the country. According to them it is imperative that to
accelerate its development initiative, an under-developed country like Bangladesh needs to unleash the full potential of its women. A social transformation must be engineered by changing power relations within the household and society. To achieve this, the Government and its development partners need to re-orient their programmes and implement an effective affirmative action for women.

Haung (2002) in HIV/AIDS among fishers: Vulnerability of their Partners refers mainly to the Asian situation also draws widely from information on Africa and other parts of the world. The study found that fishers were five times more likely to die of AIDS and of other causes than farmers in the same region. According to this study women in the lives of these fishermen find themselves in double jeopardy. Not only they are vulnerable in terms of the meager income they receive from the trade but also the behavioural patterns of their husbands only serves to exacerbate their vulnerability to the infection of many diseases. The study suggests that the fishing industry must do something now if we are to ensure that there will be enough fishers who would take to the sea.

Nandeesha and Tech (2002) in Women in fisheries activities of the Asian fisheries society explores in some depth the kind of impact women are making in the Asian Fisheries Societies (AFS), a scientific society founded in 1984. The paper concludes that the women in fisheries activities carried out so far has had significant impacts and has brought about greater awareness. The study urges that more partnership and alliance among women’s groups worldwide will effectively bring about progress, development and success to the future efforts in gender in fisheries.

Shinagaysay (2002) Attempts to identify potential entry variables in aid of legislation and policy formulation which will address gender issues. The focus was on married women in Philippines coastal fisheries. It is discovered that women in fishing communities generally have low educational status. They come from medium sized households of about six family members, at least one of whom is below six household. They are married to husbands who, with a similar educational profile, do not bring home as much cash income as required for the family to stay above the poverty line. Other able- bodied family members contribution to family
incomes are earned irregularly and at low levels. Married women tend to offer more work hours in the labour market.

Gajjala (2002) in Cyber feminist Technological Practices: Exploring Possibilities for a Women-Centered Design of Technological Environments speaks about the priorities in ICT for skill development for women. The following questions were sought; are there ‘women-friendly’ strategies for access and use of ICTs necessarily allow entry to women from all backgrounds irrespective of race, class, caste, sexuality and geographic location’, and ‘is it possible to devise women-friendly.’ In this connection the study proposes more women must be involved in careers in the communication sector. The continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications-electronic, print, visual and audio – must be stopped.

Aramanzan Madanda (2003) in Commercialization and Gender roles among Lake Victoria Shore fishing communities of Uganda, after having analysed various studies done in the area of fishing industry, the author further suggests that there is a need to revive and promote cooperative fishing and marketing, in addition it would be more economical to make for joint storage facilities, resource pooling and developing synergies. The article insists that there is need for some conscious effort from Government to cater for local community participation as well as for gender equality. The contends that, as issues of culture, the gender division of labour, and the socio-cultural setting seem to have not been catered for policy models, it is important for policy makers to ensure that policy adoption, formulation and implementation take into account the local cultural gender dynamics. This may call for a lot of modification and additional support if the local women and men have to benefit. His clarion call in this research is for a comprehensive education system that encompasses all Ugandan including adult literacy programmes.

Mary Bosco Ebera Amakwa (2003) the article on Marginalization of Women in a Globalized Society the impact of Information and Communication Technology on Women, talks about promoting the improved social inclusion of women in the world of information technology. Globalization and the convergence of various forms of new information technologies have fuelled the wide spread and rapid
promotion of ideas and values at the local, national and global levels in a scale and intensity never before experienced. The author suggests that the latest information technology should involve as many women as possible so as to promote their social status. Globalization must pave ways for this change of attitudes in the developing societies.

Batchellor (2003) in an Analysis of Info Dev Case Studies: Lessons Learned examines the categories of development primarily among the poor in Kenya, the Philippines, Brazil, Colombia, Nigeria, Russia, India, Senegal and Peru. A sector by sector breakdown of the projects was also presented. Eighteen lessons learned were then listed, followed by eight recommendations and eleven guiding principles developed by the department for international development (DFID): 1. Involving target groups in project design and monitoring enables projects to better meet their needs. 2. Particular attention must be paid to the infrastructure requirements, local availability, training requirements, and technical challenges of technologies selected for poverty intervention projects. 3. Telephones and voice mail systems can add considerable value to the communication systems of poor people in the developing world. 4. Internet technology is not a cost-effective choice for many ICT for development projects 5. Supporting ICT projects that reach out to rural areas might contribute more to achieving the MDGs than projects based in urban areas. 6. Existing technologies, particularly the radio and television, can often convey information less expensively, in local languages, and to larger numbers of people than can newer technologies. 7. Information development technology should consider linking television and digital video technology in future ICT-for- development projects. 8. Innovative technology solutions can be used to great advantage in development projects when they respond to user requirements. 9. Neither the comparative benefits of open source software, nor the costs of commercial software licenses, are well understood by implementers or end-users of ICT projects.

Bonilla, Marcelo, Cliché and Gilles (2004) in Internet and Society in Latin America and Caribbean designs to foster discussion about the policies and actions that must be promoted for building an internet culture in Latin America and the Caribbean, based on the principles of social and cultural equity. Also it presents pioneering research that is designed to show, from a qualitative and ethnographic perspective, how new ICTs, as applied to the school system and to local governance
initiatives, merely reproduce traditional pedagogical approaches and the dominant forms by which power is exercised at the local level.

Mitter (2004) in Globalization, ICTs, and Economic Empowerment: A Feminist Critique evaluates the problems of information technology led globalization from the perspective of women from poorer countries. The research also has documented the challenges and opportunities encountered by women. The impact of ICTs on the working lives of these women, for example when they trade on the net, or in the areas of tele-working or call centres, is also assessed. The study proposes including women’s groups in policy dialogues to assess the significance of ICT-led globalization in the developing world. Government must take initiatives to promote Self-Help-Groups and local level community centres to empower women.

Maddox (2007) Literacy in Fishing Communities in Comparative Education, states that there is a widely held view that low literacy rates, and widespread educational disadvantage in fishing communities are a barrier to many aspects of development, for example limiting the agency of women, people’s ability to diversify, to improve their business activities, and benefit from extension advice and so on. This paper examines such claims, exploring the empirical evidence that fishing communities have lower levels of literacy than other occupational groups, and the nature of any observed educational disadvantage. The study suggests that these existing practices may provide a suitable foundation for social and economic development. The paper draws on experience of the Sustainable Fisheries Livelihoods Program (SFLP) in West Africa and from the wider research literature in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Madon (2007) in Telecentres and Development: A Social space approach discusses how telecentres have proliferated across most parts of the developing world. The main thrust of the discussion is to consolidate on the learning that has accumulated about telecentres so far in the world. He goes on to say that these centres aim to provide shared public access to information and communication technologies for meeting the educational, social, economic, personal and entertainment needs of communities in the developing world. Finally, he touches upon some implications of adopting a social space approach to the study of
telecentres and development in the developing countries. This study proposes how the concept of social space drawn from development studies paves the way for a more rigorous analysis of the micro-level social structures which eventually influence the extent to which a telecentre can promote the development of rural communities.

Ahmed and Denaine (2008) in their study highlight the role of women in freshwater prawn farming in Southwest Bangladesh. According to them as prawn industry has been flourishing internationally the demand also increases considerably. Hence, the industry inducts lots of women for the profit motive. Despite several problems involved in the prawn industry in the modern world the research states that the practice of prawn farming has offered an opportunity to increase incomes for farmers and associated groups. To improve the prawn cultivation further the authors suggest that a number of low-cost locally produced ingredients feed industries would help to increase farmer’s profit margins, reduce the negative environmental impacts of snail harvesting and increase job opportunities. Furthermore, research adds that in areas such as seed and feed production may need to be given particular attention considering existing technology, adaptation and development of new technology.

Aneela Babar Shaw and Vieziany (2008) in Mobile Phone Access and Usage among Female Micro-Entrepreneurs in Bombay City Today describe the importance of mobile phones among the middle class beauticians and near-poor tiffin-worker in Mumbai. The study highlights the case of the very poor Koli fish sellers for whom the future demand for mobile phone remains considerable. According to the survey 39 percent of the Koli women live in households with mobile phones but only 15 percent of these had their own mobile phones. Mobile phones controlled by other family members, especially husbands, are inaccessible to the women. Most of them, therefore, reported using public call shops (62 percent) and only 7 percent could use mobile phones owned by another family member. Of those fish traders who do not currently use mobiles phones, 16 percent state that they intend to start using a mobile phone in the next six months. The overwhelming evidence is that even in the case of poor Koli fish sellers, mobiles are perceived to be desirable.
Jese Verebalavul (2009) in the paper entitled SPC Women brings out how the contribution of women in industrial fisheries has a huge impact on the individual fishing companies and nation as a whole. Income generated from artisanal fisherwomen, small business owners, and female employees of the fishing companies has a significant effect on their families and communities. This research has noted that women’s involvement in fisheries in Fiji, although under reported, is having a significant socio-economic contribution towards their households, community and nation as a whole. Therefore, the study concludes by saying that women must be properly educated to handle the market situation.

Zahanzeb Altamas Pasha (2009) in the Impact of ICT on Women in Bangladesh explains how information technology has become a potent force in transforming social, economic, and political life globally. According to the author the uneven distribution of the technologies within societies as well as across the world has been termed “the digital divide” that reflects a division between the information “haves” and “have-nots”. Women within developing countries are in the deepest part of this divide, further removed from the information age than are the men whose poverty they share. If women are not actively present at all levels, there will be new forms of marginalization that could undermine other advances made by women in the world. The study proposes that there must be increase in social awareness and also the government must promote indigenous knowledge through ICT. Under social justice considerations, women should have ‘a fair share’ of the high-status, high paid and influential jobs in this sector. In addition, gender inclusion in ICT is necessary in terms of economic performance.

Meyers (2009) in Radio, Convergence and Development in Africa: Gender as a Cross-Cutting issue speaks about the problems connected to gender issues in media. According to this study media professionals are subject to prevailing social, economic and cultural norms. Their views, outlook and output often reflect these norms. The paper further highlights the cross-cutting nature of gender issues in media practice, production and consumption. When looking at media producers, the most striking gender issue is that the industry is dominated by men. Gender issues are also prevalent in media content, portrayals of men and women and stereotypes.
Harris (2009) in Transforming Images: Reimagining Women’s Work through Participatory Video describes how participatory media support empowerment, dialogue and community building. This study of participatory video involving rural women in Fiji found that women integrated local norms and practices in their video production. They used social capital – relationships and social networks – as a key element. The project highlights the importance of encouraging multi-ethnic or heterogeneous social networks in Fiji. The study urges the government and other NGOs to promote gender-sensitivity programme so as to involve more women in the media industry.

Onyango and Jentoft (2010) in their studies on Poverty alleviation Gender Relationships, and Women’s Social Entrepreneurship in Lake Victoria, Tanzania narrate the story of how a group of women in a Lake Victoria fishing community in Tanzania addressed the poverty status of their community through their agency and social entrepreneurship and, by doing so, also their subordination to men. The study strongly recommends that economic power of women must determine the social status. There must be drastic changes in the economic muscle so as to bring a sociological transformation. This paper also elucidates how Aristotle’s concept of practical wisdom or prudence - is useful in understanding what poverty alleviation and social entrepreneurship requires.

Byerly (2011) in Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media in International Women’s Media Foundation, brings out what is the condition of gender equality in the global news media. This study presents findings from its analysis of news company behaviour in relation to gender equality in staffing, salaries and policies. It finds that men occupy the vast majority of governance and top management jobs and news-gathering positions in most nations included in the study. The study recommends that there be a strong gender sensitization by training women as media owners, director generals and programme producers on gender balanced reporting.
2.1.2 Reach, Access and Utilization of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in India

2.1.2.1 Reach of Media Resources by fisherwomen in India

Leela Gulati (1984) in her path-breaking analysis, Fishing Technology and Women, Part 1 highlights the role of women in Kerala in fishing related activities. She is of the opinion that as a result of technological innovations in fishing procedures, uncertainties produced by ecological hazards have been considerably minimized. In the context of these changes and developments the social status of women related to fishing is discussed. She proposes that women must be empowered to use the modern machinery in the fishing trade. According to her women have not yet learned the modern communication media to the extent of profit making in the trade. Therefore, they must be systematically introduced to the new media for the development of fishing trade.

Waheeda Sultana (2004) the research article on mass media and women’s empowerment in Karnataka discusses the status of women in relation to mass media. According to her all women in Karnataka do not enjoy the same status. The educated and employed women of urban appear to enjoy relatively a higher status than illiterate rural women. The author discusses how community radio project (67%), and print media (54%), has empowered women in Karnataka. The paper suggests that one of the ways in which Kannada channels could be made useful to women would be if women themselves could produce products for various television channels. These products could include programmes on women’s issues, their rights, political participation, job opportunities, discrimination against women and health issues.

2.1.2.2 Access of Media Resources by fisherwomen in India

Cecilia (2000) in Towards a Gender Friendly Information Technology analyses the impact of Information Technology on social and gender relations at various levels and sectors in society. The study concludes that women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, knowledge and access to information technology. This will strengthen their ability to combat negative portrayals of women and challenge instances of abuse of power of an increasingly important industry.
Hector Luis Diaz and Vijayan Pillai (2004) describe the linkages among the three concepts of communication, empowerment and development. The research defines social development as life chances women have at two crucial life stages, birth and death. The paper proposes that more equitable access to the means of mass communication by Indian women will be associated with higher levels of empowerment or self-determination. Such higher levels of empowerment and access to the means of mass communication according to the authors will in turn lead to higher levels of social development for Indian women. The contention of the authors is that the voices of oppressed and marginalized groups such as women must be heard if they are to become empowered. Such empowerment is necessary to avoid cases of distorted development, that is, to avoid situations in which there is extreme poverty and gender inequality in the midst of economic affluence.

Divya McMillin (2004) in her paper addresses the failure of state-controlled television to facilitate women’s development in India. The article provides a feminist critique of the dominant paradigm of development communication that privileges the state and its ideological apparatuses. The author proposes that an integrated approach that normalizes critical thinking in the media workplace, uses innovative and grassroots methods of programming, taps the private sector for programme sponsorship, draws from NGOs for expert knowledge of and access to target populations, and that recognizes the structural support of the state, will bring women closer to utilizing television’s potential for development.

Geetha Kutty (2004) in her detailed enquiry identifies the roles to which Indian mass media can rise, to further the ever-continuing women empowerment process. In conclusion the author proposes that the patriarchal values which parade and rule the media should be challenged so that gender biases and gender-based discriminations can be removed. The media also can educate and inform the citizens about the need of gender sensitivity and the need of women’s empowerment for the development of nation.

Mukerji (2013) in a fascinating work on ICT and Development: A Study of Telecentres in Rural India highlights the importance and usefulness of telecentres in the age of Information and Communication Technology. This book brings out how
the telecentres being supported by the modern communication technology has infiltrated into the lives of rural people. According to the study the telecentres have emerged as powerful strategy for providing shared and mediated access to Information and Communication Technology. The study suggests that particular telecentres have brought about some change, but that is only when there was a match between the services provided and the local demand for particular information services. But the telecentres must be made more independent and user-free by training more people in computer skills.

2.1.2.3 Utilization of Media Resources by fisherwomen in India

Yap (1980) in the Potential Technical and Economic Role of Women in Fisheries, in the Role of Women, in Small Scale Fisheries of the Bay of Bengal has made a survey of women related to fishing particularly the wives of fishermen. As fishing in the sea requires a lot of physical strength, the number of women that go to the sea for fishing is very small. He has suggested that wives of fishermen have to be empowered economically by Self-Help-Group so as to be the potential earning members of the family. He further argues that mechanization of craft and gear has resulted in the economic displacement of many fisherwomen. He goes on to propose that these fisherwomen must be given the privilege of preparing the dry fish so as to sell in the nearby places.

Kurien (1984) in the Marketing of Marine Fish inside Kerala State (ICSSR) has analysed the economic backwardness of marine fishermen and inequality in the assets-holding among them. He has pointed out that these fishermen are exploited by wealthy traders and middlemen who buy their fish at lower rates. He has therefore suggested that if there is a proper method of marketing and distribution by the government the ignorant fishermen would not be cheated. Also in order to develop the social economic status of the fisher folk, there must be regulated markets and provision for chilling the fish so as to sell them for higher rates in the off-season.

Kurien (1985) in his yet another macro analysis on Technical Assistance Projects and Socio-economic Change: Norwegian Intervention in Kerala’s Fisheries Development, has brought out the problems involved in the fishing industry in Kerala. He has examined the problems and trends of catching, distribution and
marketing fish and the impact of change in technology on fishermen. He has further suggested that the state government must take steps to provide livelihood security to marine fishermen.

Pollnac (1988) in evaluating the Potential of Fishermen’s Organizations in Developing Countries points out that in many communities, women take over the function of buying and selling fish. Several occasions, they are only involved at the primary level of buying from the fishermen. There is a division of labour among women related to fishing activities just to keep more of the profit within the family. The study found that women are frequently at a disadvantage with respect to decision-making powers in fishing communities in spite of their significant contribution. He suggests that organization of women into associations or cooperatives facilitated their participation in the development process. He further underlines the need for to be included in Organizational Development Plans.

Madhu (1989) in Fisherwomen of Bay of Bengal succinctly examines the direct contribution of women in the fishing industry. According to the researcher the entire processing sector is highly dependent on women as more than 90 percent of the work force is women in prawn peeling and 70 percent in the processing of other fishery products. He concludes with the suggestion that although attempts have been made to achieve convergence in the sector by various government departments and agencies, the possibilities of social and economic development through incorporating more women in fisheries participation has not yet been successful. More effort is to be put towards filling the gaps in program planning rather than program implementation. The various social, psychological, institutional, and economic issues challenging empowerment of fisherwomen have to be seriously taken into consideration while chalking out new development strategies.

Nair and Kandoran (1990) in Employment Generation for Women in Fisheries, describe the immense potentialities of women in the field of fishery. This short paper describes the efforts made by CIFT (Central Institute of Fisheries Technology), Cochin, in transferring new technology developed by it in net fabrication and the preparation of various nutritious products from low-cost fish, to fisherwomen. The fishing industry is facing a series of constraints such as: lack of
marketing facilities and information about potential markets, scarcity of fish and high cost of raw materials, low prices of finished products in the market, lack of suitable transport facilities, lack of coordination and communication among various developmental agencies.

Srinath and Thangamani (1990) in an extensive research work on Empowering Fisherwomen, published in Women in Indian Fisheries trace the reasons for the marginalization of fisherwomen in India in spite of their important role in post-harvest operations and in net making. According to the research the annual income of a typical fishing household in India ranges from Rs. 2,500 to 3,500 of which 80 per cent is spent on food. Earnings are determined by type of fishing, access to markets, existence of supplementary sources of income and extent of indebtedness. The fishing villages are often remote and inaccessible, and with unproductive lands that are also subject to sea erosion. Housing is inadequate. Basic facilities such as hygienic drinking water and health services are often lacking. For the actual emancipation of fisherwomen, the researchers point out that fisherwomen first need to be empowered with a positive self-image and decision making capabilities which will be followed by the economic empowerment.

Beena (1990) in Problems of Women workers in the Fishing Processing Industry discusses the problems encountered by women in the fishing industry. The activity of prawn peeling in the fish processing industry is labour intensive and is done exclusively by women. Even since this activity was separated from freezing the workers engaged in prawn peeling have been subjected too much exploitation by the employers. Until the mid-sixties all the workers used to be directly employed by the exporters as both peeling and freezing were carried out in the same premises. These problems coupled with the new labour laws and the fear of trade unionism made the activity of prawn peeling less appealing to the exporters, who then proceeded to divest themselves of this responsibility. Henceforth peeling became a separate operation and was either sub-contracted or was got done through small ancillary units. Most of the workers are in the age group of 15 to 34 years and under the control of a male relative. It is found that the employers often use these male relatives to forcibly keep the women workers in check.
Shenoy (1990) in Women in Fisheries Management and Administration, elaborately speaks on how women, who have always played an important role in the fishing industry, are now in a position to play a meaningful role in fisheries management and administration too, with the increasing number of women getting an education or training in this field. The author concludes planning for growth in the fishing industry should be multifaceted, making use of the potential in each person involved. The potential of educated women must be made use of. Many educated women must be employed in in the fishing industry. It is extremely important that in order to obtain any lasting results in achieving a degree of emancipation, women at all levels must be encouraged to participate in developmental activities and decision making processes that involve them.

Cecily (1992) in Fishery Technology Package for the Upliftment of Coastal Women describes the training of 200 fisherwomen in post-harvest technology for low cost fish and shell fish, with financial assistance from government. The study brings out the effectiveness of the cooperative societies formed by trained fisherwomen. 25 fisherwomen with minimum educational qualification from different communities were selected for the study. Proper training courses were conducted for the fisherwomen on how to run cooperative societies efficiently. The study found out that enterprises such as the cooperative societies have not only helped the fisherwomen gain employment, but also provide ready-to-serve produces from raw material that is otherwise wasted. The author suggests that such training schemes be initiated in other states also.

Surya Chandra Rao (1990) in Role of Apex Institutions in Promoting Fisherwomen Co-operatives highlights a number of successful co-operative societies and brings out the role of apex bodies in alleviating problems faced by fisherwomen in India. He proposes that involvement of fisherwomen in cooperatives would give them the necessary institutional structure through which they could be provided credit, transport, marketing facilities and consumer goods. He further adds that a comprehensive human resource development programme for fisherwomen should be a mix of literacy campaigns, cooperative education, health care and family welfare, as well as transfer of technology. He concludes by saying that if fisherwomen are given due priority by the Union Ministry of Human Resources Development under
the umbrella of cooperatives, then one could see the new era dawn in the lives of fisherwomen.

Alagar Swami (1992) in his Empowerment Opportunities for Women in Coastal Aquaculture states that women in India have always been involved in various aspects of marine fish production and marketing. However, he would say that as far as coastal aquaculture is concerned, their involvement has only been marginal. According to the author, any improvement in their participation in coastal aquaculture, as seen in many south-east Asian countries is possible only by bringing about changes in the social norms that are prejudiced against them. He subsequently suggests a few strategies that would help achieve the objective of Indian women realizing their potential for employment in coastal aquaculture such as; formal and non-formal education of target groups of women, creation of awareness of potential for economic upliftment, training programmes for improvement of skills and enterprise development, leasing of water bodies to women, and a more credit policy for aquaculture enterprises by women.

Rajya Lakshmi (1992) Women in Fisheries Research and Education, states that it is commonly acknowledged that women succeed not only in conventional occupations but perhaps are actually more suited than men for jobs requiring patient and methodical work. According to the findings of the study, however, despite the participation of women in the field of fisheries research and education in India right from the inception (1940s) the percentage representation of women has not increased from 1 percent seen in the beginning. This paper makes the following recommendations to tackle most of the constraints and to follow a more sympathetic approach for the utilization of the vast potential of women fisheries researchers and educations: increase the age of recruitment of women; condoning any break in service incurred during maternity; greater involvement of women in team work, as it is well known that teams work much better; and a combined team of men and women scientists will result in better turnover of work.

Nayak (1992) in the keynote address on Fisheries – A Feminist Perspective, discusses on the evolution of the commonly seen gender based division of labour in the fishing sector. This paper raises two questions. First of all on the propriety of the
inferior status generally conferred on women’s role and secondly, on the effectiveness and usefulness of modernization programme in capture and culture fisheries. Finally advocates that both capture and culture fisheries be sustained by what calls as “nurture fisheries”. The author further adds that if developmental processes have to be life sustaining, then stress has to be placed on nature policies that do not bear immediate fruit and are perhaps not profit oriented. Nature policies would mean caring for the natural flow of nutrients and preventing pollution.

Vijayan (1992) in Women Fish Vendors of South Kerala and their Efforts to organize, describes the role played by the women fish vendors in the fish markets of South Kerala. This paper recounts the numerous problems encountered by the fishing women in the markets. According to the female vendors despite their vital role in the fishing industry, not only face various kinds of problems at each stage in their profession, but also have to hold on to the means of livelihood under constant threat of competition from sophisticated sales outlets such as refrigerated booths. The author suggests various collective actions such as Communication Forums, Street Theatre and Community Meetings to increase awareness and focus attention on the need for empowerment of women fish vendors.

Varghese and Nandeesha (1992) in their paper on Employment Opportunities for Women in Freshwater Aquaculture, discuss employment opportunities for women in aquaculture. Women in families can periodically fertilize the ponds with the cow dung they obtain during clearing their cattle sheds, and feed the fish by dumping into the ponds all the spoiled food, left-overs and kitchen refuse. Thus the ponds can grow fresh water fish. This can create a lot of small scale aquaculture units in which women can be gainfully involved. The paper suggests that designing and implementing a number of training programmes exclusively for women are the initial steps to be taken by governmental agencies in India to ensure participation of women in aquaculture. These training programmes should be backed up with support from financial institutions for starting small-scale ventures in aquaculture.

Shet (1994) in Impact of Fisheries technologies on Fisherwomen investigates the role and impact of technologies and media resources among the women related to fishing industry. According to the study traditionally women in rural areas have
remained backward for a long time due to various social, economic and political reasons, which may emerge from illiteracy, traditional conservative values and norms, dominant position of males, superstition, and dependence of women on men and low work participation and discrimination. Women participation in fisheries subject to many peculiarities they are not involved in the production or catching stages, their involvement is only on-shore work. According to him the social media and modern technologies should be made available for fishery women.

Asowa-Okwe (1994) in Dynamics of Women Participation in Workers Struggles in Uganda: A Case-Study of the National Union of Clerical, Commercial, Professional, and Technical Employees (NUCCPTE), established that women with their children were responsible for processing fish. The women worked late hours into the night. According to this study, a woman has no choice as failure to do the job can easily lead to her being beaten up. Yet, the husband has overall control on the proceeds from the sale of fish, although it is she who has worked for it. Usually he takes most of the revenue. The study concludes by stating that women are presented as if they are homogeneous, they have children and are married which assumptions are erroneous.

Prakash (1994) in a Study of the impact of mechanization of fishing on marine fisher folk of Kerala speaks about the impact of mechanization in fishing. According to a case study made in Vypeen Islam in Kerala he states that the locals got the assistance from the State Government as well as under the Indo-Norwegian project. In the meantime the members of higher communities, whose traditional occupation was not fishing, entered the occupation of fishing. As compared to traditional fishermen they are more educated and advanced. As a result, they have taken better advantage of the opportunities for mechanized fishing through external assistance. The study suggested ways and means on how to make use of the mechanization on fishing.

Saradamani (1995) Crisis in the fishing industry and women’s migration: The case of Kerala points out that fishing communities take up jobs outside the State. The study indicates that poverty, indebtedness and unemployment have been the main reasons for the girls to migrate to other states. It is brought to light that in
terms of persons and number of days worked, women are an important segment of the fishing industry. The study also reveals that the young women are in high demand as they are considered skilled. But they are highly exploited, being given low wages and poor accommodations.

Mohapatra (1995) in Empowering Women: a Success Story from Orissa, gives a brief account of the success story of women fish vendors in Orissa, regarding the use of ice boxes to maintain the quality of the fish during transportation from the landing centre to the market. A women’s group was formed, following assistance by the post-harvest fisheries Project in 1995, to manage four ice boxes. Women entered into an agreement with the traders who brought ice into the village, brought fish and carried catches back: the traders would give women ice free of cost and women would ensure supply of fish in good condition. The study proved that women left to themselves do greater and more effective work in the fish trade and the author suggests that more of NGOs must empower women in this trade.

Baral (1996) in Status Gap: Fisherwomen in Transition discuss the gradual changes taking place in the life of fisherwomen of South Orissa. The study analyses the problems connected to school going boys and girls from the fishing community. The study states how they are now inclined to drift away from their traditional belief and practices and seize upon new opportunities. The study further notes on how fisherwomen have begun to move higher in social status though their rise to equality will be a long haul. The study recommends that there must be more educational institutions to raise the standard of women and girl children.

Tripathy and Patnaik (1996) in Socio-economic profile of fisherwomen community of Krushnaprasad block Orissa who depend on chilika the largest brackish water lagoon of Asia. The study depicts that the moneylenders and fish traders exploit the simple and illiterate households through multifarious ways. This field study shows that fisherwomen community constituting 52% of the total population with 20% literacy represent the most deprived segment of the society. The study narrates the sad story that several women and children die unexpectedly without health care and proper nourishment.
Aleyamma, Nalini Nayak, Gracy, Mercy Alexander and Alphonsa (1997) in Women First Report of the Women in Fisheries Programme of ICSF in India narrate the significant role played by the fishing women in Indian states. The study recommends that in the context of countries like India, where industrial development is not able to engage the large army of surplus labour, and where over half the population is forced to live below the poverty line, the numerous outlets for employment in the artisanal sector should be noted and creatively integrated into the economy. In this regard the authors call for a need to employ a creative approach to planning, which will be based more on the nature of the resources and artisanal skills of the local population, rather than on macro-plan, which demarcates the areas of operation of the artisanal and modern sectors.

Tewari, Parekh and Saha (1998) in Occupational Workload of Fisherwomen of India, made a study of fisherwomen in India with a group of 60 fisherwomen, aged 20 to 50 years to evaluate their occupational workloads. Of the eight activities involved in fish handling, only four, viz., sorting, washing, drying, and selling, which are most frequently carried out by the fisherwomen, were selected. The heart rate responses and rating of perceived exertion (RPE) were used as measures of occupational workload. A significant influence of age and body weight on the physiological workload was observed, being negatively correlated with age and positively with weight.

Sahu and Pradhan (1998) in Fisheries Cooperatives in Orissa: A case-study of financing beach landing crafts in Ganjam District (Orissa) have examined the credit and marketing aspect of fisheries cooperatives in Ganjam District of Orissa. The study reveals that marketing structure is not conducive to the fishermen’s interest and is adversely affecting them due to exploitation of middle-men. The study suggests that the problem of marketing with the predetermined traders aggregates the exploitation of the fishermen. For this some kind of institutional arrangement of consumption loan during the lean period is necessary to make the fishermen free from clutches of fish traders and money lenders. A well-directed credit marketing linkage with institution support involving the fishermen community is needed for the sustainable development of fishermen.
Supriya Bala (1999) in her research study Economics of Marine Fisheries in Orissa has examined the economical aspect of marine fisheries mainly on production, consumption and export trend of marine fisheries in the State of Orissa. She has remarked that the catch of fish in the offshore area exceeded the maximum sustainable yield while in the deep sea fishing it is far below and underexploited. The production of marine fisheries increased tremendously during 1988-1998 but its consumption has been declining in proportion to consumption of fresh water fish in Orissa. The study further reveals that the state enterprise in the marine fisheries has commercially failed whereas the private enterprises are prospering with 88 percent contribution to production and 100 percent contribution in case of exports.

Gopakumar (1999) in his study Fish as a Source of Employment and food for youth to fight hunger examines fisheries as a potential source of employment and food. While highlighting the potentiality of the fishery sector, the author analyses that in some of the Asian countries fish supplies 35-50% of animal protein. According to his study a large amount of fish potential is yet to be tapped. Fisheries sector holds the potential for an additional 6.0 million men and women employment if tool potential is exploited.

Bastani (2000) in Muslim Women On-Line highlights that, on-line communication is a new way of building and maintaining human relationships. Geographically dispersed individuals are able to communicate at a speed and cost superior to telephone, mail, and face-to-face meetings. An examination was carried out of online interaction among a particular group of Muslim women, those taking part in the Muslim women network, and the kinds of support they provide online. Both participant observation and interviews indicate that members who are socially and geographically isolated and live away from Muslim communities attempt to gain more information and support online. These women are among the ‘active’ members and look for more face to face and off-line interaction to reduce their feelings of isolation. Other types of support which these Muslim women provide online are also explored.

Pandey and Mishra (2000) in Cooperatives and fisheries Development (with special reference to districts of Faizabad, Ambedkar Nagar, discuss the role of
cooperatives in the development of fisheries in the Faizabad and Ambedkar Nagar District of Uttar Pradesh, they present that fishery cooperatives are destined to play an important role in enhancing the fish production and socio economic conditions of the fisherman. Future growth in this sector will depend largely upon what happens to the demand for selected fishery products relative to the demand for protein sources, and on relative production costs.

Narayanakumar et al., (2000) in Socio-Economic Analysis of Marine Fisherwomen in India: discuss the changes that have been brought about by the mechanization of fishing industry in terms of income and employment generation and investment on fishing equipment. The study points out that the marine fisherwomen in India, in general are socially and economically backward. Hence, any innovation in marine fisheries including new technologies besides increasing the yield from capture and culture sector should be economically and technically efficient and socially acceptable. The study suggests that any sort of technological innovation, financial scheme or management practice needs to be analysed to assess its socio-economic, environmental and ecological impact such as family size, age structure, employment potentials, education and living standards of fishermen and this will help identify the constraints obstructing the realization of full potential of development schemes and adoption of new technologies.

Klausen (2001) in Kerala Fishermen and Indo-Norwegian Pilot Project brings out the results of his study conducted in two fishing villages in Kerala belonging to Latin Rite Christians and traditional Hindus. The equal measure of help given by the Norwegian Government has highly helped the Latin Rite Christians than the Hindu group. This differential impact according to him was due to the fact that the Latin Rite Christians are relatively more educated, more conscious and economically better off and that they have the capacity and aptitude for taking risks in making substantial investments in modern fishing. Therefore, he has proposed that there must be more formal and informal method of educating the fishermen for a better investment and development of the trade.

Arundhati (2001) in Common Property Resource Management: Gender, Equity and Participation – A Case Study of the Fish Workers of Kerala, gives an
elaborate survey and has analysed the problems faced by women related to fishing in small scale fisheries sector. According to her women are most deprived in the challenging fishery industry due to their very little occupational mobility. Women face more constraints, including credit and finance problems, a lack of training, inadequate markets and transport problems. She brings out ways and means to handle these problems in order to recognize the role played by women in the fishing industry.

Ashaletha et al., (2002) in Changing Roles of Fisherwomen of India – Issues and Perspectives, analyses how women in coastal India despite the slow but emerging recognition of their silent contribution, still face stumbling blocks in their path towards development. This study underlines the fact that in agriculture the contributions made by women are at least quantified and found to be substantial, on the contrary; the role played by women in fishery is not visible. In its concluding section the paper proposes that various social, psychological, institutional, and economic issues challenging empowerment of fisherwomen have to be seriously taken into consideration while chalking out new development strategies. Researchers also have to pay sufficient attention for identifying the needs of fisherwomen and thereby generating women-friendly technologies. The study recommends that women empowerment and thereby the community development through combined efforts of men and womenfolk must be a holistic.

Praveen Dalal (2002) in Use of Information Technology for Women Empowerment in India focuses his concern on the need to view women not as passive recipients of media and its technology, but developers of active knowledge and technology. One of the neglected issues in India is the “gender sensitization” that must be adopted while formulating and implementing the media policies in India. For this the author states strongly that we have to first place the women on an equal footing. According to him they cannot be put on an equal platform till they have equal capacity and opportunity to use the techniques of modern media. He concludes that they cannot effectively use the modern media till their “feedback and concerns” are incorporated in the National Policies including the E-governance plans.
Goswami (2002) in Literacy, Information, and Governance in the Digital Era: An Indian Scenario presents an overview of the use of digital information in Indian for the purpose of poverty alleviation, the marketing of farm produce in rural areas, responsive governance, and provision of access to official records and information. This paper also seeks to identify better ways of using ICTs for Indian national development. Policymakers should view content as more important than conduits; and proper content management is possible only with the active involvement of informational professionals.

Sathiadhas et al., (2003) have studied the role of fisherwomen in the post-harvest marine fisheries sector in Kerala. These women are engaged in gutting, peeling, sorting, drying, marketing, and value addition of marine products. The study has expressed its concerns over exploitation of these women who are underpaid. The fisherwomen fall victims to money lenders and fish traders. The study strongly proposes that the women should be encouraged with adequate financial and technical support. Fisherwomen should be provided training in processing activities like salting, drying, curing, etc. to increase their share in marketing of fishers. Fisherwomen are found mostly in the clutches of moneylenders and victims of various cycle of indebtedness despite their reasonable earning from their vocations. Hence, women oriented credit schemes should be adopted to rescue them from the hands of moneylenders and to improve their living standards.

Samal and Meher (2003) in Fishing Communities on Chilika Lake: Comparative socio-economic study. Focus the socio-economic impact of Chilika lease policy during liberalization period. The study has been focused on both primary and secondary sources of data with a sample of 277 households (226 fisherman households and 51 non-fisherman households) from 30 villages surrounding the lake Chilika. The study suggests that presently, due to rapid degradation of environment of Chilika, there is a need for total ban on ‘culture’ fishing in and around the lake. The study concludes with the suggestion that Chilika being a Common Property Resource (CPR) should be managed by local collective action through an autonomous body in which fishermen community must have the majority. They further add that the government should play the complementary and
supportive role by providing a legal framework and technical assistance to the local system.

Sobhasri and Sanjeevayya (2003) in the Role of Fisherwomen in Fishing Activity: A Study of the Fisherwomen in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, analyse the pattern of trade activity of the fisherwomen, pattern of investments by women in trade, and status of the fisherwomen’s trade. They suggest that there must be more women self-help-groups to promote their potentiality for trade.

Bene (2003) in his article on when fishery rhymes with poverty: A first step beyond the old paradigm on poverty in small-scale fisheries, in World Development has given a detailed analysis of the evils of poverty among the fishing communities. According to him fishing community being one of uncertain industry the people are left with an ever increasing poverty. He further proposes ways and means for alleviating poverty in the community.

Raul Roman and Royal Colle (2003) in Content creation for Information Technology Development projects: Integrating Normative approaches and Community demand, discuss why concerns about the importance of content provision for information technology development projects, such as telecentres, radio stations must go beyond international initiatives such as the World Bank Development Gateway. The authors emphasize the importance of grassroots research, such as community needs assessments, for the generation of contextually appropriate content through information media including the role that local universities may play as facilitators in the identification and processing of this content. The paper concludes by stating that awareness raising about the value of information media and integration of information services within the local communication structures constitute a basic foundation for locally relevant content generation and use.

Vibhuti Patel (2004) examines the role of multi-media in empowerment of women in Maharashtra. According to the author the state has the highest number of women writers, painters, journalists, feature and documentary film makers, institutes for mass communications with gender-sensitive syllabi and a band of committed, hardworking and sincere teachers in mass communication. Because of their
combined efforts, they have been able to create strong alternate media dedicated to the cause of empowerment of women. The author proposes that there must be more and more training workshops to understand technicalities of media technologies into consideration of women’s empowerment. Committed and gender sensitive men and women can implement gender sensitive strategies within the system and effective use of the media and concentrate masses for social transformation favourable to empowerment of women.

Chaturvedi (2004) Women in Fisheries on the East Coast of India: A Review evaluates the impacts of the past interventions made by the Bay of Bengal Program and other agencies and also determines the level of empowerment at the grassroots. Over 30 villages were visited across Tamil Nadu, Pondicherry, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, and West Bengal. The author after having done the Participatory Rural Appraisals (PRAs) with the women in the fisheries sector brings out that alternative livelihood strategies. Media were found to be catalysts in transforming the lives of people through viable means of reaching out and seminars.

Choudhury (2004) in a study of fisher folk of Kerala has drawn the attention to the inequality and deprivation suffered by fisherwomen. Women related to fishing industry enjoy very little occupational mobility, and there is gender discrimination with regard to control over common property resources and participation in decision making process within the community. According to the findings fishermen migrate to cities in search of labour leading to ‘feminization of fisheries’. Though fisherwomen have major responsibilities in the domestic area and distribution of catches, they are totally excluded from the decision making process, especially at the community level. The article further proposes that empowerment of women in the fishing industry is imperative. Men must involve women in decision making at every level. This way the gender gap will be reduced and there will be more equality among them.

Costal Disaster Mitigation Centres (CDMC) should be established in the vulnerable points along the coastal areas of both Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh. These centres should also motivate budding young women to take entrepreneurial activities related to fishing and also guide the old fisherwomen for their livelihood. Fisherwomen should be provided adequate training on awareness of natural disasters and its management. Computer based training module should be designed for the employment opportunities for the displaced young fisherwomen. He further states that in the context of globalization the fisherwomen may be trained in establishing a Domestic and Export Trade and Market Intelligence Cell (DETMIC) in their own harbours through self-help-group concept for the betterment of the fisherwomen community. Finally the study suggests that the establishment Fisherwomen Market Consortia, (FMC), would assist the fisherwomen for better marketing of their toys, shells and other value added products.

The Deccan development society, Hyderabad, India brought out a report (2004) on “An alternative to literacy: is it possible for community video and radio to play this role? A small experiment”. A small experiment carried out by the Deccan Development Society (DDS) among disadvantaged women in the Medak district of Andhra Pradesh, India, illustrates this point. Seven Dalit women were taught how to operate video cameras, edit their shoots, and make their own stories over an eight – month period. The objectives, methodology, outputs and linkages, findings, recommendations, and philosophy behind the DDS project were outlined. The project demonstrated that non-literate women can turn into excellent videographers, that being non-literate is no barrier in learning video as a mode of expression, that video can be a very effective tool for use by non-literate rural people to express themselves through video, the non-literate women were in no way inferior to their urban counterparts who came to media education with formidable academic backgrounds.

Arun (2004) in ICT Initiatives, Women and Work in Developing Countries: Reinforcing or Changing Gender Inequalities in South India? have presented two case studies from South India (Kerala) that reflect two of the possible approaches: a market-oriented and gender-blind approach that enables the competitive forces to exert an effect, and a state-led approach that deliberately and concertedly intervenes
with a specific focus on gender. The research concludes with a statement that by contrast, a gender-focused ICT initiative involving significant state intervention has brought about positive changes to livelihood outcomes and empowerment of poor women.

Manisha Joshi (2004) in a well-researched article poignantly expresses the pathetic situation of the secondary status of women in the socio-cultural and environment of the hill society of Uttaranchal. According to the study the hill women are major stakeholders and they cannot be ignored any longer. The author points out that the process of change in the social and economic condition has been deepening divisions between women and men’s work and is affecting women more adversely. In this context the author points out that various women’s groups bring out written magazines on various development issues that has been a source of empowerment for women in this area. The study proposes under the circumstances prevailing in the hilly rural areas, there needs to be a three model involving the government, Panchayat Raj Institutions, and NGOs a model with the acronym.

Pavarala, Malik and Cheeli (2006) in Community Media and Women: Transforming Silence into Speech, and Gurumurthy, Sing, Mundur and Swamy, in Gender in the Information Program (2011) explain how the community media empower women. These studies find that community media initiatives perceive women as producers and contributors of media content and not just as consumers. Community media encourage greater involvement of women in technical decision making, and agenda-setting activities and have the potential to promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media. The community media must also give high proportions of stories on peace; war and gender-based violence reinforce gender stereotypes.

Mayanja Meddie (2006) in Rethinking Telecentre Sustainability: How to implement a Social Enterprise Approach – Lessons from India and Africa narrates that telecentres today are the key to telecentres of tomorrow. If they succeed in achieving their objectives, there is no doubt that development partners, social investors and governments will have a fresh look at the potential of telecentres to development in coastal areas. According to the author financial and social
The sustainability of telecentres remain one of the key challenges for fisherwomen. The author uses field-based experiences from India and Africa to review varied telecentres sustainability approaches. While analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of each of the approaches he makes an argument for a new approach – one that will ensure high social capital, sustainability and financial sustainability for telecentres.

Antony Palackal (2007) in Information Technology, Women and Development discusses the impact of digital revolution in the fields of information and communication. According to him information technology has an enormous potential to improve people’s economic, social and cultural well-being through the knowledge-based digital economy. The article addresses the relationship between information technology and social change under the structural conditions of the Indian sub-continent. This study reveals how Internet is beginning to play a rather noteworthy role in the careers of Indian women researchers.

Geoff Walsham (2007) in an elaborate discussion on ICTs for the Broader Development of India: An Analysis of the Literature asks whether the information and communications technologies have been valuable in producing broader development benefits to all Indian citizens. The analysis shows that many ICT-based initiatives have taken place over the last decade and some positive effects have resulted. However, the beneficiaries are almost always not the poorest or most disadvantaged groups, it is hard to scale up initiatives to have effects throughout India, and the need for attitudinal and institutional change remains a fundamental problem.

Samuel (2007) in Women, Work and Fishing: An Examination of the Lives of Fisherwomen in Kerala documents women’s daily routines and experiences in their work, home and social circles. The study reveals the continuing significance of social customs and traditions in limiting and confining women in their everyday life. Despite the varied cultural roles that women play in the fishing industry, the income women earn from working has not altered preexisting exploitative relations between men and women. Divisions based on caste, the emulation of upper-caste behaviour, the continued practice and inflation of dowry, and cultural perceptions of women’s responsibilities within the family combine to keep women in a secondary and
subservient position relative to men. Women are seen as a largely untapped resource to overcome the skills shortage in many sectors and occupations. The digital technology specially empowers women to have a better say in the family space as well as in the national and global communities. Although our Indian tradition adores and respects women yet in many places it has to be promoted and women must be given equal status socially and culturally.

Bailur (2008) in Deconstructing Community Participation in Telecentre Projects seeks to deconstruct the assumed causality drawing on both information systems and international development literature. First of all he starts with a brief review of the three broad perspectives on the impact of telecentres. Secondly, he analyses the notion of “community”. Thirdly, he illustrates how stakeholder involvement has emerged in evaluation studies from measurement, description, and finally negotiation as a valid method of evaluation. He concludes by saying how identifying stakeholders and inviting participation is not as easy in practice as in theory. This paper therefore aims to make a contribution to the existing literature on participation in information systems and development by asking – does community participation make a telecentre project more successful? He urges to unpack the rhetoric on participation in telecentres.

Hardin and Whiteside (2009) while talking about Media and gender equality in, Getting the Balance Right: Gender Equality in Journalism, state how journalists and other actors working in the media contribute to gender equality. This handbook aims to assist people working in the media to assess progress on gender equality, identify challenges, and contribute to debates and policy formulation. It urges those working in the media to do more to confront gender distortions in newsrooms and in unions.

Nirmalsahu et al., (2009) in Economy of the Fisherwomen in Ganjam District of Orissa have remarked that though fisherwomen have very limited control over the conditions and products of their labour, they have almost exclusive responsibility of running the household and caring for their children. Women in this culture do not have any decision making power. This study looks into the nature and extent of the socio-economic problems associated with the decline in the control of
resources by fisherwomen which hinders sustainable development of the community. Therefore, the study suggests that there must be proper method of involving women in the process of decision making and thus speed up the empowerment of women in the fishing society. Their traditional ecological knowledge needs documentation, recognition and appreciation. The natural fishery capital stock in the sea and land resources in the coast needs protection. The fisher people’s council should be recognized as a socio-political institution. Methods such as self-help group and community level empowerment programmes also are envisaged by the author.

Sarkar (2009) in Sundarban Fishermen in the World Heritage Setting has drawn attention to four important things about fishermen. First of all, they continue to resort to supernaturalism like ritualistic pujas to appease deities as a means of fighting against big uncertainties in fishing. Secondly, mechanization of fishing gear has brought about a big change in fishing economy and resulted in class formation among fishermen. Thirdly, fisherwomen are engaged in dry-fishing, fish-vending, and net-mending. Fourthly, fishermen, in general are largely in debt and they fall victims to exploitation by middlemen working as the linkage between active producers and final consumers. As the middlemen manipulate the poor fishermen the study suggests that there should be government interference in regularizing the market prices and secondly women empowerment programmes must be systematically implemented either by the government or by the NGOs.

Kumar et al., (2010) Women Fish Vendors in India: An information booklet, we find information on vending and vendors, the problems faced by women fish vendors, and some of the organizational initiatives they have taken to protect their livelihoods. The study is based on the information collected through personal interview and formal techniques such as participatory rural appraisal and focused group discussions carried out in the southern states of India, namely Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. One of the main findings of the study is that women play several critical roles in fisheries, particularly during the pre- and post-harvest sectors. In the marine fisheries, active marine fishing is generally undertaken by men, although a small percentage of women also take part in near-shore fishing, seaweed harvesting, and in the collection of clams, mussels and bivalves. The study
suggests awareness should be generated among the fishermen community about the need, importance, and advantages of collective action through institutions like Self-Help-Groups, fishermen association cooperatives so that the exploitation of middlemen could be minimized. The study also proposes that entry of private agencies in this regard should also be promoted with appropriate regulatory mechanism so as to prevent possible exploitation of fishing community.

Cooper, Goodsmith, Lotter, and Molony (2010) Exploring the communication initiatives and changing attitudes and behaviours of women in, Communication, Participation and Social Change: A Review of Communication initiatives, address Gender-based Violence, Gender Norms, and Harmful Traditional Practices in Crisis-affected Settings’ the fact that in conflict and post-conflict settings, high levels of gender-based violence can result from disruption of social structures, men’s loss of traditional roles, poverty, frustration, alcohol and drug abuse, and criminal impunity.

Llanos and Nina (2011) in Election Coverage from a Gender Perspective: A Media Monitoring Manual brings out how media can contribute to gender equality in election campaigning? The media has in many instances become the principal forum where electoral competition is played out. The study high lights the structural and institutional obstacles women face in political competition. This publication aims to be a useful tool for promoting fair media coverage during election campaigns, generating an informational approach that includes all candidates’ points of view during election campaigns.

Goyal (2011) speaking on the digital divide in Developing women: how technology can help, brings out questions of whether women have lower earnings due to intrinsic feminine attributes or because features their environment was addressed. The conclusion of the author is that there is evidence that the predictions of the model are being borne out in the use of IT. It was not the small difference in women’s biology and preferences that harmed them as much as the absence of opportunities that matched these qualities. Technological change can, with a little help, remedy this.
Goyal (2011) in another attempt highlights the issue on why women lag behind and why they may lead. Normally women are allocated more time to the household, often in a critical period of their career. This lowers their productivity in the external labor market, and by lowering learning-by-doing in remunerative skills, lowers future earnings as well. The fears expressed in the women’s literature were subsequently examined, together with the extent to which events have validated them. This paper points to the usefulness of ICTs in benefiting women who are aware of them and their use of such technologies is rising steadily.

Bindu George (2011) in the unpublished thesis on Technological Change and Modernization in the Fishing Sector: According to this study the present fisheries scenario of the state of Kerala is a free and open access system and consequently there is intense competition for the resources among the various sectors (traditional and mechanized vessels). One of the main recommendations of the author is: those technological changes in the fishing industry in terms of trawling and purse seining and diversification of the coastal economy have led to the unsustainability development. Main threats to sustainable fisheries in Kerala are overcapitalization, over capacity, over investment in the harvest and post-harvest sectors of the industry non-implementation of the existing rules and regulations and the lack of alternative employment generation. Hence urgent measures are required to tackle these issues so as to have sustainability of fishery resources. The second recommendation is that the traditional way of conserving the fishery resources have to be emphasized. Optimal fishing models have to be developed both for the marine and inland fishing resources. Local level experiences have to be preserved and adapted to the new and changed environment.

Susmita Patanik et al., (2011) in Socio-Cultural life of fisherwomen in India-continuity and change with special reference to Orissa State bring out the problems of fisherwomen in detail such as professions, employment, marketing, income, indebtedness, education, residence and health care. The focus of the study is to address the question as to what development goals have been achieved in India to date. In this regard the research has made three things clear. First of all, women related to fishing trade are changing though the process of change is slow. Secondly, the change of fisherwomen represents a blending Telugu and Oriya cultures and
thirdly, the change is more marked and substantive among fisherwomen girls than among middle age and elderly women. The research has suggested that as the fisherwomen have been for long steeped in illiteracy and ignorance and due to this factor they have been exploited and oppressed by local dominant caste. The government education of women related to fishing must be the gate-way to development and the fisherwomen need to be sensitized about this need.

Tuara and Passfield (2012) Women in Fisheries provides information on issues relating to gender in fisheries science and management. The current status of gender participation in the fisheries sector is assessed. The authors indicate that women make up 18% of the total number of staff working in fisheries, environmental institutions and environmental non-government organizations in the three countries. The percentage of women working as administrators and clerks is about 60%. This is an interesting study as it shows that the effort to actively involve women in fisheries has not really progressed in the last 20 years.

2.1.3 Reach, Access and Utilization of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in Tamil Nadu

2.1.3.1. Reach of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in Tamil Nadu

Gomathi (2005) in the a Tale of Two Tricycles gives a brief account of the experience of two communities in Tamil Nadu, India, regarding the use of tricycles by women fish vendors to assist them in reaching fish markets quickly. Numerous management problems were encountered by women in Periakuppam, near Mahabalipuram. The author highlights how the men were hostile and the women’s group often quarreled with each other regarding costs and rights to use the vehicles. This resulted in the fact that much of the time the tricycles remain unused. However, when tricycles were made available to women fish vendors in Nagapattinam, the results were much more successful.

2.1.3.2. Access of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in Tamil Nadu

Gender, Technology and Development (2002) Project launched in 1998 in Pondicherry, South India by the M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) in India to measure the impact of information technology in rural and coastal areas
through a number of rural telecentres or “Village Knowledge Centres” was described. The telecentres are run by unpaid local volunteers and managed by local village groups under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MSSRF. The project was developed with an inbuilt gender sensitive component and had three objectives: to set up telecentres that enable rural and coastal families to access modern media; to train educated young people, especially women, in coastal and rural areas in how to operate information shops; and, to build a model in information dissemination and rural exchange in rural areas using an appropriate blend of modern and existing channels of communication. A hub-and-spoke model of data cum voice communication in a group of six villages was setup, using a hybrid of technologies; wired and wireless for communication and solar power and electricity for power supply. The telecentres provide information in Tamil and on a range of locally relevant issues, from incense manufacture and savings cooperatives, to herbal remedies. It is said that using Tamil in the media, is key to the success of the project

Indu Capoor and Prayas Abhivav (2005) discuss the digital divide in the arena of new media in Understanding the Digital Divide from the Gender Perspective. This article scans ICT projects from a gender perspective. The study answers the question whether women and girls have access to the ICT based project. Accesses are examined in context of factors such as language, availability, cost, time, out-reach and impact. They conclude that it is important to design, develop and popularize ICTs in gender-sensitive and accommodative ways. It should be ensured that gender stereotypes are eliminated from ICT programmes throughout. This means according to them that ICT policies and programmes need to adopt a more holistic view.

2.1.3.3. Utilization of Media Resources by Fisherwomen in Tamil Nadu

Kalanjiam Community Radio Experiences by Krishnamurthi, DHAN Foundation in his article Building Communities through Media reflects the works of DHAN Foundation in South India through Kalanjiam Community (NGO). He brings out how information, communication and public participation become important aspects of a community’s ability to recover from a disaster event. He brings out how
after the Tsunami devastation, in December 26, 2004, DHAN Foundation started working in a big way with the affected fishing and farming communities along the coastal areas with a long term development focus. This article describes how the Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli (Community Radio Station) jointly with the disaster preparedness is training members from villages to combat disaster situation. The main area of discussion is how with a transition into mixed media model of ICT based radio and video, the Kalanjiam Samuga Vanoli is taking shape of a Community Multi Media Centre. With the mandate of ensuring major stake and ownership for women the Centre is enabling women to participate, own and manage the Kalanjiam Community Media Centre to address various socio, economic and development issues concerning them. The article also discusses the issues of financial sustainability of the projects.

Krishnamurthi of DHAN foundation in his article, Building Communities through Media, reflects the works of DHAN foundation in South India through Kalanjiam Community (NGO), clarifies how information, communication and public participation become important aspects of a community’s ability to recover from disaster events. The paper further articulates how applications of information and communication technology were introduced through the Village Information Centers connected with Internet facility setup in all the villages.

Working with the information Village Research Project of M S Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) Chennai, Vedavalli in her research on Knowledge centers in Pondicherry: the gender perspective explains how the access to information and technology and the willingness to learn seem to depend on various factors. She concludes that the urge of women to improve themselves and work for the society needs to be capitalized meaningfully. The article calls for an increased participation by the women members of the user communities which can have positive impact on the long-term sustainability.

Dwivedi (1980) discusses in detail the use and power of self-help groups for the social and economic development of the fishing community in his, Socio-economical Problems of Fishermen, annual report of Central Institute of Fisheries Education. The survey shows that the self-help groups play a positive role in helping
the fisher folk in their socio-economic development, emancipation and empowerment of fishing community. The study further analyses as to how this programme must enable the people to live with self-esteem and gain the awareness that everyone has a right to live.

Daniel Viswasam Samuel (1986) Economics of Marine Fishing and Role of Fisherwomen in Tirunelveli District of Tamil Nadu, According to this study though women play a significant role in decision making in economic activities (40%) their overall role in the family is very insignificant and unrecognized. Hence, he suggests that the government must provide educational and social awareness programmes such as community telecentres to empower the women of the area.

Ahilan and Selvaraj (1990) in Fisherwomen’s Problems and their Social Participation in Chidambaranar District of Tamil Nadu had conducted a comparative analysis of fishing related activities in the Chidambaram district of Tamil Nadu. One hundred and twenty fisherwomen from six randomly selected fishing villages in Chidambaranar district of Tamil Nadu were interviewed to elicit information about the problems they face a women belonging to an economically and socially backward community. The authors conclude that in majority of the cases family and social problems and the lack of social participation have prevented them from actively involving in community organisations and thus deriving benefits. The study suggest that in view of the problems these fisherwomen face both within the family and in society, it is important that they are properly motivated to participate not only in community organisations but also to open cooperative societies and other beneficial voluntary bodies.

Ahilan, Sujathkumar and Selvaraj (1990) in Training Campaigns on Fish Processing for Fisherwomen in Chidambaranar and Tirunelveli Kattabomman District of Tamil Nadu, narrate about the off-campus training programme for fisherwomen in the preparation and marketing of various fish products, conducted by district of Tamil Nadu. According to the findings, comparing this training programme with those conducted on-campus, the authors feel that off-campus training programmes are more effective as they are easier to participate in and can also be made to address local problems. The study suggests that the establishment of
a well-equipped training centre will facilitate the conducting of such training programmes in a large number of villages.

Bostock (1991) in Post-harvest activities in Kanyakumari, India, studies the Fisherwomen community of Tamil Nadu. According to his analysis fisherwomen suffer from non-availability of alternative transport facility. This adversely affects their income position. Hence, the study suggests that the local panchayat or the civil collector must concentrate on the feasibility of providing public conveyance for the fish trade.

Sukumar, Sujathkumar and Selvaraj (1992) in Training of Women in Fish Processing and Fish Culture, describe a scheme funded by Food Foundation, U.S.A. and implemented in Fisheries College, Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu, wherein training in enterprise management was imparted to four batches of 15 fisherwomen each in fish processing, and to two batches in fish culture. The main objective of this programme was to select a few literate rural women with managerial ability and willingness to take up the organizational and management of fishery units. The study suggests that the trained women need a long technical support for which it is necessary to provide a follow-up service on a sustained basis. Also a cell to help fisherwomen in their entrepreneurial development may be set up in each district.

Warrier (1997) in his Socio-Economic Condition of Fisher folk of Madras has shown that for fisher folk, sea fishing is more a way of life than a mode of occupation or business. According to the findings of the study there are some mistakes in the supply of mechanized boats to fishermen by co-operatives. He has proposed that the government must use the local panchayat or the local unit leaders to distribute the boats. Secondly proper training must be imparted on how to use the mechanized boats. In this way the government must regularize the distribution of mechanized boats to help the fishing community without any partiality.

Harsha Liyanage (2003) in his candid article on, Women and ICT at Tsunami reconstruction underlines the fact that new media possess an almost magical power to excite the human mind; it can simultaneously entertain and give invaluable information to the recipient. According to his research, as the community became more accepting towards the idea of a telecentre, the promise of vouchers increased
female participation from 8 percent to 40 percent within a three week period. In fact, the number of women participants bypassed that of the males.

Perumal (2003) Growth trends of marine fish production and export in Tamil Nadu, presents an analysis of fishery sector development in the State of Tamil Nadu. He remarks that in the world over, India stands as the 8th largest fish producer. The paper concludes that Tamil Nadu is one of the major fish production states in India, as 11.5 percentage of the India’s total catch is from Tamil Nadu. Fish and fish products are reasonably good foreign exchange earner. Tamil Nadu exports about 10% of its total landing to international market. The most important export verities from Tamil Nadu are shrimp verities. This paper brings out though the fish production is one of the biggest money making market, yet the fishing community is always at the backside of the social and economic progress.

Rajesh Das (2003) in Scope of Revitalizing Rural Development through Community Radio, looks at the role of community radio in agriculture and rural development. According to the findings, if used in conjunction with other modes of promoting agriculture and development community radio can play an effective role in promoting social change. Using example and analysis from India, the paper demonstrates the linkages between rural radio, agriculture and rural development. The paper recommends that in order to enhance communication activities and for the farmers to be fully involved, it is necessary to train the farmers themselves in communication skills so that they can actively participate in the transfer of knowledge and technologies. There is also need to create farm broadcasting units at common gathering in the village (choupals) where important issues regarding agriculture, health and hygiene can be discussed for the content of the community broadcasting. Broadcasting experts, extension worker, Local panchayat members and the villagers as a whole can meet and share their ideas and opinions. These units would then distribute the content to the community stations to reach finally to the end users.

Deshmukh Ranadive Joy (2003) in Placing Gender Equity in the Family Centre Stage: Use of ‘kalajatha’ theatre, states empowerment does not necessarily take place when livelihoods are enhanced or for that matter when groups are formed.
Social capital empowers people undoubtedly. Hence changes in public areas with respect to new formations of social capital or new avenues of income generation, especially when they are directed to and through women, even contribute towards accentuating tensions within households. The primary goal of this non-confrontationist intervention is to promote norms of democracy within the family through the medium of ‘kalajatha’ or folk theatre, with follow-up workshops. Without apportioning blame, the plays question traditional socio-cultural norms within the family. Along with sensitization, consensus and commitment are also sought from members of the audience. The activities, approach and impact of this pioneering intervention were described in detail.

Anita Guru murthy (2004) in Bridge: Development – Gender and ICTs: Overview Report offers a bird’s eye-view of the central themes in the gender and information and communications technological debate. The first part of the paper deals with the meaning of information technology; its key players and key politics; and an analysis of how gender has featured in the information and communications society debate. The second part discusses the inequalities in the information and communications technology area, and the gender dimensions of these inequalities. The third part focuses on how information technology can promote women’s rights and empowerment. The final part concludes with a discussion of the directions for engendering the information and communication technology. According to the findings of the report engendering ICTs is not merely about greater use of ICTs by women. It is about transforming both gender politics and the ICT system. As ICT system is organized on elitist, patriarchal, techno-centric, non-democratic lines and based on capitalist values, transformatory gender politics will need to question these values and search for ethical alternatives. Furthermore, the paper suggests that a more inclusive, democratic and gender-just information society is possible only if the multiple actors in the ICT arena commit to work in coordination and collaboration. Strategic wisdom needs to inform future action, particularly in the renegotiation of gender relations through ICTs.

Arunachalam (2004) in Information and communication technologies and poverty alleviation discusses the role modern communication technologies can play in poverty alleviation. This he discusses basing largely on what has happened in the
past years in a cluster of ten villages in Pondicherry by M S Swaminathan Research Foundation, Chennai. He recommends that ICTs are a necessary but insufficient condition for development, and that they must be used as part of integrated development. His recommendations are as follows:

1. Encourage a favourable environment for ICT-supported programmes in partner countries – including freedom of expression, transparency, accountability, community ownership of technology, the public commons, and open source software.

2. Examine ongoing programmes – focusing on the significance of actual experiences, and identify good practices and success factors.

3. Encourage mutual learning by supporting, for example, South-South exchange workshops, and building partnerships and networks (e.g. IDRC’s PAN Asia network).

4. Encourage the evolution of home-grown models and avoid the tendency to transplant Western models based on an oversimplification of reality.

5. Evolve systems for evaluating and monitoring ICT enabled development programmes and avoid heaping praise and awards on programmes too early. Involve people from developing countries in advisory bodies (as IICD has done).


Ramachandran, Subbiah and Ravishankar (2004), the paper analyses the level of exposure of women to mass media in Puducherry. In conclusion the paper states that though there is a little difference between rural and urban area, the level of exposure of women to mass media is generally high in the Union Territory of Puducherry. There is a close association between mass media exposure and socio-economic background of women. The study further notes that, Television seems to be a predominant media channel attractive among women. Rural women have relatively more exposure to Television, but the rural-urban differences could be observed with regard to selection of programmes being watched. The study suggests instead of the generally observed worldwide focus on women’s empowerment programmes concentrating on conventional approaches to economic betterment, the
facilities must be made available for women to have more access to information technology which is expected to bypass the conventional lengthy process of empowerment through the most cost-effective means of promoting gender equity in the shortest time.

Ramachandran, Subbiah and Ravishankar (2004) in an extensive study have made an attempt to examine the role of mass media in women’s empowerment in Tamil Nadu. The data are drawn from National Family Health Survey-2 (NFHS-2) for Tamil Nadu undertaken in 1998-99. A sample of 4,676 eligible women comprising both rural and urban areas was interviewed. This survey analyses the relationship between mass media exposure and women’s autonomy. The study states that about 58 percent of women were found to have high autonomy indicting improved status of women in Tamil Nadu. The study suggests; through application of new communication strategies, the people in general and womenfolk in particular must be made aware of these programs in such a way to utilize them and bring behaviour change for their betterment. Also the government can approach suitable agencies to sponsor certain programmes on social awareness for women. Giving due representation to women and marginalized groups to raise their voices or share their views with others, there must be international workshops on communication issues and their implications for democracy and social justice.

Jayraman (2008) in Performance Analysis of Fisherwomen Self-Help Groups has depicted a detail study of two maritime districts of Tamil Nadu. This study concludes that contrary to the common belief that poor women are not credit worthy, they are far more credit worthy, honest and most importantly, “bankable”. The study proposes that there must be more recognition of the self-help groups for women. Women must be basically empowered and informed of the usefulness of the self-help group programmes in the grassroots level.