CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, an attempt is made to review the literature on women workers in household informal sector. In order to provide comprehensive conceptualization, the literature reviewed has been categorized under the following broad headings.

i. Studies on women workers in the household production activities in developed countries.

ii. Studies on women workers in household production activities in developing countries.

iii. Studies on women workers and their participation in household production activities in India.

2.2 HOUSEHOLD WOMEN WORKERS IN DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

ILO study (1998) reveals that home based women workers and street vendors are two of the largest sub-groups of the informal work force. While the home-based workers are more in number without any visibility, the street vendors lesser in number but with more visibility is a significant point. Taken together, they represent between 10%-25% of the non-agricultural work force.
in developing countries and over 5% of the total work force in developed countries. However, they vary considerably depending on the contribution of the homework to the income of the family unit. It is common knowledge that women in household industries work for longer hours during peak seasons without any rest. The weekly working hours for women household workers vary from country to country. In Canada, women work on an average of 46 hours per week. In Austria, they work between 16 to 82 hours per week. Further, in Greece, Netherlands and United Kingdom, women who work on piece rate basis at home in the clothing sector complained of irregular working hours.

Ungerson and Kember (1997)² in their study examined women’s working condition in the informal sector in European countries. Adoption of the legislation of equal treatment to gender is one of the most important steps taken by the European Social Policy makers to enhance the women’s participation in the productive work on par with male members. Indeed the promotion of women’s rights is the hallmark of Article 129 of the Treaty of Rome, which imposes a firm legal obligation on the industry to implement the policy of ‘equal pay for equal work’. In this context, the authors reviewed the Maastricht Treaty of European Union in which they found that the treaty protects the social security of workers in unorganized sectors. The treaty is more beneficial to the women workers as current labour policies in UK focusing on a rather narrow set of issues that obscure the fact that many women cannot compete equally in a labour oriented market. Even in Germany and
Japan, the household work system is brought under certain labour laws where most of the women were paid minimum wages and other social benefits.

Wiego Web-site (2002) in the study on informal economy presented a true picture of women’s participation in the household and informal labour force in the developed countries. The author pointed out that the part time work and temporary work, synonymously referred to as informal household work, comprise 30% of overall employment in 15 European countries and 25% of total employment in the United States and they receive a few employment based social benefits. In the United States, for instance, less than 20% of regular part time workers have employer-sponsored health insurance or pensions. Though women’s participation rates in the general labour force are low, their participation rates are high in part-time work (informal sector) in most of the developed countries and it is more than 60% in the total employment of informal sector in a few European countries. Women’s share of part time work is as high as 98% in Sweden, 80% in U.K. and 68% in Japan and USA. Further, the feminization of housework varies from 92 to 95% in the Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands and 84% in France. Women in clothing industry constitute 75% in Spain and 95% of them are migrants. In USSR, 86% of the total women workers are working in household industry.

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2010 for the development of women workers in informal household sector in European countries and concluded that women preferred work at home due to flexibility in allotting time and to earn additional income for the family. They pointed out that the essence of women’s participation in the community development programmes is lacking among the women workers in European countries.

2.3 HOUSEHOLD WOMEN WORKERS IN OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Eileen Miraftab (1996) studied the women’s participation in the informal production activities in Mexico and found that during the severe economic crisis in 1980 women from informal household sector played a vital role in altering economic pressures on the nation. Mexican low-income earning families have been able to survive against the economic shocks by contributing meagre incomes to the combined contributions of family members. Women were at the core of the survival strategies of the poor households during the time of crisis. They increasingly took up the low paid income generating activities in addition to their unpaid homework and child caring responsibilities. Home based work was one strategy that made it easier for women to combine their multiple roles and responsibilities.

In the study on invisible workers visible contribution Manjul Bajaj (1999) analysed women workers in Agarbathi industry in India, garment industry in Bangladesh, leather football in Pakistan, medicinal plants in Nepal and coir industry in Sri Lanka. The study indicates that though women’s
contribution is significant in these industries, their overall condition has not yet improved. The study further indicates that discrimination against women takes place in two distinct ways: (1) they are relegated to the lower paid work within the sector and the better-paid works were dominated by male workers (2) they are often paid less for the same work compared to male workers. Women have the potential to bring a dramatic change by participating in economic activities; they are best suited for informal household sector because of their good concentration patience, skill at fingertips and capability of handling domestic chores along with the home based production activities. The author concluded that women seeking to work either at household level or at other sector are determined by two factors such as the socio-cultural background and economic necessity of women.

ILO study (1989)\(^7\) explains that 86 million of the female population are economically active in the South East Asian countries. Of this, eighty two million women are in the age groups between 15 and 64. The remaining 4 million are outside this age group predominantly girls below the age of 15 years. The report further shows that herculean efforts are necessary to create huge employment opportunities if both women and men are to have equal access to economic activity in the year 2025. These intensive efforts would result in an increase in the female share of the economically active population from 38 per cent to 43 per cent.

Netherlands Development Corporation Study (1998)\(^8\) indicates the conditions of women work force in Asian and African countries and
highlights that the monetization of non-market work of women is more than a question of justice. The report was concerned about the low economic status of women in the society. If women’s work were properly valued, it is quite possible that women would emerge in most societies, particularly in Asian and African countries as main breadwinners or at least equal breadwinners. The study further forecasted that by 2010 AD in most of the countries women work force would constitute 50 per cent of the total work force.

Tripathy and Patnaik (1996) in their study examined the stratification of work force in the informal household sector in Asian countries in which large number of women participate in productive and economic activities. In fact, the Asian and African women are considered as hard workers and their earnings are crucial in supporting their families as majority of them are below the poverty line. They consider household chores and productive work as their daily routine responsibilities. Although considerable job growth is projected in informal household occupation where women are a vast majority of the total work force, it is to be noted that there is no immediate solution on gender discrimination in work. Women’s participation has been found to be relatively high in agricultural activities where they are essentially engaged in transplantation and other similar monotonous low paid occupations.

Fazil Banu (1987) in her study, examined the women’s participation in dairy and poultry based home industries in Bangladesh and found that except grazing and marketing of the dairy products, women attend to all types of tasks without violating the norms of seclusion. She suggested that greater
attention has to be paid to animal husbandry development within the agricultural development programmes in Bangladesh in order to enhance women's participation in this sector.

In another significant study Anne Marie Goetz (2001)\(^1\) found that women who availed micro finance facilities from the Bangladesh rural banks have successfully started household entrepreneurship and promptly repaid the loans. In fact the process of empowerment of rural women has began in Bangladesh when rural banks introduced the micro finance scheme.

Elizabeth Eviota (1992)\(^1\) in her study on Political Economy of Gender and the Sexual Division of Labour in Philippines explored the interaction between gender ideology and the sexual division of labour. The study focuses on the changing position of women in relation to the production and marketing of the goods produced at home.

Boserup (1975)\(^1\) analysed the feature of labour market and division of labour at household production where all family members participate in the production activities. Some of the jobs or occupations attended by men and women are to be determined by cultural factors rather than physiological basis. The author evaluated the different aspects that affect the women in labour market and pointed out that the division of labour within the family, the hierarchy of work between men and women, the inferior position of girls and young women in the educational system are all responsible for the deterioration of the female role in the labour market.
Yasmeen Mohidden (1994)\(^{14}\) highlighted in his study that those women headed households are increasing in Pakistan due to non-working attitude of male members in the family. Meanwhile, Tomson (1990)\(^{15}\) recommends effective technology transfer to the rural informal sector to enhance the production capabilities of the household women workers in Pakistan.

Sarathy Acharya (1984)\(^{16}\) in his study highlighted that the African women in the agriculture sector contribute more than 60 per cent of the labour to food production and this is true even in Arab, Asian and Latin American agricultural sectors.

Lal Das (1988)\(^{17}\) observes that women all over the world, by and large, have been discriminated almost in every sphere of life. The author quoted in his study that large numbers of research studies, committee reports and surveys have produced a plethora of data attesting to the discriminatory treatment to the women workers.

Centre for Research on New International Economic Order CRNIEO (1993)\(^{18}\) examined the rights of women and their responsibilities and found that the position of women in Asia is an enigma.

In her study Anne Witz (1997)\(^{19}\) examined the role of women's participation in productive work and found that employment for the women is crucial step for their empowerment. She argued with feminist and gender perspectives that gender discrimination generates inequality based on gender
division in work. Thus the gender discrimination and inequality in the work place have occupied a central place in feminist theorizations of patriarchy of modern societies.

Aranya Kesari and Patnaik (1996) found that women constitute nearly fifty percent of the total population in India where they are termed as second sex and second ‘creature’ that live on surplus. Their very existence has been considered as parasite on the men who rule them. However, the role played by the women in the national economy is fantastic and many scholars have emphasised on this vital point. In almost all the developed and developing countries, women do engage themselves in various forms of productive activities.

ILO study (1996) on women’s participation in footwear, clothing and textile industries, brought to light that women’s participation level is lower in textiles and higher in clothing but the percentages vary significantly even in countries with similar levels of development. In clothing, women are accounted for at least 68 percent of the employment in many countries but it is 89 per cent in Sri Lanka, 36%, 25% and 14 per cent in India, Kenya and Zimbabwe respectively. The low percentages may be due to women’s predominance in household productive work. Increased female participation in more skilled jobs was also observed in both the textile sectors and in the combined group of clothing and footwear. However, in textiles, the percentages of women in both manual and non-manual employment are much lower.
2.4 HOUSEHOLD WOMEN WORKERS IN INDIA

India, under the label of developing country in the world, has a set of constitutional provisions and development programmes to protect the right's and to develop the oppressed groups in general and women in particular in order to integrate them into the mainstream society.

In the ILO (1998) study on women embroidery workers in informal household sector in various States in India, it is found that in New Delhi women attend to embroidery work nearly 6 hours per day. In Lucknow, women attend particular art work is sarees spend nearly 9 hours per day. In Gujarat, nearly 44 per cent of the women workers attend clothing work 7 to 9 hours per day. Further, men and women have different identities in production activities according to the role they performed within the home. Women perceive themselves as primarily housewives and their household chores as merely to help their husbands whereas male workers perceive themselves as breadwinners and their domestic chores are not different from the work outside the home. The different ways in which female and male members utilise their time, space and earnings influence the way in which female and male home workers perceive the value of their productive activities. The complimentary part in the use of time and space by women home workers may create a disadvantageous situation whereby the women's economic role within the family is rendered invisible.

Miraftab (1996) observed that despite woman's (wife) constant participation in family work (paid and unpaid), the wife is often considered as
a helper because she “takes time off from work” to do the domestic work. Most of the women in rural India spend bulk of their lives within their homes; they do not go outside their homes unless there is a substantive purpose. Women have traditionally been responsible for the daily routine household work. They have to take dual responsibility of carrying out productive work along with their family welfare oriented tasks which cast the heaviest burden on them.

Abraham (2002)\textsuperscript{24}, highlighted that the extent of women participation in employment is approximately 25.68\% in 2001 in India. However, these statistics neither account women’s paid employment in few pockets of the informal household sector nor their unpaid family labour in agriculture, industry, trade and services. In the unorganised household sector women not only work as paid labourers but also form a major part of the unpaid family labour. They have been relegated to labour intensive jobs and paid lower wages compared with men similar work.

Arna Seal (2000)\textsuperscript{25} in her study mentioned that existence of division of labour is a common feature of the home-based work where entire family members participate in the productive work. However, there are a few areas where women dominate the work, i.e., maid servants, social workers, teachers, cook, street vendors, nurses and so on. To improve the working conditions of women, one has to necessarily find what are the reasons behind such large-scale differences between men and women in the informal household production sector and why women attend only low paid production activity.
Most of the men folk assume that women do not have to contribute the major share of the family income. A look at the unemployment from the perspective of women will reveal that several reasons were identified for the differences in the way women and men participate in productive work. The majority of working women in the household trade in India come from a poor family background and their income is very essential for the basic survival of family members particularly the children.

ILO study (1994)\textsuperscript{26} indicates that the occupation of women in most of the household production activities in countryside is linked to her husband or father’s occupation. It is very unfortunate that the unorganised sector is not yet governed by the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, Factories Act 1948, Contract Labour Act 1970 (Regulations and Abolition). Therefore, there is no guarantee of minimum wages or security of tenure or other employment benefits like gratuity, pension, leave, bonus and so on. Further, the study identifies that a few organised industries shifted from organised to unorganised sectors because of the above acts. These organised sectors prefer to supply raw materials for job work to household entrepreneurs to avoid increasing cost of overhead investment on employment related expenditure.

Patel (1987)\textsuperscript{27} in his study observed that the labour intensive industries employ mainly female work force as piece rate workers and offer low wages. The fact is that women are not exposed properly to the male dominated occupations and they are deprived of equal access to development opportunities. The household sector has long been marked as a transitory
phase in the economies of developing countries. However, it is evident that everywhere this sector has to stay as a permanent feature of the national economies of not only in India but of the entire world.

Jaya Arunachalam (1997) examined the women's participation in the informal production activities and found that the earnings of the women workers are different from sector to sector and depends on type of work in which they are employed. Equal value campaigns emphasize that majority of women workers are badly paid, because the paid work, they do is analogous to household employment and undervalued in the market because their labour is invisible.

More-over Rama Kumari (2000) highlighted the plight of informal construction women workers in Andhra Pradesh. She opined that due to practice of subcontract labour system, the middlemen play decisive role in allotting unskilled and laborious work to women workers. Exploitation in terms of wage discrimination and bonded type of labour, is common feature in the informal construction sector in Andhra Pradesh.

Krishanama Naidu (1996) emphasised the need for establishing institutional link to empower the women workers of household sector. It is a fact that in the absence of a systematic data regarding the working and living conditions of the household women workers, it is a difficult task to identify the suitable women workers for institutional linkage programme.
Sahasranaman (1996)\textsuperscript{31} found that many footwear producing industries in south India employ women workers on low paid wages and offer in-plant training to them. He stressed the importance of establishing institutional training links to these workers to enhance their skills.

Gill Whitting (1997)\textsuperscript{32} in his study examined the level of women's participation in production activities and classified it into three categories.

i. As an entrepreneur, a self-employed worker or a wage earning employee producing goods and services for the market.

ii. As a participant in return for a share to his livelihood, in the family's production activities whose products are at least partially meant for the market.

iii. As a contributor to the family's real income by producing some goods which are available in order to supplement or replace its market purchases.

It is evident from the studies made by Holstram (1996)\textsuperscript{33} Padmini Swaminathan (1996)\textsuperscript{34} that women seek employment in the informal household sector due to poverty and economic needs of their families for survival. Further, the authors viewed that majority of them earn irregular and low wages.
Framane and Mariamme (1986) examined women's participation in household productive work and identified the difficulties in measuring their labour as they combine productive work along with household chores.

Nirmala Banerjee (1985) in her study explained that the division of labour is practised in the family based production activities in which each family member has possessing specialised skills and the skills are transferred from the elders.

Irene Tom (1989) studied the status of women workers in Silk industry in Karnataka. She had chosen Kolar district, as this area is popular for silk industry and a large number of women are also involved in it. The findings of the study reveal that majority of the women in this industry are unpaid family workers. They occupy low skilled work and status. To support the family income, women are working nearly 10-12 hours per day. Most of them enter into this activity at an early age. The author selected respondents randomly from all the sections of the silk producing household units. She concluded that though women work regularly for longer hours, the male members under value their economic contributions. She also identified the low educational level and health problems among the women.

Maithreyi Krishnaraj and Karna Channa (1987) examined women's work supplementing family income and health related issues of women workers in Gujarat. They found low socio-economic conditions of women workers in the household production sector. They analysed the size of the each family and earning level of women in the household sector. Of the total
respondents the authors studied, nearly 50% are engaged in earning their livelihood without the support from male members.

Vinita Kaul (1990)\textsuperscript{39} George England (1986)\textsuperscript{40} and Raj Mohini Sethi (1976)\textsuperscript{41} highlighted that majority of the women workers of informal household sector produce goods with primitive skills that may not fetch good price realization. Hence, women workers of household sector needs skill upgradation programme to enhance their production.

Ashok Kumar (1998)\textsuperscript{42} in his study observed that women workers in various industries including large, medium and informal household sectors occupied low-skilled positions in the labour force. Lack of awareness about schemes, social benefits and absence of proper training facilities are some of the main reasons for women occupying in low skilled work.

Whereas Devaki and Nirmala (1985)\textsuperscript{43} examined the use of primitive tools and reliance on manual ingenuity in the production process. They found that the use of primitive tools and manual labour resulted in the production of inferior goods and consequently affected the earnings and socio-economic status of the women.

Jeemol and Rani (2000)\textsuperscript{44} in their study found that India and other developing countries are marked by the predominance of agriculture and house-based production units where there is a pattern of non-wage employment of family members. The work performed by the women in households is largely undervalued and often invisible to the outside even to
the same family members. While assigning productive work to women in household, they perform the work suitably combining with domestic tasks.

Bhattacharya (1985) attempted to categorize the women’s participation in home-based productive work into (a) women in the household who perform work for wage and (b) those who attend the work and not paid for their work. According to the author the term work has a wider connotation to mean both socially useful work and productive or gainful work performed for the production of goods and services.

Thresiamma (2002) made an interesting observation in her study that women acquired the skills of male members in construction activities and they carried construction work independently. After the formation of Self Help Groups, these women workers in Kerala, aspire for the expansion of their activities throughout the State. The author concluded that they gained the confidence and economic empowerment i.e., economic independence through the institutional support.

Ela Bhat (1987) in her study “Invisible hands of women in home based production” analysed women’s position and their exploitation in informal production sector. She pointed out that there is a lack of statistics regarding the participation of women at home based production activities and even the available statistics are highly contradictory and under-estimated the number of home-based women producers. She distinguished between the home-based women workers who are self-employed and those who attend piece rate work. Piece rate work is very gainful to the employer because
employer makes good profit, as he need not invest money on machinery or on other production related infrastructures. By supplying raw materials to the women workers, who attend piece rate work, finished goods will be supplied back to the employer. There is no contract binding on him to provide any other facilities to the women workers other than paying piece-rate wage. She suggested that more attention should be paid to evolve operational definitions for the household maintenance work and productive activities. Further, she suggested that the data collecting agency should include the gender composition of the home-based labour force in the country.

Walter (1991), Asha Bajpai (1997) and Shakuntala Narasimhan (1999) examined the effects of economic liberalization on informal sectors and suggested that protection and creation of more job opportunities for women workers in the informal household sectors are very essential as the liberalization process affects largely to these sectors.

Zarina Bhatti (1987) in her study on home based beedi industry in Uttar Pradesh found that the women workers in this industry belong to Muslim community and due to socio-cultural reasons they prefer to work at their home itself even at low wages. Infact among the 2.5 million beedi (Country Cigarette) workers in India, 90 percent constitute women workers who mostly work in their homes on piece-rate basis with the raw materials being supplied by a contractor.

Manoshi Mitra (1987) in her study on women dairy workers in Andhra Pradesh found that women do almost all dairy related work and put
hard labour. Though their labour is crucial to support the family income, it is not fully endorsed by the male members in the family.

Jan Brouwer (1987)\textsuperscript{53} studied women's participation in home-based crafts production activities and found that division of labour is practised in these age-old production activities. The author found that large number of women belonging to Scheduled Castes and Muslim Communities participate in this activities.

Parameshwara (1990)\textsuperscript{54} analysed on informal leather workers in Karnataka and found that there is confrontation among them over adaptation of modernity in their life style and footwear production activities. Women assisting in footwear production work at household level are more conservative and they failed to adopt the changes in their life style. Further, Angela Maria (2002)\textsuperscript{55} explains the division of labour in the household production work is inevitable because men, women and their children specialise in particular components of production activities.

Savitri Murthy (1990)\textsuperscript{56} in her study analysed the issues related to women workers in home-based work. She mainly focussed on the socio-cultural and historical background of the women's invisible productive role. She suggested that home-based work should be treated as part and parcel of global capitalist system.

The study on women workers in tea plantations in West Bengal conducted by Mita Bhadra (1992)\textsuperscript{57} indicated that majority of the women
workers come from Nepal tribal community and that illiteracy malnutrition and health related problem are common features of these workers. Further, they stated that women have to shoulder the dual role of workers and housewives.

Baud (1996) found out that Government agencies extended support to women workers in household sectors and few non-government agencies made genuine effort to improve the awareness about the various socio-educational and health related aspects among the women leather footwear workers in Chennai city in Tamil Nadu. The study stressed the importance of the role of institutional support to the women workers in the informal household sector. Shoba and Kanchan (2000) suggested that empowerment of women could be achieved only through providing institutional support and creating economic opportunities to women.

Marina Durano (2002) in her study revealed that women who prefered to work within the house are from traditional occupational families. However, due to introduction of substitute material in the market, many traditional house based production units are disappearing fast and a large number of women loosing their traditional role of production work.

Sengupta (2000) pointed out in his study that discriminative attitude of men towards women workers is rooted into socio-cultural and historical perspectives.
Sharma and Seema Singh (1992)\textsuperscript{62} examined the different roles of women in productive work in India. The authors analysed the historical trend of women's employment, and marginalisation, in plantation, mining and so on. They found that women were exploited and they struggled for survival.

Shobita Jain and Reddock (1998)\textsuperscript{63} in their study focussed mainly on women workers in plantation industry in different regions of India. According to them, though plantation industries provide continuous employment to the women workers, their wages are not enough to meet their basic needs and hence spending for education, health and so on are insignificant among these workers. Further, they observed that consequently educational levels among the children of these workers are low and more number of dropouts are reported in plantation industrial belts.

In her study, Shanthi (1998)\textsuperscript{64} found that development of household industries and linking them with large formal industrial units for continuous job work is a must to sustain the household industries growth. Reweaving and strengthening of household industries help large number of women workers particularly those working in rural sector. Further, Vanitha Vishwanath (1993)\textsuperscript{65} found that agricultural women workers in South India slowly move towards non-agricultural activities due to stagnation of agricultural wages.

Jan Breman (1996)\textsuperscript{66} points out that women in India play active role in production activities both inside and outside the home. However, researchers and planners have either ignored women's economic activities or treated their labour as extension of homework. Consequently, this has resulted in the
universal undervaluing of women's work as well as in the positioning of their status.

Wagner Peter (1994) in his book examined the women's role in household production activities in India and found that women's work is badly remunerated. The paid work they do is analogous to household employment and under valued in the market because the domestic labour is unpaid. Further he identified three factors are responsible for low participation of women in the productive work in India.

1. The technological and occupational structure of the economy might have undergone a male biased transformation to such an extent that there has been a smaller expansion of the sectors where women workers have a relative advantage.

2. Indian economy has failed to attract many potential women workers into the workforce. The growth in work participation is not in tune with growth in investment and output. This has naturally caused the composition of the labour force to be tilted in favour of the male.

3. Urbanization is found to have caused a severe blow to the rural household industries where women are normally found in large numbers.

Gisela Schneider (1989) in his study found that women's participation in homework has persisted over the years and for those who preferred to work at home, homework is a viable alternative to regular employment and a means of supplementing family income while staying at
home. It is also a means of earning a livelihood for those who have not been successful in finding access to the labour market.

Menefee Singh and Anita Kelles (1987)\textsuperscript{69} in their study explained that the earnings of the home-based women workers in Gujarat are far below the minimum wage level fixed by the State Government. In Ahmedabad women workers earn on an average Rs.130 in a month whereas vendors earned about Rs.250.

Maithreyi Krishnaraj (1987)\textsuperscript{70} in her study examined the disadvantage that Indian women face in society today and the ordeal is not accidental outcomes; they are really the consequences of a systematic bias built in the social structure. Gender relation is structured in the household production through sexual division of labour which creates the specialization of the skills to women workers. On the economic activities of women workers, where activities are mixed, they become a matter of subjective judgement. Another notable feature of gender relations is that during the process of division of labour among different members in the family, only the so called undefined occupation or low productive work is allotted to women who toil for long hours but get no recognition and no good returns.

Qureshi (1990)\textsuperscript{71} has analysed the pottery artisans in informal sector in Haryana and stated that science and technology should bring the change among the traditional skilled artisans in informal sector in India. But, there are other obstacles to introduce the technology to the rural artisans such as lack of education and lack of awareness. Most of the women in the artisan families
are working at subsistence level and forced to do subsidiary jobs to supplement their earnings. He suggested that the institutional linkage to improve the skills of women workers in pottery craft is very important to enhance quality products.

Nandwani and Sharda (1985)\textsuperscript{72} analysed the role of women workers in the socio-economic development of Indian society and found that women's participation in economic activities is more prevalent in rural agricultural sector. They opined that existing statistical profile on the role and contribution of women to rural development presents a distressing picture. Further, they stated that 97 percent of women in rural areas are without skills. This underlines the bias in the technology policy of the Government.

The ILO study (1988)\textsuperscript{73} reveals that women are playing an important role in the economic development of the country. It is estimated that around 53 percent of total labour energy in household is attended by women. In certain cases, they have to even assume the role of principal breadwinners in addition to their other domestic responsibilities where male members do not contribute to the family income.

Mita Mazumdar (1991)\textsuperscript{74} in her study observed that household industry and self employed occupations are two major segment where large number of women particularly those below the poverty line were involved in the production activities. For them work and earnings are insecure.
In his study Shukla Deb (1993) \(^75\) analysed the role of women in informal sector and found that their efficiency is often seen as the prime reason for drawing them into economic activity. He viewed that it is quite simply imprudent not to make use of the latent production abilities of women and it is not an easy for the male dominated societies to accept. Hence women inevitably accept the low earning works.

Bina Agarwal (1989) \(^76\) explained the present status of rural household women and their participation in the economic development activities. The author mainly focussed on the unequal distribution of food and cloths to the women in the household, employment discrimination against the women folk, lack of access to land and problems faced by them. The author has also studied the escalating environmental degradation and its impact on poor rural women and analysed the interlinks between economic and social dimensions of women’s subordination.

Sangeetha Purushotham (1998) \(^77\) examined in her study the need for a shift towards an alternative development for women’s informal household production activities. She found that their earnings are more crucial and utilised to meet the family’s basic needs. Despite the various difficulties, women in poor households often contribute substantially to family income and act as sole breadwinners to the family.
2.5 CONCLUSION

The literature review on women and occupation particularly in terms of their integration into the development process has been rich in theoretical and conceptual approaches. From these review of literature, relevant information was derived about the women’s departure from their linkages in the traditional occupation. Rather what is missing in these studies is about institutional centered approach to deal with the issues of women in occupation particularly in the traditional informal sector including household production work. More than informal occupational sector, the production dimensions of occupation in the household itself is more severe and oppressive than the dual role for women. i.e. work in the household chores and production related occupational sector. The Beedi Industry and leather production work involve women through the franchising strategy that the women are working in addition to their own household chores.

Further, it was observed that women at work in India are in a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, social development and modernization have opened new avenues for women to take up employment particularly in the tertiary sector and on the other hand, the technological changes have affected the participation of women adversely in the primary and secondary sectors as women are handicapped due to lack of training opportunities and mobility. If women have to work, sustain and survive, they need more empowerment by way of increased earnings, creation of more micro level
employment opportunities, and encouragement of their participation in all social development activities.

The household industry, which fetches low earnings to the women workers, is a universal phenomenon. Household workers tend to work excessively for long hours, which in turn leads to poor health. Low earnings also have a negative influence on housing, nutrition, sanitation, and education. Often household workers accept to do work under conditions, which present risks or dangers for themselves and their families. Invariably, they have no access to health benefits or social security. Their chances of improving their economic and social status in general, and their terms and conditions of employment in particular are bleak unless they are given adequate legal protection and assistance to improve their bargaining power.

The global objective of social equality requires integration of women into the process of development by giving recognition to the contribution of women and making use of the women work force and recognizing the multiple roles of women. It is therefore imperative that the society in general and government in particular must avoid discrimination on the basis of gender and provide necessary conditions and support to enable women to perform their various roles successfully. So, this literature review enabled to identify the gap i.e. the institutional centered approach in integrating the women in informal household work with the developmental policies.
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