Chapter-1

Introduction
Human resources in an economy constitute a significant input in the production process of goods and services. The study of human resources, their quality and problems is of immense use in manpower planning in both developing as well as developed economies. Most of the population is depending upon agriculture which is contributing to about half of the national income in our country. The character of Indian economic development reflects in the nature and magnitude of agricultural development of the country. Agricultural labourers constitute the largest share of the labour force and they contribute one of the biggest slices of Indian population. The agricultural labour is provided mostly by backward classes and other classes who are economically poor and socially downtrodden since the days immemorial. Most of the scheduled caste population is depending upon the wage paid employment in agriculture to eke out their livelihood.

The agriculture labourers have to work in cold and hot weather from sunrise to sunset. Their wages are low when compared to industrial labourers. They are generally custom bound. They suffer from many social handicaps and majority of these handicaps are inter-connected with economic problems which overweigh other problems. The low income only enables them to have low levels
of living. The low standard of living further causes social disabilities and malnutrition. This ultimately, results in low efficiency of labour leading to low labour productivity in agriculture. These agricultural labourers are suffering due to unemployment, underemployment and low wages. Due to low employment potential in other sectors, most of the population is forced to be dependent on agriculture. Employment in agriculture is mostly seasonal and intermittent in character. The labourers suffer with seasonal unemployment. During the periods of peak agricultural activity, the demand for labour is high and during the off season they have to face acute unemployment problem. In the areas where multiple cropping is practiced, the labourers get employment throughout the year with minimum period of unemployment.

The low wages are responsible for their sub human standard of living. It is very difficult for an agricultural labourer to make their both ends meet with these low wages. In certain occupations women workers are paid lower rates than men. The inevitable result is that they are mostly semi-starved, not having sufficient physical strength to perform all agricultural operations in a proper manner. The chronic imbalance between labour supply and complementary resource in agriculture is normally expected to result in fixing up of wages at subsistence levels over large parts of the country. The productivity of Indian agriculture is substantially lower than many countries in the world which limits the employer's
capacity to pay so that few can afford to raise the wages above the prevailing level.

Agricultural labourers are paid usually on daily basis. In case, they are employed regularly for three or four days for one operation of a single farmer, the amount will be paid in one installment calculated on daily basis. Wages are also paid on piece rate basis for operations like sowing harvesting, transplantation and works connected with it. A few workers coming together as a group enter into an agreement with the cultivator to complete agricultural operations. They will be paid the entire amount agreed upon immediately after the activity is finished. The amount will be shared by the labourers among themselves. Sometimes, particularly in the case of groundnut harvest, wages are paid in kind proportionately with the produce harvested by the labourers. The agricultural labourers are conscious of the fact that there are various factors that determine the method of wage payment. Naturally, if the prices of food commodities are high they demand wages in kind. It is believed generally that kind payments may increase or decrease in quantity as well as in quality with a good or bad harvest. But, it has not proved to be correct. But we can safely generalize that traditions and customs play a dominant role in the method of wage payment.

In India, population, agricultural labour and total workers are fast growing from 1901 till today. The agricultural labour and other workers purely depend on wage paid employment. In the areas where multiple cropping is practiced, the
labourers get employment throughout the year with minimum period of unemployment. Although, several years of planned development have passed, still the conditions of agricultural labour are miserable and the meager incomes are resulting in low standard of living. Agricultural labour is provided mostly by BC/SC/ST and other depressed classes who are socially handicapped from the earlier days and are leading a life of misery.

**Wage Differentials**

There is no uniformity in wage rates of agricultural labourers. There are many factors which are contributing to the differences in wage rates. There are considerable disparities in wages between regions, between different crops as well as between male and female labour. The differentials between the wages of men and those of women are much more than what they are in an industry. This is due to the fact that wage differentials in agriculture are based not merely on the demand and supply position, but also on social considerations. The wages vary even from operation to operation. Wages offered for ploughing differs from wages offered for weeding. Disparities in wages between different regions arise on account of diversity of socio-economic conditions and differences related to traditions. Generally wages offered in the peak season are high and wages offered in the slack season are low. Wages also in turn depend upon the hours of work. If the hours of work are more, the wages are high to some extent as in the case of sugarcane cutting and jaggery making operations. But this trend is extremely to
give usual wages and do not reduce the wage rate. The agricultural labourers are
going higher income when work is available throughout the year. The
agricultural labour need not work compulsorily especially when they fall ill or
have to attend to some important work of their own. Also they have an option to
choose any work they like. But the agricultural labour has less security against the
vicissitudes of seasonal unemployment to which they are always exposed.

Women constitute nearly half of the population in any country whether it is
developed or a developing country. They contribute in many ways in the
development process. Broadly, women contributions to socio-economic
development are in two forms viz., to the households and the economy, at home
women’s role as a daughter, wife and mother cannot be simply ignored. Women as
a care taker of the family, most of the times attend to food requirements and she
looks after the health of all members in the family. These two duties are very
important in maintaining the productivity of the work force. Personal services
rendered by women in the household are termed as non-market output, which
means they have no clear price signals.

Outside the home, women try to be an equal and able partner in the
economic activities. In agriculture, she is engaged in seeding, planting, weeding,
irrigation, processing, harvesting and marketing operations. In rural areas “Dairy”
is her enterprise.
In economic terms, women is defined as

i. Quantitatively, supply of labour force, through her reproductive function.

ii. Qualitatively, improve productivity of workers through her proper care, at home.

iii. Supplement income of the family and thus helps in improving the standards of living.

iv. Helps by contributing towards savings.

Sustained and rapid rates are the most effective route to poverty reduction. However, the main challenge is to ensure that growth is pro-poor and pro-women. The Indian economy, on average, has grown at a rate of more than 8 percent during the last three financial years, making it one of the fastest growing economies in the world. This has been accompanied by a benign rate of inflation. The BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) report identifies India as the only economy that will be capable of maintaining growth rates above 5 per cent till the year 2050.

**Economic Growth, Poverty and Gender Inequality**

There exists a two-way link between economic growth and poverty and gender inequality. On one level, poverty and the lack of growth exacerbated gender disparities. Inequalities between girls and boys in access to schooling or adequate health care were more acute among poor people than amount those with
higher incomes. While poor people had less access to such productive resources as land and credit, poor women generally had the least access of all. Similarly, girls' and women's health and schooling are more vulnerable to economic downturns than those of boys and men. On another level, gender inequalities undermined the prospects for poverty reduction in fundamental ways. While disparities in basic rights, access to schooling, credit and jobs and the ability to participate in public life took their most direct toll on women and girls, the evidence showed that gender inequality ultimately hindered economic growth.

The rationale for economically empowering women is compelling for both for its own sake (intrinsic) and for other spillover benefits (instrumental). Research indicates that economic participation of women – their presence in the workforce in quantitative terms – is important not only for lowering the disproportionate levels of poverty among women, but also as an important step towards raising household income and encouraging economic development in countries as a whole. Amartya Sen makes a compelling case for the notion that societies need to see women less as passive recipients of help and more as dynamic promoters of social transformation, a view strongly buttressed by a body of evidence suggesting that the education, employment and ownership rights of women have a powerful influence on their ability to control their environment and contribute to economic development.
However, participation alone is not enough; quality of women’s work is critical. A key challenge is to overcome a situation where women may gain employment with relative ease, but where their employment is either concentrated in poorly paid or unskilled job “ghettos”, characterized by the absence of upward mobility and opportunity. For example, women are most often concentrated in “feminized” professions, such as nursing and teaching, office work, care of elderly and disabled termed “horizontal occupational segregation” – where they tend to remain in lower job categories than men. Typically, because these functions are carried out by women, they are the lowest paid, in addition to offering limited or no opportunity for advancement. The term “feminization of poverty” is often used to illustrate the fact that a substantial percentage of poor are women and that the gap between women and men in poverty has not lessened, but may well have widened in the past decade.

Further, globalization has dramatically changed the conditions under which the work for gender equality must be carried out, especially in high growth countries like India, while globalization has generated opportunities for local producers and entrepreneurs to reach international markets, it has at times intensified existing inequalities and insecurities for many poor women, who already represent two-thirds of the world’s poorest people. Since the gains of globalization are often concentrated in the hands of those with higher education –
those who own resources and have access to capital – poor women are usually the least able to seize the long term opportunities offered.

Some of the salient features of women employment in India are

- Women’s work in India – Invisible, unrecognized and unremunerated.
- India has 397 million workers.
- 123.9 million are women.
- 106 million are in rural areas.
- 18 million are in urban areas, only 7% of India’s labour force is in the organized sector, 93% is unorganized.
- 96% of women workers are in unorganized sector.
- Female work participation rate (WPR) has increased from 19.7% in 1981 to 25.7% in 2001.
- In rural areas, female WPR has increased from 23.1 to 31%.
- In urban areas it has increased from 8.3 to 11.6%.
- But women reported as non-workers in the census found to spending 4 hours a day picking, sowing, grazing cattle, threshing or working as domestic servants for 8-10 hours a day.
ILO methodological studies indicate that measured female labour force activity rates rose radically with a wider definition of "economic activity" to cover informal sector and non-market activities from 13% to 88% in India.

In last two decades, this advantage has been exacerbated as in most of the countries, policies reflect a commitment to global norms of markets and social policy is increasingly determined by market dynamics. Market friendly policies generate high growth rates that fail to translate into improved standards of health, education and human security. Feminist scholars have highlighted the gendered impact of such policies, many of which increase women's job vulnerability, unpaid work burden, while reducing state-level resources that might be used to provide a social safety net. Owing to dissent voiced by feminist scholars on the widespread assumption that gender inequality as a challenge can be overcome with effective and sustained advocacy as it is more about mindsets and less about policies, especially economic policies, there have been some attempts to integrate economic and social policies but gender concerns have not been accorded requisite attention. These disadvantages have led to a situation where gains in women's economic opportunities lag behind those in women's capabilities. This is inefficient, since increased women's labour force participation and earnings are associated with reduced poverty and faster growth, women will benefit from economic empowerment but so too will men, children and society as a whole. Women's lack of economic empowerment, on the other hand, not only impedes growth and poverty reduction, but also has a host of other negative impacts.
including less favourable education and health outcomes for children and a more rapid spread of HIV/AIDS. Thus, it is extremely important to ensure that women are economically empowered. There are various factors that contribute to the economic empowerment of women. These factors operate at various levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Macro-Policy Level</th>
<th>Women’s representation in better remuneration jobs; representation of women’s interests in macro-economic policies, national and state</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Meso-Community Level</td>
<td>Ownership of assets and land; access to credit; involvement and/or representation in local trade associations; access to markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micro-Household Level</td>
<td>Women’s control over income; relative contribution to family support; access to and control of family resources</td>
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Economic empowerment of women

In the current scenario, one can identify the following characteristics of women’s work in India.

1. **Volatility of employment**: Particularly, export-oriented employment, in less than one generation, there had been massive shifts of women’s labour into the paid work force and then the subsequent ejection of older women and
even younger counterparts into more fragile and insecure forms of employment. Women’s livelihoods in rural areas had been affected by the agrarian crisis in most developing countries.

2. **Changes in the nature of women’s work**: Including an increase in informal work, characterized by greater reliance on casual contracts and an increase in service work. There had been a substantial increase in self-employed low-end service work, especially in domestic and retail trade.

3. **Increase in unpaid work**: The impact of the decline in the public provision of many basic goods and services had meant a substantial increase in unpaid work.

4. **Crisis of livelihoods in agriculture**: The effect of trade liberalization had been accompanied by a decline in world agriculture prices. Agriculture constituted the main employer of women in the developing world and the basic source of income for most of the world’s poor.

5. **Massive increase in women’s migration for work**: What was new historically was the fact that women were moving alone. Cross-border migration had become a huge issue. While it had become a source of macroeconomic stability, it was also a source of exploitation. Internal migration had also increased. Migrant workers had few rights, and governments rarely thought about ensuring their protection.
Enabling Strategies for Economic Empowerment of Women

**Sound macro economic policies** - Gender inequalities manifest as women and men have different access to resources, roles and responsibilities, both in the market and at the household. These inequalities exist at the meso and micro levels with macro implications indicating clear two-way linkages. In the Indian context, fiscal policies are being increasingly examined through gender sensitive – budgeting exercise, although the focus still remains on expenditures in ‘soft’ sectors, with several aspects like taxation, trade, capital flows etc., remaining largely an unstudied domain. Macro-economic policies are formulated and implemented in areas such as trade, fiscal management, debt financing, social welfare and other sectors without a comprehensive assessment of their potential gender impacts. All these issues would be particularly important if the analysis of the sources of growth were to suggest that influencing the distribution of income and assets by gender might have a beneficial effect. Some policies, particularly those promoting greater women’s property rights and control over assets or access to credit, technology and transport, are likely to be win-win policies in terms of higher growth, greater gender equality and reduced susceptibility of women to economic shock.

**Improvement in Infrastructure**

Development of infrastructure was previously assumed to be gender neutral, with both sexes benefiting equally from well designed projects gender-
responsive infrastructure interventions can free up women’s time, thereby increasing girls enrolment in schools and facilitating women’s participation in income-generation and decision-making activities.

Transport

Men and women have varying transport needs and constraints and are affected differently by transport interventions.

Rural transport projects that build roads for motorized transport often do not benefit rural women, who mainly work in and around the village and travel on foot.

Urban transport systems that transport people to and from employment centers are sometimes inadequate for women, who must combine income generating activities with household and familiar activities, such as taking children to school and health centers and visiting the market. Poor women, who balance productive, social and reproductive roles in societies, often have higher demands on their time than poor men.

Women in Agriculture

While women have always played a key role in agricultural production, their importance both as workers and as farm managers has been growing, as more men move to non-farm job leading to an increased feminization of agriculture. Today 53% of all male workers are in agriculture as against 75% of all female
workers and 85% of all rural female workers are in agriculture. Women constitute 40% of the agricultural work force and this percentage is rising. Further, an estimated 20% of rural households are de facto female headed, due to widowhood, desertion, or male out-migration. These women are often managing agriculture and providing family subsistence with little male assistance. Hence, agricultural productivity is increasingly dependent on the ability of women to function effectively as farmers. In the above context, a two pronged approach of:

A. Ensuring effective (rights being rights not just in law but also in practice) and independent (rights being rights that women enjoy in their own capacity and of those enjoyed by men) land rights for women and

B. Strengthening women’s agricultural capacities is desirable.

Land Rights for Women in Agriculture

Land rights can serve multiple functions in rural women’s lives which are not easy to replicate through other means. Endowing women with land would empower them economically as well as strengthen their ability to challenge social and political gender inequalities.

Importance of Land for Women

- Land access can reduce a household’s risk of poverty, but for persistent gender inequalities land solely in men’s hands need not guarantee female welfare.
• Direct land transfers to women are likely to benefit not just women but also children. Evidence both from India and from many other parts of the world shows that women, especially in poor households, spend most of the earnings they control on basic household needs, while men spend a significant part of their on personal goods such as alcohol, tobacco etc.

• Women with assets such as land have greater bargaining power, which can lead to more gender – equal allocations of benefits even from male incomes.

• Women without independent resources are highly vulnerable to poverty and destitution in case of desertion, divorce or widowhood. In parts of western and Northwestern India, not uncommonly, rural women even from rich parental and marital families, deprived of their property shares when widowed, can be found working as agricultural labourers on the farms of their well-off brothers-in-law. The fate of deserted and divorced women is worse.

• Tenure security and especially titles can empower women to assert themselves better with agencies that provide inputs and extension services.

• Women in many parts of South Asia are often better informed than men about traditional seed varieties and the attributes of trees and grasses. If they had greater control over land and farming, this knowledge could be put to better use.
There are three main sources of land for women

1. Direct government transfers

2. The market (by purchase or lease)

3. Inheritance or gifts from families

To enhance women’s land access from all three sources, a range of initiatives are needed, including land titles to women in all government land transfers, credit support to poor women to purchase or lease in land from the market, raising legal awareness and legal support about women’s inheritance rights, supportive government schemes, recording women’s inheritance shares etc.

It will also need a new approach to enable to retain the land they get by strongly encouraging a “group approach” in land cultivation and investment in productive assets. It is now well recognized that the poor are best empowered if they function as a group rather than as individuals. This lesson should be true in the creation of all productive assets in women’s hands.

**Strengthening Women’s Agricultural Capacities**

The Ministry of Agriculture is now moving from a ‘women-only’ approach to programming (hitherto confined to the extension sector) to the gender mainstreaming approach spread across the entire establishment. Earmarking of benefits to women or of participation by women, though a basic tool, confines
itself to the quantitative dimension. Other indicators of good (and bad) program outcomes need to be identified so that an overall conclusion can be reached that the program and the funds invested, are making the women participants better off. Right now there are no such qualitative measurement tools. Successful achievement of physical and financial targets need not lead to empowerment or rise in status.

Better coordination and collaboration between the various inter-disciplinary approaches by all concerned can achieve better outreach to the poorer women working in the sector. Public investment in agriculture should be 10% of GDP with a stipulation that 50% of the new investment be made in rural activities directly benefiting women.

**Ensuring Women’s Effective Presence in Village Decision Making Bodies**

- Women are major stakeholders in the protection of the environment, especially forests. Given their stake in forests, it is critical that rural women are centrally involved in the institutions set up for forest management across the country. All Joint Forest Management groups across the states should allow all village adults to become members of the groups. Also these groups should have at least one third and if possible, 50% women in their executive committees. Within each JFM executive committee, there should be a subcommittee composed only of women who can put forward
women's collective concerns before the Executive Committee and General Body. Having one or two token women does not give women a say in the decisions, such as panchayats in Uttaranchal, they should be strengthened rather than replaced by JFM and made more gender balanced.

- Gender sensitizing through the media, educational institutions, etc., for changing social norms and social perceptions.

**Strengthening Existing Institutions**

The National Gender Resource Centre should be strengthened to enable it to meet its gender commitments (including gender budgeting) from a sounder technical and professional base. A better interface with the National Centre for Research on Women in Agriculture would contribute to this. Joint activities can be planned as part of the National Action Plan for women.

**Devise Incentive Mechanisms**

Increase subsidies to poor farmers and non-farm livelihoods (livestock, fishing, folder etc.) providing incentive such as provision of higher subsidies for land development, irrigation, credit and debate on transfer fee, house tax, sales tax and stamp duties on women owned land, housing and rural industries.
Statement of the Problem

Besides women’s contribution in terms of production and earnings they have been overlooked and labelled as supplementary, casual ‘optional’ and ‘supporting’ (far from these) their contributions are in reality substantial. It is unfortunate, that her role is not adequately recognized and her contributions are not properly quantified. There is gross under-estimation of this invisible labour force.

However, “Women and Development” as a subject entered the international scene around 1970, when the disguised economic-social contribution of invisible labour force began to be recognized. The declaration of the international women’s year by the United Nations General Assembly in 1975 was considered as a turning point regarding the role and position of women in society. The United Nations declared the period 1975-85 as the women’s decade.

The agricultural women labour is characterized by the following:

a. Widespread illiteracy and absence of non-agricultural occupational skills;
b. Early marriage, a large family and marginalization in the household level decision-making process;
c. Agricultural women labourers belong to landless families and also small and marginal land holders families; thus the women in general belong to rural poor households;
d. Agricultural women labourers are deprived of property rights, thus, the rural women in general and women of the SC and ST families in particular are very poor. This situation is called ‘feminization of poverty’;

e. Agricultural women labourers are discriminated by both gender and caste norms in rural India. Thus, the incidence of income poverty as well as human poverty is higher among low caste (untouchable or panchama) agricultural women labourers but it tends to decline as the women labour belongs to intermediate and high caste groups;

f. Agricultural women labourers are deprived of social security benefits, since agriculture is not an organized industry. Thus a large number of aged women employed in farm sector above 50 or 55 years of age face serious problems of food insecurity, income insecurity, housing insecurity and physical / health insecurity.

In India, the constitution has provided equal rights and privileges for men and women and has made special provisions for women to improve their status in society. Economic development is initiated through the implementation of series of Five-Year Plans since 1951. But these plans did not seem to have made significant impact on women. It has either left them out or considered them as unequal and unimportant partners. This is evidenced by the act of low sex ratio, low life expectancy, high mortality, illiteracy, low nutritional status, low economic
and social status of women especially in rural areas. During the last four decades, especially from Sixth Five-Year Plan onwards, the Government of India has evolved a number of programmes in order to benefit the rural women in various fields like social, educational, health, economic, political empowerment or development.

The minimum wage legislation includes the agricultural women labourers. In many agricultural regions – both in wet land and dry land areas, the rural women labourers do not receive minimum wages. This is partly so because still gender bias is strong and it is operating in the rural economy and society and partly because in many agricultural regions farming is not remunerative; thus, the land owners are unwilling to pay minimum wages. This is vicious nature of the low wages, high level of deprivation of human rights including economic rights and high degree of feminization of poverty in rural India.

On account of seasonal unemployment the rural women labour is wasted (remains idle). This is another area of constraint on the state’s capacity to alleviate the feminization of poverty / rural poverty. Thus how can we reduce rural poverty and empower agricultural women? And also reduce the incidence of backward agriculture on rural women? Like this, many development and social justice related questions or issues can be raised. And we have to search answers for these questions.
Women's Work: Some Theoretical Formulations

There is no unique thematic model which can capture the diversity in the women's work. Several theoretical models have been formulated, but the existing theories can be categorized into three i) Neo-classical theories, ii) Segmentation Models and iii) Feminist or radical theories.

1. Neoclassic theories

According to the typical neo-classical approach, based on the balancing of demand and supply in a competitive capitalist economy, workers were paid according to the value of their marginal product. The male-female differences in wages and earnings are thus either due to the lower productivity of women workers or due to imperfections in the labour market. According to neo-classical approach, the factors like family responsibilities, physical strength, education and training, hours of work, absenteeism and turn over affect, the labour productivity and labour supply of women and they account all these male-female differentials in earnings in the labour market. The human capital theory, developed in 1960s was used by the neo-classical to strengthen the critical foundations of the labour market analysis. Neo-classical theory suggest that women earn lesser than men because they have lower levels of human capital and therefore, lower labour productivity (Mince and Polan Check, 1974). This happens because parents and women themselves are not keen to invest towards women's education, it is also,
due to marriage, bearing and rearing of children and for other reasons their employment is interrupted. In such a situation employees are also not willing to invest in the training of women. Consequently, women workers acquire lesser experience and training and their skills are lower which account for their lower earnings.

The new home economics approach, emphasizing the time allocation of the household between home production and wage work, also strengthened the basic neo-classical theoretical formulation. According to this approach, the household maximizes its utility, not subject to a simple budget constraint but subject to its production function, a total time constraint. Accordingly, the participation of women in the labour market would be greatly influenced by the family composition – the families allocate their resources (time and money) among family members in a national income, which causes females to receive less human capital investments when young and they have to take care of the children when older. Each household member undertakers those activities in which they are more efficient. Even though men and women are equally efficient in household chores, men receive higher wages when men go out to work. Further, a general rise in income might permit women to go out to work since it enables the purchase of labour savings household technology. A rise in the market wage of women vis-a-vis men should have the same impact.
The neo-classical approach has been very important in pointing out some of the productivity related differences between men and women which account, at least partially, for the fact that men earn more often based on the need to improve women's educational levels and training – that is, their human capital. In developing countries, women are generally less educated than men and this factor may accordingly be more important in these countries than in industrialized countries.

However, this theory has been criticized on the ground of its unrealistic assumptions.

2. Labour market Segmentation Theories

Labour market Segmentation has been a powerful and popular theoretical approach for the study of labour market for the last two decades or so, both in developed and developing countries. Labour market segmentation is essentially a refinement of the neo-classical theories as they view the labour markets as segmented by institutional barriers. A popular and early version of the segmentation model is dual labour market theory which divides labour market into primary and secondary sectors the former is relatively better in terms of pay, security and opportunities for advancement and the latter has relatively inferior jobs with low pay, low job security and little possibilities of advancement. An unequal distribution of technical progress between modern and traditional sectors
has led to highly differentiated productivity growth, leaving the traditional sector labour force in a permanent situation of under employment, low productivity and poverty. This process shows up in the segmentation of the labour market on one side, the modern sector is responsible for a high proportion of total production but a relatively low proportion of total employment and the other, activities of traditional type, employing the majority of the labour force, but with only a limited contribution to total production. This leads to a situation in which workers with equal abilities obtain different levels of incomes, depending upon the production stratum of the enterprises in such type work. There are various models developed with regard to the labour market segmentation and in developing countries these models have been described mostly in the context of economic dualism, and most common expression is in the distinction between ‘formal’ and ‘informal’ sectors. Both horizontal and vertical segmentation models have been developed in this context. Horizontal segmentation denotes the separation of complete production system, in which all labour have some common characteristics and which may involve a separation by type of enterprise or product, associating the labour process within each segment with particular production process, vertical segmentation, on the other hand involves the use of labourers from different segments in a single production process.

Although labour market segmentation theories give powerful explanation of male-female wage differential and discrimination of women in the labour market,
they are not able to adequately explain why sex is such a persistent and important dimension for labour market segmentation.

3. Feminist or Radical Theories

There are various versions of this approach, known as feminist or gender or radical theories. It has many divergences and it incorporates both Marxist and Non-Marxist approaches. The main point of the labour market and in the home/family are interrelated, and part of an overall social system in which women are subordinate to men.

Marxist feminist economists attribute capitalism and particularly as responsible for lower earnings of women. Both are interrelated and act as cause and effect for each other, in particular, the women hold interior position in family than men. Men are considered as main bread winners and women are responsible for house keeping. The women may enter labour market if i) there is no man to earn in the family, ii) men may not be able to earn an income which will fulfill the family requirements, iii) the men are not ready to share their whole income with other family members rationally, leaving women and children at a very low level.

Low-income level compels women to join labour market. Since she generally has no required skill to join high income secure and lucrative job, joins low paying jobs. Low payment and insecure job, keeps her at subordination of her husband.
Feminist writers have also raised the issue to sexual harassment. Anker and Hein (1986, p. 13) argue that in developing countries, sexual harassment may be greater problem than in the developed countries. First, the group of women desperately in need of income (which constitute prime victims for harassment) may be greater in developing countries. Secondly, in traditional societies, women leaving the protection of her home in order to take employment are more likely to be perceived as ‘loose’ women and consequently willing for sexual activity. Thirdly, in contexts where men are not accustomed to interaction with women as workers in an organizational setting, they are likely to fall back on gender based expectations of behaviour. It has also been stressed by the feminists that ‘women’s occupations tend to be extensions of domestic roles (such as teaching, housing cleaning, serving, driving etc.) and just as women’s domestic work is devalued within most societies, so are these occupations of the skills. Further, job evaluation systems for determining the ‘value’ of work tend to give more weight to qualities generally attributed to men-physical force is placed above manual dexterity and patience.

It is difficult, rather impossible to analyze the women’s work and different dimensions in a single ‘the critical model’. There is enormous diversity in women’s work situations in a country as big and heterogeneous as India. None of the above three main theoretical formulations is able to capture the reality- each one of them only partially explains the scenario.
Chapter-I  Introduction

Need for the Study

Women in the Indian labour force have been widely researched since the mid seventies. A number of studies have highlighted their status, visibility and importance in the economy. There are however many problems related to the definition of work, more working hours, invisibility of work (household or domestic work), enumeration and coverage of workers which is effecting the work participation of women.

Women are the backbone of the village economy of rural India. Women take up different works to eke out their livelihood and the majority of the rural women depend on agriculture, which is the major unorganized sector in India. Many of these labourers are landless homeless and belong to the socially depressed class of the society. Despite the seasonal nature of employment in the field of agriculture enormous growth is witnessed in the size of the agricultural labourers since the beginning of this country. An attempt is made to study the women labourers, especially in agricultural field of two talukas from Shimoga district in Karnataka.
Objectives of the Study

The following specific objectives are set out for a detailed study:

i. To examine the socio-economic conditions of agricultural women labourers in Karnataka in general and Shimoga district in particular with a view to assess the degree of feminization of agriculture in different social groups;

ii. to examine the employment situation of women agricultural labour in the study area and

iii. to examine the trends in wages of agricultural women labourers in the study area with a view to examine the degree of wage differentials in relation to minimum agricultural wages.

Hypotheses

i. The extent of feminization in agriculture is directly proportionate with the extent of the prevalence of subsistence agriculture and visa-versa.

ii. Wage differentials are very high in agriculture.

Limitations

i. Agricultural women labourers who are below 60 years and above 20 years are only considered for the case study analysis; since they are the economically active population.

ii. In socio-economic status of the self-employed women are not analyzed here. Because it is not part of our study.
Scope of the Study

In this study an attempt has been made to evaluate various aspects of women employment and wage differentials. The finding of this study could be gainfully by the administrators, policy makers and extension workers to know about the status of women workers and women employment.

Chapter Scheme

The present study is organized into seven chapters. The contents of these chapters are outlined here.

Chapter – I : Introduction

Chapter - I present the theme of the study, statement of the problem and need for the study. The objectives of the study and hypotheses to be tested are also specified. The limitations of the study and chapter schemes are presented at the end.

Chapter – II : Review of literature

Contains the review of literature relating to the objectives of the present study.

Chapter - III: Methodology and Data Base

The chapter – III presents the methodology adopted for the study, selection of study area, selection of sample talukas, selection of hoblies, selection of
villages, selection of sample farmers, description of the study area, nature and sources of data are discussed. The comprehensive discussion on sampling techniques, analytical procedure and statistical tools used in the study is also presented.

Chapter-IV : Socio-economic conditions of Agricultural Women Labour in the Study Area

Chapter - IV deals with the socio-economic conditions of agricultural women labour in Shimoga district. It includes fairly good rate of growth of the economy in the field of transportation, health, education, cultural, power supply, agricultural development and infrastructural development.

Chapter-V: Analysis of Employment of Agricultural Women Labour in the Study Area

Chapter – V analyses the employment of women in different agricultural activities of kharif season in Nidige hobli and Hiriyur hobli and women employment in different agricultural activities in Rabi season in Nidige and Hiriyur hobli, activities during lean season – Nidige hobli and activities during lean season in Hiriyur hobli. Comparison between employment of agricultural women labour in the villages of both the hoblies in kharif season, comparison between employment of Agricultural women labour in the villages of both the hoblies in rabi season and comparison between employment of agricultural women labour during lean season in the villages of both the hoblies.
Chapter-VI: Analysis of Wages of Agricultural Women Labour in the Study Area

Analysis of wages of agricultural women labour has been presented in chapter six. It includes wages of agricultural women labour in the Nidige hobli in kharif season and wages of agricultural women labour in Hiriyur hobli in kharif season, wages of agricultural women labour in Nidige hobli in rabi season and wages of agricultural women, labour in Hiriyur hobli in rabi season, activities during lean season in Nidige hobli and activities during lean season in Hiriyur hobli.

Comparison between the villages of both the hoblies regarding total wages received by agricultural women labour in kharif season and rabi season comparison between the villages of both the hoblies of Shimoga and Bhadravathi taluka regarding total wages received by agricultural women labour in lean season.

Chapter-VII: Summary, Conclusion and Policy Implications

In this chapter, the main findings of the study are summarized and appropriate conclusions are drawn for the agricultural women employment and wages in Shimoga district.
References


