Chapter - II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Many studies have been conducted on “Women Empowerment” at micro and macro level. A good number of such studies have been related to the role of non-government organizations in women empowerment. Literature on NGOs and women empowerment in the form of reference works, research papers and case studies has been published in India in recent years on a substantial scale.

Women empowerment is of much significance and of contemporary interest in view of the vast women population in India which is subject to severe disadvantages and exploitation perpetrated by the male dominant and tradition bound social system in our country. Women empowerment has assumed greater significance and the studies by various writers have highlighted the need for empowerment of women in various areas such as economic, social, political, legal, cultural and other fields where women are subject to discrimination and harassment.

The researcher has made a comprehensive reading of the available literature on the subject of women empowerment and the role of NGOs and NSS in the area of women development and empowerment. However, on grounds of feasibility some select publications on the relevant aspects of women empowerment and role of NGOs and NSS have been reviewed here. The reviews have been useful in gracing a good insight into the theoretical and practical aspects of the subject.

Vanita Viswanath’s main refrain in her work “NGOs and Women’s Development in Rural South India – a Comparative Analysis” has been to measure the efficiency of NGOs in deriving economic benefit development
of leadership capacity and increasing the collective power of women. The study is based on the analysis of the working of two NGOs located in Dharwad in Karnataka, India Development Service (IDS) and The Grama Vikas.

The author's focus in the first part of her book is on analyzing the categories of organizational functioning of the NGOs studied and a framework for measuring NGO’s effectiveness. Vanita has provided a brief administrative history of the state along with an economic profile and the policy of the Government for women's development in the second part of the book. The third part of her book is devoted to provide a detailed picture of the India Development Service (IDS) and its dimensions. The fourth part is devoted to provide a description of Gram Vikas project and comparative and critical study of these two projects – IDS and Gram Vikas has been made in the fifth and sixth parts of the study. The constraints aspects of implementing these two projects has been studied in the seventh part of the study. The author has provided her major findings and conclusion in the last part of the book.

The author has concluded on three major aspects of women empowerment. The first conclusion relates to economic benefit to the clients. The author says it is necessary for the NGOs to design programmes in which profits are manifested early and frequently. She further asserts that programme related initiative and decision - making as aspects of leadership capacity are better addressed in Gram Vikas programs than in IDS projects. On Collective power, the author has observed that in order to empower the community, women’s groups must be strengthened and NGOs should incorporate appropriate mechanisms to further that objective in their interventions.
The various dimensions of women empowerment are very well discussed in the edited book “Empowerment of Women” by Shanthy (1998). The publication deals with the aspects of general, political, legal, social, economic and cultural aspects of empowerment of women. The contributions in the book are made by experienced academics, social activist, legal experts and research associates.

In section I, PKB Nayar has tried to conceptualize empowerment, its ramifications and possible strategies of empowerment of women. Ananthlaxmi Subramaniam in her article on “Political Aspects of Women” has dealt with political empowerment of women. The stress in this article is on importance of participation of women in decision making in power structures. The author has pleaded for reservations for women at all levels from panchayats to parliament. The discussion on legal aspects of women empowerment is focused on personal laws and legal remedies for crimes committed against women. This article by Sheila Jayaprakash has examined the scope of the legal provisions under Law of Inheritance and the Criminal Procedure Code and IPC.

The second section deals with the role of family courts in providing justice to poorer women. Articles in section IV deal with social aspects of empowerment of women. Rajkumari Chandrasekhar has analysed the importance of education as an instrument of empowerment. The other article by Prema Rajgopalan deals with the ordeals faced by women in getting into a career in science in this male dominated society.

The articles on economic aspects of women empowerment in section V of the book relate to the role of Government and NGOs in the empowerment of women, self employment for economic empowerment by
K Shanthi and by K. Seethalakshmi and K. Shanthi. Other articles in this section deal with economic empowerment of aged women, economic empowerment of female leads of households and on roots of inequality within family. In section VI, Chandra Periganayagam has discussed cultural empowerment of women through street plays as a media.

The book edited by Misra and Singh (1992) "Indian Women-Challenges and change" provides wide spectrum of analysis of changing attitudes, values, behavior pattern and economic change witnessed by women in the country. The volume encompasses numerous problems such as depressed conditions, exploitation, injustice and other related problems of daily life. The book is claimed to be containing tridimensional aspects of Indian women. These dimensions are change problem and methodology. The editors of the book have observed that women are neither wholly changed nor wholly traditional and deprived.

The volume contains 19 papers divided into three sections. Section A deals with changing attitudes values, traditions and occupational mobility of Indian women. Section B deals with the problems they face while they are in family, outside and at their work place, and section C suggests plans, procedures, and policies meant highly congenial for bettering socio-economic, political and psychological conditions, levels and status of Indian women of today. The book highlights a fluctuating situation of which Indian women of today are kept to exist.

The study on "Status of Rural women in Karnataka" conducted by National Institute of Advanced Studies (1998) is based on an empirical survey on varied issues related to economic, social, political and legal aspects of women in a regional set up like Karnataka. The study has made
a comprehensive analysis of issues like food and health security, occupational status, labour and income of women. The sociological aspects like marriage, control over reproduction and sexuality, etc. have been discussed. Other aspects relate to access to education, political participation, law and justice. The study has made detailed analysis of access to credit and other public resources.

The study is unique both conceptually and in methodology. The methodology adopted was participatory and democratic with NGOs as equal partners.

The findings of the study indicate the high lighting of the issues of violence, land rights and ownership, health care and the multitude of facets that impact on women's lives.

The study has good relevance and useful to researchers, policy makers, political activists, administrators and others concerned with the upliftment of women’s status.

Kilby in his study “Non Governmental Organizations and Empowerment: A study of Women’s Self Help Groups In India” examines the nature of empowerment for poor women in India and the factors that influence empowerment outcomes arising from NGO interventions. The study is a research work on the NGOs and empowerment.

The definitional aspects of the discussion relates to empowerment as both the expansion of choices that an individual experiences and their capacity to act on those choices.

A part of the study is devoted to the role of accountability for the NGO to the people with whom it is working as a factor for empowerment. The author has observed that NGOs are to be seen to be important agents.
of empowerment as they are generally regarded as being closer to the communities with whom they are working than other development agencies.

The study is based on a survey of 15 NGOs in Karnataka and Maharashtra in India and the author interviewed 77 SHGs of poor women who were served by these NGOs. The author’s conclusions based on the field investigation has revealed significant trends. The author found that women closely respond to the notion of changes in their agency as being key to what they see as empowering. The author has confirmed through her findings that accountability of the NGO to the groups, together with the period for which the group had been together and the leadership of the groups were all statistically correlated with empowerment outcomes.

The findings of the research study have important implications for development practice which seem to focus more on efficient program management practice for effective programs. The author has rightly contended that the findings of the study rightly point to a stronger focus on formalized participatory processes which hold the development agency to account by the beneficiary constituents as a powerful empowerment process in its own right.

**Jyoti Mitra (1997)** in her book ‘Women and Society -Equality and Employment’ has provided an extensive compass of views on different aspects of women’s development with particular emphasis on women’s empowerment and the goal of equal opportunity. The author has made comments on the various international bodies related to UN and other such organizations which in one way or the other look to the interest of women and children welfare in the first chapter on Women and
Transnational Dimensions'. The author's views in the second chapter on sociology of women and work are quite revealing. She refers to two basic needs strategy for women in developing countries. One is to enable them to contribute more effectively to the satisfaction of their families' basic needs, within the framework of their traditional responsibilities. The other which is the fundamental need of the women themselves is to ease their work burden while furthering their economic independence and their more equitable integration into the community beyond the narrow circle of the family. The main argument in the third part of book on "women's identity and professional life" is that even the processes of professionalization and industrialization are not in favour of women. Professionalization is basically a process of increased control and power. In the process, women who are less powerful in the overall social organization are related to positions which are devoid of power and control, if not through deliberate discrimination at least by the existential exigencies of working women.

The author Jyoti Mitra has succinctly identified some criteria of integration of women's role in development process in her discussion on "Women and Development Main stream." She stresses the need for women obtaining activities. There is need for recognizing women's role in the reproduction and maintenance of human capital. Integration should involve women's productive roles being considered in the designing stage. Women should have widest of choices and they should have the possibility for making those choices. The author further stresses that women should control their earnings, have the right to challenge the status and receive needed information which should be made available.

The discussion on "Aspects of women in Business" is quite relevant for women empowerment. The author contends that Women have the
ability to make it in business within the management ranks of the modern corporation and management has given every indication that they want to see her there. The author feels there is need for retraining and re-education which will allow acceptance of the modern women by men.

The author has commented that women will face both adverse and favorable forces in their quest for equal rights in the corporate world in her discussion on “Women in the Corporate World 2001.” She has felt that men will dominate for sometime to come by virtue of their sheer strength of numbers.

The author has observed in her discussion on “Women and Socialist System” that the changes in the production relations affected the socialist revolution created conditions that made possible the weakening of the traditional family and disintegration of religious organizations in a short span of time. She feels that further advance towards equal status is restricted because of the existence of an hierarchical economic and political power structure.

The discussion on “women Entrepreneurs as Professional Entities” is quite comprehensive. The author has made a wide ranging examination of the issues involved and has suggested some useful remedies towards women empowerment. She has stressed the need for changing attitudes of girls and women themselves and of parents and society towards women’s roles and duties. The author feels that women themselves and society at large need to gain confidence in women’s abilities to tackle non-traditional work. The author further observes that research is needed on the background, motivation, and attitudes of women who take up entrepreneurial activity. She opines that women’s professional
organizations need to become more active on behalf of their members both for advocacy and technical support.

Discussing the issues of Women Managers and modern Management A study of Japan’s Corporate sector" the author has predicted that the future appears to offer increasing opportunities for women in management in Japan. However, she observes that there will still be some glaring blind spots. Ambitious young Japanese women will have to seek out opportunities for advancement shrewdly and pick their mates carefully.

In the edited book “Dimensions of Women’s Exploitation” Malthotra (2004) has carried out discussions on various issues related to the female exploitation and women’s emancipation. “Violation of Women’s Rights” has been discussed in the context of international law. Instances of violations of human rights with regard to women in Myanmar, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, etc, with details of violence against women have been cited. The authors have detailed the various guarantees to women and children under the provisions of the international law.

Discussion on “Trafficking in Women” and “Regional sexual violence and Abduction Against Women” is centred on the various issues involved in these sex related violence perpetrated on women in different countries. The articles on STDs (Sex Transmitted Diseases) and HIV have discussed the problems related to sex worker and women’s movement.

The article on “Transforming Approaches in women Empowerment” is devoted to discussion on women’s security. Policies and programmes for women empowerment and on reservation for women.

The discussions in the different articles provide a comprehensive picture of the issues involved in the exploitation of women.
The edited book “Economic Empowerment of Rural Women in India.”

By Singh et al. (2004) brings into clear focus the role and status of rural women in India and their problems arising from the given socio economic set up of our society. The contributors to this volume have made critical analysis and evaluation of governmental policies and programmes.

In their discussion on “Role and Participation of Rural Women in Economic Development of India” Rita Bakshi and Aruna Sharma have highlighted the various discriminations or biases witnessed by women in India in general and rural women in particular in regard to distribution of developmental benefits. They have also stressed the fact that the contribution of women in the development process has been continuously undervalued or underreported. The authors have concluded that there is need to identify the inherent skills in rural women folk, enhance their skills and capabilities and channelize it into proper direction. This requires metamorphic changes in the existing institutional structure as well as attitudinal changes in mindset of our planners and decision makers.

Meenu Agarwal has focused on rural women’s participation in agriculture. She has detailed the different areas of agricultural operations in which Indian women have been engaged and how much time and labour they have put in there. She has cited the negligence of the planners and policy makers in proper appreciation of the economic and social roles played by women in rural life. The author in her article “Economic participation of Rural Women in Agriculture” has advocated for removal of all obstacles to the full participation of women to ensure that they find on equal terms with men in all facets of life. She further observes that in
India agriculture needs to be matched with feminization of agriculture for an overall development of rural economy.

Singh and Singh in their article “Economic participation of Rural Women In informal sector through Self Help Group” have observed that the only best solution for improving the present pitiable position of women is the formation of Self Help Groups (SHGs) by women themselves, thereby making them economically self reliant and allowing them to take their own decisions independently.

Beena Lohani in her article “Government and Rural Women in Economy” has observed that status of women is closely linked to their economic position which in turn depends upon their access to productive resources and opportunities for participation in economic activities. The author has examined some major women development oriented programmes in India like Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWACRA) and Self Help Group (SHGs). The author has contended that in a planned society women’s place shall be equal to that of men. Equal status, equal opportunities and equal responsibilities shall be the guiding principles to regulate the status of women. The author has pleaded for greater attention towards women’s education to enable them to have facilities for training for any profession or occupation that they may choose to follow.

Renu S. Rana has observed that employment of women has been recognized as the critical entry point for women’s integration in the mainstream of development. In her article on “Empowerment and Occupation of Rural Women and their Contribution to Economic Development” the author has focused on some specific problems facing rural women viz., (1)
marginalizing women in relation to rural agricultural development (2) lack of training to develop their awareness and skill (3) low productivity and narrow occupational choices (4) low level of decision making and (5) inadequate financial and expert guidance for promoting socio-economic activity of rural women. The author has suggested to involve women in the administration of rural development.

The book contains few more articles on the role and status of rural women by Poonam Sharma, Poonam Singh, Meenu Agarwal and others. The discussions in the articles by all these scholars have contemporary relevance and of much use to scholars and researchers engaged in studies on women empowerment and development.

In an UNICEF sponsored research project report by Malini Chand and Olhen (1980) on “Income Generating Activities for Women – some case studies” an attempt in made to assess the performance of some organizations involved in women oriented activities in different parts of the country. The project has the scrutinized functioning of (i) Lijjat Papad Centre, Valod, Gujarat (ii) Tamil Nadu Sarvodaya Sangh, Thirappur Tamil Nadu (iii) Woollen Handloom Weavers of Pampore of Pampore, and Chadura – Jand K and (ii) Sikki Grass Handicraft work, Sursand – Bihar.

The book is prepared by Malini Chand, Cevaki Jain, R. Kalyana sundaram and Nalini Singh. The research projects on these units have provided good insight into the working of these units and their performances.

i. The Lijjat Papad Unit at Valod in Gujart has been found producing high quality papads with technically qualified supervisors. The study has revealed that operating costs have
been kept low by minimizing overheads. A margin of 20-25 percent was maintained between ex-factory cost and sales price. This has served as the basis for profitability. The Valod unit has adopted scrupulous accounting practice of the Lijjat organization.

ii. The Tamil Nadu Sarvodaya Sangh engaged in handloom spinning has adopted the ideal of decentralization and self management based on Sarvoday, a philosophy of voluntary divesting of power. The unit has used improved technique of production and marketing. It has also instituted several programes for the welfare of rural workers. However the unit's success is due to the generous support form Khadi and Village Industries Commission.

The TNSS lacks definitive programme for women even though it has 60000 women members. With 60 percent of rural artisans being women, their representation at District sanghas is negligible.

iii. Handloom Weaving of Woolen Khadi at Kashmir Dastkar Anjuman (KDA) Pampore and Chedura J. and K

The KDA has created an appropriate infrastructure using the weaving skill of poor rural households. It provides processing facilities and enhances the marketability of its production. KDA receives financial assistance from KVIC. There is however keen competition for raw wool between agencies and there is overlapping in marketing between major agencies.

iv. Sikki Grass Handicraft at Sursand is in North Bihar. The unit's functioning is inhibited due to lack of orientation of Sikkim production to market demand. Sikki centres lack autonomy from parent body. They lack management competency.
The study has revealed that these units have failed in meeting adequately the needs of women. Hence there is need for reorienting their functioning towards women specific programmes in their overall management.

The study on “woman’s Place” by UN Nahar and Others is based on personal interviews with women respondents belonging to three type of professions viz., teaching, medicine and law. The main refrain of the study relates to options and units in women’s professional career. It covers several dimensions with regard to lady professionals. The study is important to rationalize the structure and function of the professions to make it conducive to the participation of fair sex. The authors have observed that woman in profession often finds herself face to face with problem that stem from the typically gender oriented mindset still stuck up in the conservative mould whose demands and expectations drag her back into the fold of home and hearth, and the unfamiliar challenges she meets in the profession.

The findings of the study reveal a high degree of satisfaction among medical and teaching respondent professionals but a low level of satisfaction among legal professionals but a low level of satisfaction among legal professionals. Lady professionals have not experienced harassment. Discrimination is experienced by lady professionals. However, family duties have come in the way of their professional duties. Disturbance in family life and neglect of children are mentioned as negative aspects of working. Rise in status, financial well being, independent life and self confidence are the perceived positive effects of work.
“Women and Empowerment” by Jaya K. Pillai is an analytical study of women in different fields of socio economic set up in India. The author has made some strong observations on empowerment which she considers as an active, multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. The author affirms that power has to be acquired and once acquired it needs to be exercised sustained and preserved. Women have to understanding the causes of the existing inequality of women in all sectors-economic, social, political, legal and educational, and take the initiative to change their status.

The author has devoted the first part of her discussion on empowerment of women in general. The second part of the study is related to empowerment of women professionals. The analysis in the first part of the discussion covers such areas as the existing status of female child, legal rights of women, the views of Gandhi and Nehru on women’s rights. The analysis traces the social and economic development of women since independence. The first part of the study also covers aspects like policy on the development of poor women.

The core discussion is on the strategies of empowerment, the new role of education, the importance of academic discipline of women’s studies as a powerful tool to the cause of women’s liberation. It provides the strategies for advancement of women into upper management position.

The author has reviewed studies on four categories of women—women physicians, women engineers women lawyers and women managers in the second part of the study.

Sunita Gupta and Mukta Gupta have touched varied aspects of women and their problem in their work “Role of Women in the Twenty-first
Century." The authors have stressed the need for an all round development of women through imparting of education and providing employment. They have focused on the scientific basis of women development. The attempt by the authors is a multi-disciplinary investigation into various aspects of pressing socio, economic, and political problems facing Indian women. The authors have argued that the development plans and policies in India have neglected or have even been detrimental to women. Hence the authors have tried to explore how the problems can be solved after integrating women into development.

The authors have mentioned some inherent weaknesses in the present socio-economic set up in the country which have serious implications for women. They relate to illiteracy, lack of training in basic skills, inefficient enforcement of labour laws, and industrial awards, non-implementation of national policies, non-appraisal of job performances and not discarding traditional attitudes.

The authors have rightly suggested that there is an imperative need for systematic study and an in-depth research in the status, position and role of women from historical, socio, logical, cultural and economic perspective.

The focus in the publication “Social Security for Women” by Stiftung (ed) is on the question of social security for women since they are affected by direct and indirect forms of discrimination in the social security system in many countries. Mr. Beate Martin contend that workers on part time basis do not often receive the minimum level of earnings and are therefore not covered under the social insurance schemes. Domestic and home
workers, casual and contract workers are exempted from coverage by law. They are not entitled to sick leave maternity leave etc.

Subramanya in his discussion on “Social Security Needs of Women” has observed that the need for adequate and stable income should be the corner stone of all efforts to improve the social security of the poor. He has further mentioned that social security needs of women should be considered in the context of their economic and social needs like nutrition, healthcare support to discharging family responsibility etc.

Lynn Villacorta of ILO in his presentation has observed that existing social security schemes must be reformed in order to eliminate discrimination against women and to expand coverage into informal sector. Subramanya in his paper on social security for women in informal sector has lauded the work of NGOs in this direction. He has specially referred to the work of Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA). However, he is not happy with the general situation about the social security cover provided for women under the existing schemes. He has pleaded for rationalizing the existing schemes for a comprehensive system of social security. Priority should be given to those poor women in the informal sector.

Ananth Laxmi Ganapathi has pleaded in her discussion that the informal sector is also covered through maternity protection schemes. She has also advocated that some areas of the rural sector could also be covered through contributory schemes or through levy as is being done in Kerala for agricultural workers.

Dr. Sarala Gopalan has opined that the large number of women who need to work and earn a wage still need a well designed and integrated
support service mechanism. There is need for concentration on micro level planning to increase the intensity of services like crèches for infants and integration with other pre-school services would need greater attention.

**RC Gupta** in his paper “Experiments in Social Security Measures in NGOs” has lauded the work of NGOs when he observed that the NGO credit rounded through self help groups (SHGs) of poor women also contribute to social security of poor by reaching financial assistance to them in a simple, flexible, friendly and self-managed manner with no collateral arrangements.

The above presentations made at the National Seminar on ‘Social Security for Women have highlighted the different aspect of this important measure towards women empowerment in India. The presentations throw light on the various issues involved in the social security needs of women in general and women working in informal sectors in particular.

**Usha Sharma and B.M. Sharma** in their volume “Women and Society” (Ed) have very aptly observed that the status of women cannot be regarded as a socially static phenomenon. It changes under the stress of multifarious social, economic, political, technological and ideological forces. They have further stated that in India these forces have been working decisively and no doubt the status of women has changed substantially. The editors have rightly given credit to various social reformers, educationists and all others who have always championed the cause of women’s development in various fields.

The writings on the status of women in India by great political and social leaders include Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Sarojini Naidu, Vinoba Bhave, Kamaladevi Chattopadhya and such others.
The writings highlight the status of women in educational, economic and political arena. The collection of the writings is more focused on women’s education, co-education, education of women in rural areas. There are writings on the role of Christian Missionaries in the area of Education. Social aspects of women like widow re-marriage, sex education, education of women of different religious groups like Hindu and Muslim women.

The collection is a good contribution towards policy formulations for the amelioration of social and economic problems of women in India.

**Ashok Kumar** has tried to provide an integrated account of women’s social status and the vital issues pertaining to their development. The author observed that sustaining equality of status, augmenting credit lending programmes, skills, training, business development, job counseling and women’s participation in economic decision making merit consideration.

The author has pleaded for institutional change from the point of view of women involved in development delivery. Women field workers in rural development programmes. The author has studied through his investigation of two rural credit and development programmes in Bangladesh, in the first chapter of the volume I of the book. In the second chapter on “women and Development Planning” the author has asserted that economic crisis in many Third world countries has led to reduction in spending on health, education and food subsidies and the impact is heaviest on poor women. He has argued that investing in women will not put an end to poverty but it will make a critical contribution. The author has analysed comprehensively the Government of India’s Draft National
Perspective Plan for Women in the third chapter on “women’s Movement: A Perspective.” The author’s elaboration of the evil system of prostitution and its evolution in different periods of history in the world is commendable. His analysis is based on the subjugation of women by men on the ground of the so-called male superiority over female. The author has analysed the issue in the fourth chapter of his book. The fifth chapter is devoted to a discussion of the position of women in the family where she is confined to look after children and do domestic work. The discussion on “Women Development Agents” is focused on how the process of development is again dominated by men. However, the author has cited some areas where women are making their presence felt in the modern environment. The author's main refrain in the chapter on “Governance and Women’s Poverty: scheming for women” is about institutional capacity building in development from a gendered perspective. The author has mentioned the experiences in India and Bangladesh of the politics of promoting gender equity policies. He has examined the popularity of microfinance for women in this context. The other aspects discussed by the author in the first volume of his book relate to women’s changing status in the post-independence period, the women, power and authority, women’s guidance, employment position of women, etc.

The second volume of the book deals with areas like feminism, postmodernism and geography, women’s struggle for equality and emancipation in the first few chapters. The discussion is more of a narrative nature of the conceptual aspects. The discussion in the other chapters deals with women and informal sector where the author narrates the work of some for the women’s organization for improving the conditions of women in the informal sector. The author’s discussion on
'women's participation in social and political affairs. A summary report from Western nations is a narration of women in the social set up of Kerala and Kashmir are also quite revealing as discussed by the author in the second volume of his book.

Commenting on “Empowerment of Women – Philosophy, Goals and Achievements” Smt Sumitra Mahajan says moving towards gender equality is not a technocratic goal, it is a political process. It requires a new way of thinking in which, women and men give way to a new philosophy that regards all people, irrespective of gender, as essential agents of change.

The author has observed that empowering women has largely been achieved in almost all the countries as a civil society movement. However in India, says the author, it has largely been part of the development philosophy itself. The author has referred to movement towards women empowerment in England in 1800 through amending laws governing marriage. France recognized women's rights to divorce, China allowed women to hold office, New Zealand extended right to vote for Women in 1893. In the first decade of 20th century women's movement gathered strength in several countries including China, Iran, Japan, Korea etc. Women got the right to vote in Austria, Germany, Turkey and Uruguay. Around the same time Margaret Mato in Japan launched campaign for reproductive rights for women.

The author has affirmed that any empowerment of women would have to embrace at least the following three principles.

i. Equality of rights between men and women must be enshrined in a fundamental principle.
ii. Women must be regarded as agents and beneficiaries of change. Investment in women's capabilities and empowering them to exercise their choices is not only valuable in itself but also surest way to contribute to economic growth.

iii. Equal opportunities to make choice exist for both women and men.

The author has provided an elaborate account of the various schemes, plans and programmes initiated by the Government of India and the state government towards the empowerment of women.

In her article “Generating Awareness’ on Empowerment of Women” Meera Seth has observed that an atmosphere of positivity, hope, encouragement and enthusiasm has been created which would lead to increasing access of women to all the benefits created by development efforts. The author maintains that women's awareness about development is basic to her empowerment. Meera Seth contends that if women are perceived as economic and emotional burdens the opportunity for a girl to access development gets reduced even before birth itself.

The author has referred to the decline in the sex ratio in India which she feels may lead to social imbalances further resulting in exploitation of women. Meera Seth has enlisted the contribution of Indian women in the field of social and family awareness, agriculture, cottage and village industries, education, medicine etc She has pleaded against dowry and other evils in the society. She has endorsed the plea for recruitment of more and more women in various fields of administration, more representation to women in parliament and state legislature and panchayats. The author has exhorted for a larger voluntary effort funded
by the government to sensitize women on their capacities and rights. She has referred to various measures initiated by voluntary organizations like DWACRA, SHGs, and other state and control level NGOs towards the safeguarding and empowerment of women. Meera Seth has suggested for a commissioner for Women’s rights to oversee through the judicial system.

C. Jayanthi has observed in her article “Catching up with Education” relating to empowerment of women that years of neglect and discrimination against the girl child cannot be turned around in a day. However careful planning on the part of the government to raise educational levels across the country with the cooperation of the civil society will result in the empowerment of women.

The author claims that India needs to follow the example of countries such as South Korea, Malaysia and Singapore that invested vast amount of resources in the education of their population and advanced rapidly thereafter and have never looked back.

C. Jayanthi has appreciated the fact that realization has dawned in India that without education women cannot be empowered. The southern states have to a large extent gone ahead of the northern states. The author has been appreciative of the fact that in the Total Literacy Mission of the government, which is in progress in 356 districts women make up for over 62 percent of adults enrolled in the programme.

Harjeet Ahluwalia in her article “Need for Larger participatory Role” has stressed the fact that economic independence of women can follow only if they are allowed a larger participatory role in the overall social scenario. Harjeet has observed that education and independence can alter the mental landscape altogether as isolated success stories demonstrate.
The challenge lies in replicating these experiments a million times over, so that the gender problems engulfing women today beat a speedy retreat.

The author has referred to some 'grey areas' despite decades of developmental activities. They relate to violence against women, the unfavorable sex ratio (927 women to 1000 men) and the largely ignored contribution of women farm workers and homemakers. She has advocated for sensitization of policy makers so that gender impact analysis is incorporated into the development of economic and social policies.

The author has quoted figures to indicate under representation of women in judicial appointment, small number of chartered accountants, medical practitioners etc. The author has pleaded for more educational facilities and opportunities for women. She has appreciated the work of women Self Help Groups in various states towards women empowerment.

**Ratna M. Sudarshan** in her article “The Economic Role” has observed that Women are important economic agents. The first step is to make visible this contribution. The next step according Ratna is to improve the quality of women’s work, their earnings and their opportunities. Economic empowerment of women is a market compatible approach and hence in consonance with prevalent macro economic policy approaches. This has two aspects: one is, the Income/livelihood, and the other, whether women have effective control over this income/livelihood. The author has drawn attention to the wage gap between men and women which exists because of uneven and discriminatory placement of women in unorganised less remunerative sector. The author attributes it to high level of illiteracy among women. There are also social and cultural constraints for this. The author has tried to highlight the attempt made by
government schemes for empowerment of women such as IRDP – TRYSEM etc. and the NGOs like SEWA (Self Employed Workers Association)

Sujata Manohar has observed in her article "Law and Gender Justice" that creating a new equitable environment is a major challenge and the leadership must come from national leaders irrespective of their religion. Also law being a major player in the effort; law reform remains a vital measure for empowerment of women.

The author has traced the advent of gender discrimination since the early days of Mahabharata where Draupadi was humiliated in the court of Kaurawas. She has referred to the UN charter and the Indian constitution where equality and non discrimination among men and women have been enunciated.

The author who is an eminent jurist has observed. "Unless laws create equality and fairness", there is no way getting rid of discrimination. If discrimination is permitted or sanctioned by law, social attitudes will not change, and if they do, there will not be a law to give effect to the new aspiration.

Bina Agarwal in her article "Land Rights and Gender Equity" has mentioned that land continues to be a significant source of livelihood and social status for millions of rural people. The author has pleaded for secure and effective land rights which are of critical importance for women's welfare and empowerment. Bina Agarwal has stressed that achieving this will need concerted efforts by gender progressive NGOs, especially women's groups, as well as by those with in the government who are concerned about women's empowerment, poverty and equitable development.
The author has presumed that in the foreseeable future for women much more than men, livelihoods will be linked to access to land. Based on surveys the author shows that most Indian women do not own land, even fewer effectively control any.

The author has suggested that to improve women's access to land it is necessary to act on all fronts: inheritance, government transfers, and access through the market. Measures to change attitudes through awareness programmes, the media etc. require an emphasis.

Sudha Pillai in her article "Can Panchayat Raj improve the scene?" has mentioned that currently almost million women occupy positions as members and chairpersons in the three-tier structure introduced by the constitution Amendment. This is a significant number and cannot but transform things in what was till recently a static rural society. The constitution 73rd Amendment has mandated not less than 1/3rd reservation for women not only at the level of member but also 1/3rd of Chairpersons should be women. All the provisions of the 73rd constitution Amendment that seek to empower Panchayats directly or indirectly serve to empower women.

The political empowerment of women resulting from 73rd constitution Amendment had impact in socio political areas. Firstly, there was a visual improvement in the administrations and delivery of services at the Gram Panchayat level. Secondly, the amendment has made possible the creation of political space which has enabled women to gain in social stature, confidence and shake off age old strangle hold of repressive tradition.
J. Bhagyalakshmi in her article “Of Human Rights and Freedom” has observed that India has taken several measures including legislation to ensure the full development and advancement of women for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedom on a basis of equality with men.

The author has rightly mentioned that the emphasis in all the governmental programmes is on Self help groups and co-operatives to have equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment which is in tune with the convention on “Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women’.

Bhagyalakshmi has concluded that in India the women specific programmes are showing positive results in the areas of health, education, employment and political and economic empowerment.

Seema Singh has made a field test an innovative model of development initiative in food security based on improvisation for enablement of landless women and agricultural workers through interactive capacity development and convergence of other suitable agencies. Seema Singh’s study “Human Development and Food Security.” Relates to SAWERA which stands for sustainable empowerment through Rural Approach. It is a new UNDP supported on going sub programmes in Uttar Pradesh. Its major concern is human development, focused area is food security; its status is that of programme support action and target is empowerment of women agricultural workers from landless and marginal farmers’ families.

The programme has resulted in rehabilitation of about 6000 women in the six selected districts of UP. The real and lasting achievement is the
capacity building of the existing government systems and sub systems of agriculture and impact on the policies and planning of the governments.

The field test has revealed that primary actors have been described as the organizations of women farmers from the organizations of women farmers from landless and marginal farmer families who will be enabled to link with the Department of Agriculture and agricultural extension system to gain access to productive assets including land credit technologies, inputs and subsidies.

The author has mentioned that the existing systems, infrastructure and the resource outlay is generally enough to meet the demands of development. However the author has concluded that the development deficiencies are clearly attributable only to management disability.

Writing on "Empowerment of Women Achievements and Challenges" Leena Mehandale has observed that women empowerment can be considered as “complete” only when women as a collective group no longer require any positive discrimination or reservation. She further observes that it is a happy sign that lot of young women have started expressing that they would prefer to come up in life on the basis of merit rather than through reservation.

The author has expressed her anguish that even after half a century of independence 70 percent of the women in work force are employed and getting paid only in unskilled jobs. She has observed that our present system does not adequately provide for imparting vocational skills which alone can ensure a quick beginning of the earning.

Leena Mehandale has maintained that the sharing of power acquires a different dimension for women from scheduled castes and
scheduled Tribes. They suffer for being women as well as for their backwardness.

**K.V. Naik** in his article “Women Empowerment through SHG – A Success Story” has observed that empowerment of women is possible only if she gets some regular income through her own efforts. Self employment opportunity is the only solution for women empowerment. Self Help Group has proved to be a major tool for women empowerment. The author has referred to Nagesh SHG as the best example in this context.

The Nagesh SHG in Goa aims at social, economic and cultural development of its members and rural masses. The SHG is running Anganawadis with the financial assistance from Madhav Varao Dhavalikar Charitable trust Bandora, Ponda, Goa. The group has awarded scholarships to top ranking SSCE students from the village. The group also assists in resolving the social problems of its members. The SHG encourages women entrepreneurship and builds self confidence among the women members in the community.

A comprehensive study has been made by **S. Ram**. On “Women and Social Change” presenting a wide spectrum of educational fields in which Indian women have been making a mark. Ram has compared the educational status of women in the pre-independence period with the position under India’s development planning in the post independence period. His analysis in the first part of this book is related to “Primary Education of Women.000” He has referred to the observations of committees and commissions on education who have considered that the quality of instruction in primary schools is deteriorating. He has
mentioned high dropouts at this level particularly in rural areas among female children.

The author has pleaded for part time primary education in view of the work patterns of children’s families. His suggestion for inducting teachers from local community is sensible since teachers from outside show less involvement in their teaching assignment. He has strongly advocated for a change in the teaching methods to make a qualitative impact on the children.

The author has mentioned the big strides made in women’s education in the field of higher education. He has cited discrepancy existing between achievements of male and female in higher education and between different communities on women’s higher education. He has cited the efforts of prominent women educationists and the establishment of special institutions for women’s higher education.

The author’s analysis of ‘women in Teaching profession’ has been quite comprehensive. He has commented on low representation to women in certain areas of teaching particularly at University level. The study on “Women and Science education” the author has based the generalization on a case study of women in this field in Bombay in 1976-78. Different aspects of career status and support system for science education of women has been analyzed. Aspects like social background of science qualified women, kind of job and the level they are working, their career advancement, the support received by their families etc. have been examined by the study. The author has analyzed issues connected with “women, Education and Development” in a separate chapter. The trends in the country’s development period in relation to women are analyzed
comprehensively. Major aspects discussed include the rule of education in women’s welfare, the empowerment of women in third world countries. Another useful and rewarding discussion in the book relate to ‘Women professionals’. The study has covered different occupational distribution of women in professional areas in India. The study has been made with a world perspective and experiences of different countries have been cited at suitable context.

The work is quite useful and provides good inputs in understanding the issues of women empowerment with particular orientation of education and professional backdrop.

Neeta Tapan perceives that the empowerment of women and development continue to be crucially related issues for the world community. In her book “Need for Women Empowerments” the author has affirmed that certain positive achievements have taken place in the areas of women development viz., the incidence of female mortality and morbidity have declined. Early marriages have shown a short decline, while the size of families have been reduced. Enrolment and retention of girls in educating is on the rise. More women are taking employment opportunities. Women are holding positions of power and prestige. They are becoming aware of their rights and issue of gender equality. However, the author has stressed the fact that the number of such women is insignificant. The gender discrimination still continues and has assumed complex and varied dimensions in Indian society. The author has suggested that a lack of concern in the society at large and a lackadaisical sense of involvement among the policy makers seem to be the chief reasons for the present status of women.
The author has discussed the issues relating to Indian women in her book with special reference to the state of Madhya Pradesh and has asserted that despite efforts by the Government for more than two decades the status of women has not shown any remarkable change.

The author has stressed in her discussion in the book on the four major aspects of the problems of women viz., gender discrimination, issues of population dynamics, health, education and employment. She has further emphasized that it is only through attaining proper status in population dynamic, wealth, education and employment can women be empowered. The author has asserted that poverty alleviation programmes accompanied by vigorous gender sensitization efforts to correct attitudinal prejudices among both men and women are also essential.

The author has divided her book into six parts. She has provided the historical perspectives of women studies in general and has enlisted all the programmes being run in Madhya Pradesh for the betterment of women along with the problem faced in that direction. The main thrust of the discussion in the second part of the book relate to the different dimensions of gender discrimination in the context of social, economic, political, religious, legal and other aspects. The third and the fourth part of the book is devoted to the analysis of population dynamics and health organizations with special reference to primary health care system and the status of women in Madhya Pradesh.

There is a micro level analysis of the history of women’s education in India in the fifth part of the book. The author has discussed the female literacy, female education and female employment scenario in Madhya Pradesh. The discussion has also covered the importance of information,
education, and communicating in correcting the attitudinal prejudices. The author has provided a summary of his conclusions on the basis of his study. The book is a good addition to the literature on women empowerment and is quite useful for the present research study.

Joel SGR Bhose has made an attempt in his book “NGOs and Rural Development: Theory and Practice” to assess the role of NGOs in development of the rural society in the country. He has tried to trace out the genesis and evolution of voluntary organizations and evolve a theory of voluntarism, such as sacrificial, professional, amateur, ventilatory, survival, pseudo and trans figuration voluntarism. Bhose has made an extensive discussion of the framework and types of NGOs in a separate chapter in his book. His analysis of the concept of rural development and NGOs interventions in it is quite comprehensive. The other very relevant aspects analysed and discussed by the author relate to people’s participation in rural development importance of empowering rural people and the need for advocacy to influence government policies in favor of the poor.

The author has aptly described that for NGO commitment is its spinal cord, professionalism is its brain, and values are its lungs. He maintains that strong in one aspect and weak in other may not serve the purpose totally and completely. Hence a full fledged NGO must be committed; people centred, professional, honest and value based.

I.S. Sundaram has urged for ensuring people’s participation at various stages of the planning process. In his book “Voluntary Agencies and Rural Development” Sundaram has commended the fact that voluntary agencies which were previously pre-occupied with only relief
works have entered the development field. Voluntary agencies, says the author, have succeeded in breaking new ground. Voluntary action is now a global phenomenon.

Most of the voluntary organizations have adopted a holistic approach to rural development even though some of them have chosen specialized areas of rural development. The author has attributed the failure of development administration for the entry of voluntary organization in the rural field. The author has enlisted various failures of development administration in delivering results. He has commended the work of panchayat Raj in this context though he has referred to some weaknesses of the system. He has made a strong case for voluntary organizations as an alternative to bureaucratic approach to development. Proximity of these agencies to people and to the local problems is considered as an advantage.

The author has mentioned the various problems faced by voluntary organizations too in their efforts to develop rural society. Lack of effective leadership, lack of proper coordination with government departments and inadequacy of funds are some of the problems faced by voluntary organizations. The author has pleaded for a proper approach by the government towards these voluntary organizations and involve them in proper areas for the implementation of development programmes.

The author has rightly concluded in his book that by assigning due role to voluntary agencies in certain spheres and by establishing rapport between voluntary sector and government departments, the task of bring down the incidence of rural poverty and unemployment becomes easier.
Raj Pruthi and Bela Rani Sharma varied aspects of progress achieved by women in their book "Post Independent India and Women". The broad areas covered by the authors include social, political, population, education and economic status of women in India. The introductory part of the book provides a profile of Indian women through the ages and a social system that has evolved through different phases of the social life and the gender discrimination in the country. The second part discusses about the sex differences and education in relation to women. Details of the male and females in different occupations have provided to highlight the gender discrimination. The author has described the role played by women in different spheres of socio-economic life of the country. Statistical data provided by the author is quite revealing in the third part of his study. The author has discussed the other aspects of Indian women like women’s organizations social legislation and women, women’s property rights, population growth and women, women work and science in India, gender equality and lastly opportunities for economic participation and women. The analysis of the last aspect relating to economic participation and women has been quite comprehensive. The position of women in different sectors of the economy like agriculture, industry, infrastructure services etc. has been discussed extensively and comprehensively.

The book has provided a good insight into the women's position in the socio-economic life of the country. It provides good scope for identifying the areas of further research and for formulating policies for women empowerment.

Muniruddin Quresh has observed in his book "Social status of Indian Women" that India claims to be a welfare state with equal
opportunities for all. But ironically a big chunk of our society is neglected badly. The author says women are still a deprived lot. Despite all efforts for the emancipation and empowerment of women, the goal is quite far away. The book deals with the real state of women in the Indian society at all levels – social, economic and political. The approach of the author is empirical. Chapter one of the first volume is an elaborate narration of the women in ancient India. He has given the views of the different religions of women-Christian, Islamic, and the modern era of struggle for emancipation of women. He has discussed the theoretical approach of eminent thinkers on gender differences and the present day thoughts in the next part. The author's discussion on major issues affecting the Indian economy and the society in relation to the women's position is very exhaustive and elaborate. Women's welfare dimensions in the present socio-legal frame work is quite analytical. Policies towards family planning, role of voluntary organizations in women's welfare and the Government bodies are the thrust areas in the fifth part of the study. The author has made an attempt to present the position of educated women, vocational training etc. in the sixth part of the study. Legislative and administrative measures for empowering women is the focus in the seventh part. National perspective plan, Five year plans in relation to women is the refrain in the ninth part of the book. The author has given exhaustive list of documents at national and UN forums etc. at the end of the First Volume.

The Second volume of Mr. Qureshi's book includes his discussion on gender bias coming in the way of women's involvement in active socio-economic life and women's indifference to active political participation, the involvement of women in freedom struggle etc. are examined in the first three chapters of the volume. The author has reviewed the Marxist's view
of women and socialist views on the same in the fourth chapter. The influence of political power, caste politics, class conflict, money power and the nexus of crime and politics on women in the modern period has been discussed in the fifth chapter. The progress in the participation of women in politics and the emergence of Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi in India in party politics, women chief ministers, legislators etc. are discussed in the sixth and seventh chapter. Panchayat Raj women, election process and women's representations etc. are the focus of eighth and ninth chapters of the book.

The author has made case studies in Bihar, MP, Haryana, Assam and also the review of the Reservation strategy etc. are narrated in tenth to fourteenth chapters. The last few chapters are devoted to a discussion of education as a tool for women empowerment.

The book is more of narrative treatise than prescriptive. However, the analytical value of the book need appreciation.

P.K. Mohammed and I.V. Somans study on "National Service Scheme and Change in Social Perception" based on a field survey covering 150 NSS volunteers. It tries to find out as to how much NSS volunteers have internalized the philosophy, methods and fields of NSS in comparison with non-NSS students.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 provides a brief history of NSS and philosophic bases of NSS. The second part is devoted to the presentation of the research methodology, objectives, data analysis and the research findings covering major aspects of the research topic.

The authors have rightly stressed the close relationship that exists between education and NSS. They have observed that the principal aim of
NSS is education and the methodology adopted for imparting education in social work. NSS is a student-centred programme. Participation in NSS would help self development of the student. The authors have emphasized that education is essentially modification of behavior and NSS has become as corrective measure in education. In the present day education there is no provision for material for change of attitude. This gap is being filled in by NSS. NSS helps the students in their personality development. Participation in NSS activities helps the NSS volunteers in imbibing the qualities of initiative, persistence fearlessness, freedom of thought, independent decision making, capacity for solving problems, self confidence, assertiveness, capacity for persuasion, openness to correction etc.

The second part of the book covers all the details about the survey conducted in Kerala. The 150 respondent students selected for study were contacted to know their perceptions about their awareness of social issues, their emergence, the consequences that befall on various groups in the society and what the NSS students would do to solve them.

The study is conducted with proper research methodology and the findings throw very useful light on the students level of understanding the social issues, Problems and solutions, etc.

The study by the authors has high practical value with a good theoretical backdrop. The theoretical discussion on the basic philosophy of NSS is highly rewarding and of much academic value. The field study provides a very good research design for an empirical evidences of the respondents' perceptions on the topic in a practical context. The survey aspect of the book is of much practical value for the researcher since the
The book “Ten steps towards partnership with the community” by Dr. Abraham is cast in the form of a manual. The author claims that the book is framed in such a way as to facilitate the personal growth of NSS functionaries and NSS volunteers. The author further mentions that Government of India which sponsors NSS in collaboration with the state government envisages “Village Adoption” as a tool for achieving the aim of NSS namely personality development through service to the community. However, Dr. Abraham has observed that the concept of village adoption has not been implemented in the way it should be done. Village adoption is not a favored work any more.

The author has divided his book in two parts. In Part I he has discussed aspects on “globalization and voluntarism” “Communitizing education through NSS” in chapter one. His discussion in chapters two and three relate to “Ten steps towards partnership” and “networking for partnership”

The author has presented his findings on the basis of experiments of social services in five different places and the results have been an outstanding success.

The thrust of the author’s argument in the first chapter is that volunteerism is an act of will. However, he maintains that NGO is an inadequate label for voluntary organization. Voluntary organization need professionalism according to the author. Thus voluntary organizations like NSS should be made professional to become really effective and successful.
The author has focused his discussion on implementation of NSS objectives and programmes. He has pleaded for communitizing of education through proper interaction between community institutions of higher education.

The discussion of ten steps towards partnership with the community has referred to 10 steps viz., orientation and motivation of volunteers, identification of a community, identification of local leaders, attract invitation for social service, fact findings, public meeting group meetings and the formation of development committee, orientation for the development committee, the launching of first activity and developing a people’s organization.

The author has discussed the networking for partnership with regard to NSS organization and other agencies like university, Government, college NSS, village PO LVO, Vo etc. They have given a good account of how the network could work with NSS. The experiments of NSS in selected places is quite revealing and informative.

The views of various writers on social work have been presented by Chhaya Patel in her book (Ed) "Social Work Practice – Religio-Philosophical Foundations." The book is divided into three parts. Part I contains views of the different authors on Religio-Philosophical Foundation of social work. Views on NGO sector and Disciplinary Concerns are presented in Part II and Part III contains views of authors on sites of social work practice.

Lancy Lobo in his essay on “Social Vision and Concern in Christianity : A Historical perspective” has referred to the liberation theology which originated in Latin America. He has mentioned that
unequal socio-economic order, glaring poverty, injustice, hunger, illiteracy which resulted in loss of original religious values of God's kingdom and banner raised against the systems tyranny on poor. He has provided important glimpses into the working of Indian Catholic Church which is moving from social work to social action. He has argued that church in India is committed to crucial issues of liberation, mobilization, and it undertakes such empowering activities as fighting for the rights of children, women, fishermen, tribals, dalits and the deprived.

Kalindi Mazumdar's paper on "Hinduism - A Social Work Perspective" is an account of personal experience of social work practice. She has discussed the main tenets of Hinduism and relates them to her experiences as social work practitioner.

Nitin J. Vyas in his essay on "Non-violence and Man-making in Buddhist philosophy" argues that violence is the real bane, a curse, a blot, a stigma on otherwise a noble species of human beings. He looks at Buddhist religious philosophy to outline its conception of man making process, social vision in general and tenets of non-violent social order.

Chhaya Patel's discussion on "Ethics, Individual and Society in Islamic philosophy- A Hermeneutic Exploration" argues that hermeneutic or interpretative model of social enquiry is more suitable for reading classical and scriptural texts as a rich source of insights knowledge.

Satya P Agarwals paper “Vivekananda’s Socio – Spiritual Approach to India’s Social Problems” describes how Vivekananda’s life and work has been useful in tackling India’s social and economic problems.

D.L. Seth and Harsh Sethi have attempted to sketch a historical context of development of the NGO sector in India in their paper “The NGO
sector in India Historical context and Current Discourse.” They have observed that conventional developmental concern for harnessing the energies of the young through programmes like NSS, Nehru Yuvak Kendras continue to dominate the main stream academic imagination.

**C.P. Goyal** has cautioned the community of social work practitioners and educators regarding the necessity of keeping constantly rolling so as not to gather the proverbial mass. In his paper on “Social work in the changing scenario” the author has argued that the phenomenon of change is all pervasive and its impact on individuals, collectivities, institutions, organizations and wider social process is inescapable.

**Sandhya P. Joshi** in her paper “Field Training for Social Development” has examined the question of social development of historically and socio economically most backward Harijan community in Vadodara city in Gujarat.

**K.G. Gangrade** in his paper “Gandhi Through Five Generation – A Personal Account of Rural Social Work” has made an autobiographical tale weaving up major issues, concerns and questions of social work practice over as long a stretch of time as five decades of an actively spent lifetime.

**K.V. Ramana’s** article “Age Care Policies and Programmes – Challenges Ahead” is very timely and immensely relevant to the academic concerns of social work, sociology, and policy sciences.

**S.P. Punalekar’s** paper on “Gender Market, Segmentation and Marginalization in Urban Gujarat” focuses on female casual labourers in the fast growing cities of Gujarat. His studies reveal the socio economic conditions of families, how they meet their needs and live in the highly adverse urban setting. **Bharati Sharma** in her paper on “Community
Mental Health – An Appraisal" has advocated for a comprehensive community mental health legislation developing various prevention-oriented perspectives and correct imparting of mental health education.

**Chhaya Patel** in her article on “Women’s Development, Voluntary Organizations and Social Work Concerns” seeks to redefine relations and responsibilities between man and women in society. She has pleaded for addressing the issue of women’s development step by step so that a major feminist socio-political movement can emerge, get strengthened and take a concrete shape and define definite direction.

**Arundhati Chattopadhyay** in her article “Women and Entrepreneurship” has observed that economic empowerment is a sine qua non-for elevating the status of women in our society. One possible approach says the author, towards achieving this end could be through entrepreneurship development. The author has referred to planwise focus of the Government on women empowerment in India. The authors quotation of World Bank definition of empowerment is apt and relevant in providing a conceptual clarity of empowerment with regard to women empowerment.

The author has mentioned the demographic imbalances and the preference for male child indicating gender discrimination in India. The author has demonstrated through chart the vicious circle of poverty of women and has advocated for economic empowerment of women along with social and political empowerment. The work participation rate of women has increased in India. However it is much lower than the male work participation rate. Occupational distribution of women indicates that they are consigned to low paid jobs and unskilled jobs. Property ownership
in India is mainly in the name of male members of the family. The author has strongly pleaded for entrepreneurship development among women as a possible approach to economic empowerment.

The article on “Women and Empowerment” Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad” by Smt. Malathi Ramanathan charts the growth of the unit from its inception. Its role is widely accepted as a vital avenue for promoting women's empowerment. Empowerment as envisaged by the unit is more than a mere boosting women’s earning capabilities. The author has observed that it enables an assertion of all other rights and to her personal space in a patriarchal society. The unit was started by a few lower middle class women to supplement the income of the family by working from home. The study by the author has tried to probe the factors responsible for the unit's success, the technique used by them in retaining the management, etc. It is ascertained that Lijjat was formed by a homogenous unit of women belonging to a particular peasant community of Gujarat. The growth of the unit has been gradual and substantial overime.

Collective ownership has been the main plank of the institution. The institution aimed at promoting self-employment, dignity of labour and earning capacity of women working from home. Gandhian, trusteeship has well suited the organization. The Lijjat has followed the practice of not accepting charity or donation. The Lijjat has only women members and owners. The 'Lijjat' is an organization started by women, managed by women and for the benefit of women.

The author has observed that the positive contributions of "Lijjat" organization to the empowerment of women have more than neutralized
the negative criticisms directed against it. It established its credentials in the society as an organization with a goal promoting a specific way of life for its member sisters. The author has opined that Lijjat has provided a beacon light to the lower class women in India irrespective of their caste, religion or region. The author has concluded that the capacity to earn one’s livelihood and the resultant self-confidence was necessarily the first step in the ladder to empowerment.

Damayanty Shridharan in her article “Encourage Self Help Group” has tried to bring out the distinguishing features of NGOs and the SHGs. The author observes that NGOs tend to operate on a broader societal level and act as facilitators of SHGs, NGOs may develop from the growth of a single SHG or group of such SHGs but generally this is not so. NGOs says the author, originate from a wider societal perception on varied development issues of which savings and credit may be one or one of many areas of work for the NGO. The author says a major aim of NGOs is to foster self-help initiatives among the poor. NGOs are better equipped to access and deal with government and other agencies. They are able to act as conduit between the SHGs on the one hand and the organizations and the Government on the other. The author has asserted that the basic difference between NGOs and SHGs is that although many NGOs work directly with the poor, SHGs are informal organizations of the poor which form such an informal alliance for a common goal to be achieved collectively.

The author has commended the role of NGO in the promotion of growth of SHGs. He says NGOs play a catalytic role in preparing SHGs for availing resources from formal credit sector like banks. They may act as direct intermediaries between the SHGs and supporting agencies. NGOs
play important role in securing external support to SHGs be it in augmenting funds or in providing much needed training to them (SHGs).

K.D. Gangrade and R. Sooryamoorthy in their articles "NGO's Today" have observed "the spirit of voluntarism is gradually dying out in the social service sector and is replaced by a new breed of professionals who approach the question of development with a completely new perspectives".

The NGOs have involved in varied types of activities in India – environmental protection, advocacy of human rights, consumer protection and the like. In the areas of welfare, education, health, sanitation, environment, human rights and social justice the sector has carved out a niche for itself. The NGOs have been successful enough to change the attitude of government towards the neglected sections. In India and elsewhere governments have been compelled to consult NGOs before they embark new projects that affect the population. The authors maintain that NGOs influence the path, course and direction of development.

Despite their positive achievements the NGOs have also been found to be deficient and they have lost their credibility to some extent. NGOs are found to harness funds. They have lost the spirit of voluntarism which was the predominant force in such organization. The authors have observed that the flamboyant life style of leaders erodes the faith of the public further. The authors have mentioned that informal functioning has given way to more formalized structure. Buildings, staff and funds became the prerequisites of voluntary action. Employing professionals and experts, paying handsome salary to the staff and implementing projects designed by donor agencies have turned out to be characteristics of the modern
NGOs. The authors have pointed out that the primary concern of the NGOs is not the people but the existence of the organization with uninterrupted supply of grants and funds. NGOs do not share power and information with members. Democratic participation is naturally the casualty. NGOs are found taking up simultaneously a number of programmes and their credibility is lost. NGOs lack proper management skills.

The authors have expressed the hope that the NGOs would make an attempt to overhaul themselves with determination and a spirit of voluntarism. Their relative intimacy with the people should enable them to function effectively and for the benefit of the people.

The article “Voluntary Sector and Credibility Issues” by Mahi Pal is focused on the need for NGOs to incorporate good governance practices. The author maintains that it is important for voluntary organization to work in a transparent and accountable manner in order to win the confidence of the people among whom they work. The author has quoted a study by PRIA and John Hopkins university mentioning that there are nearly 1.2 million non profit organizations (NPO) in India which employ almost 20 million persons as paid or voluntary workers. Further nationwide share of NPO contribution (Based only on paid employment) to gross product at current prices stands at 14.8 percent. It indicates the widespread presence and immense contribution of this sector. The author has however mentioned that many of these NPOs have siphoned off money without contributing much to human development and welfare. He says this sector does not enjoy the confidence of the people. The voluntary sector says the author, does not have a well defined regulatory mechanism. Hence Mr. Pal has pleaded that the voluntary sector should
acquire credibility in the eyes of the people. It should work in a transparent and accountable manner.

The author has referred to the initiative taken at the second Commonwealth NGO Forum held at Wellington New Zealand when guidelines for Good Policy and Practice for NGOs were presented and deliberated upon. Norms were initiated in India for a code of conduct for the voluntary sector and the Credibility Alliance (CA) was formed. The CA has classified the norms and practices as minimum norms; desirable norms and good practices.

The author has drawn attention to the fact that voluntary organizations are person centric. A number of organizations have been headed by one person for a number of years. The process of capacity building in this sector through the initiative of CA is an effort in the right direction. It will enhance the credibility of this sector provided it imbibes the ingredients of the good governance. The author has concluded that CA is an ongoing process and the national meet and consultations with donors are yet to be held. But the initiative is a welcome step towards capacity building of the voluntary sector to take up developmental and welfare activities in a more effective, efficient and transparent manner.

K.K. Mukherjee and Sutapa Mukherjee have based their article "Professional social work and women's development" by the authors is based on the understanding of the history of both women's welfare and development and professional social work since 1950 in India.

The authors have firmly stated that (i) Women development as an area of concern has never been the only forte of professional social work and (ii) direct action connected with an issue like this is usually initiated
by people who have an inner urge and dedication to do something and not merely because of having some professional qualification.

The authors have refereed to the shift of policy emphasis from women welfare to women development in the contemporary context. The concept of women's development is related to the change and development in the position of women especially in terms of education, health and employment and making them self reliant. Further the author elaborates the point by stating that women's development involves providing equal opportunities to them by removing gender bias, empowering women and creating self reliance among them.

The authors have commended the efforts of government and NGOs in the direction of women's development since 1950. The references are made to declaration of 1975 as "International Women's Year" establishment of Central Social Welfare Board in 1953, Committee on status or women in India in 1974, creation of Women's Welfare and Development Bureau under the Ministry of social welfare. Numbers of schemes were introduced for women welfare and development under the Five Year Plans. Government formed women's development corporations, National Committee on Women and National Commission on Self Employed Women.

The various efforts though laudable have not met with the desired success according to the authors. Gender discrimination still continues. The authors say that even the 73rd and 74th amendment connected with Panchayat Raj system have not been able to empower women. There is no proper implementation of Dowry Act 1984 and Family Court Act 1984.
Non-Governmental efforts have also been made in the direction of women's development particularly in the economic areas like SSIs and cottage industries, dairy and poultry units, orchard and nursery. In social areas too efforts are made viz., education and training, health programmes, mahila mandals, family counseling, and legal aid etc.

The authors have viewed the emergence of professional social work by trained persons for tackling the issues arising out of industrialization, urbanisation, poverty and destitution, crime and other social evils on the one hand and rural reconstruction as advocated by Gandhiji. There has been an increase in the number of social work educational institutes and consequently the number of students. A number of social work schools and universities have started up women’s studies centers.

Professional social work training may have the motivation of taking up employment getting a master's degree and to fulfill the desire of doing social work. The university courses in varied areas of social work like labour welfare and personnel management, family and child welfare, medical and psychiatric social work etc. would limit the areas of operation. The author has referred to the emergence of three important social work bodies in India viz., Indian Association of Trained Social Workers, Indian Council of Social Welfare, and Association of the Schools of Social Work. These bodies have been responsible for creating opinion about the importance of social work.

The authors have however made an observation in their article that the contribution of professionals social work in women’s development has never been a primary area of concern for social workers. Furthermore the authors maintain that social workers confinement primarily to urban
areas and their desire to take up work which is rewarding have limited their contribution in women development. The author has mentioned that a few professional social workers have directly taken up activities connected with women’s development ranging from creation of awareness among women to formation of women’s groups.

Cynthia Stephen in her article “NGOs and Accountability” has observed that NGOs working selflessly among the poor and the needy are bright spots in the generally gloomy picture of development in India. She has affirmed that the commitment and zeal of a few benefits the vulnerable populations with neither their voice nor visibility in the diverse mosaic of Indian society- Adivasis, Dalits, Migrants, the disabled, children and women. Cynthia perceives that the role of NGOs in society has increased lately due to donors insistence on involving them in implementing programmes in the social sector.

The author has tried to focus on the problem of the change in the original vision of the founders of the NGOs. The range and number of the NGOs stock holders increase as the institution matures. Hence the author feels there should be a correspondingly higher sense of accountability to society, especially in organizations involved in processes for positive social change. Unlike government and the corporate sector the work of NGOs is mainly overseen through internal programmes and accounts reviews, self-regulation and the scanning of accounts submitted to donors and the home ministry. Hence the author says it is up to NGOs to set and maintain their own standards of accountability and follows them. There are many who work transparently and are highly accountable of the community. The system of social audit has been adopted by some.
The author has however drawn attention to the experiences of tsunami relief activities which has led to the view that there is a feeling that the practice in many NGOs falls short of ethical standards. The author has referred to the programme on “Human Rights and Media” organised in Bangalore in May 2005 by a group of NGOs representatives from the media were unanimous in stating that NGOs as a whole had poor image in the area of social and financial accountability.

Cynthia has referred to the two initiatives to improve accountability viz., VAN and the Credibility Alliance and has observed that nothing concrete has emerged since. She has referred to the recent HDI report which shows that the situation of the poor, women, children and other vulnerable population in India is worsening. The author has rightly concluded “The writing is on the wall. NGOs need to address the issue of their accountability to society at the earliest Failure on this front will negate the very purpose for the NGOs existence and add to the on going deterioration of societal values. NGOs with a professed commitment to justice, equity rights, democracy and gender equity must actually live up to these ideals. Else there is every fear that they will loose their present freedom and come under closer public scrutiny”

Bindu Shridhar in her article “women as Entrepreneur” has cited the progress of women in the area of entrepreneurship stating that presently women entrepreneurs coprise about 10 percent of the total number of entrepreneurs in India. She estimates that in another five years women will comprise 20 percent of the entrepreneurial force if the present trend continues. Her optimism in this direction is based on her perception that “with corporates eager to associate and work with women owned businesses and a host of banks and non governmental organizations
(NGOs) keen to help them get going there has rarely been a better time for women with zeal and creativity to start their own business." The author believes that women have special qualities of intuition and they possess innate flair for entrepreneurship. **Bindu Sridhar** has asserted that women entrepreneurs are as competent as their male counterparts. They have natural inclination to admit when they do not know something and ask for help. The author says women are natural net workers and relationship builders forging powerful bonds and nurturing relationships with clients and employees alike. She further mentions that women entrepreneurs are more inclined to seek out mentors and develop supportive teams. The author observes that in business this translates into establishing rapport with clients and providing great customer service. This the author opines is the reason why many women tend to launch businesses that are client based or service oriented.

The author has rightly observed that sometimes a lack of training and prior experience can render women entrepreneurs susceptible to a number of pitfalls. She has suggested that women entrepreneurs should not undervalue their abilities. Her other suggestions women entrepreneurs relate to their involvement with their family. She opines that women entrepreneurs should learn to juggle family with business. Further she suggests they should be as persistent and assertive to make their presence felt in a predominantly male business world. The author suggests that for thriving businesswomen entrepreneurs must market themselves and take credit for their achievements.

**M.B. Dilsad** (2001) in his book 'National Service Scheme in India' has observed that the potentialities and of the NSS programmes and volunteers may be seen in terms of problems and challenges the NSS has
been facing. He has apprehended that officially the Government of India, the state government and the universities generally appear to be satisfied that the NSS programmes in the nation are generally well formulated, financed and conducted. The author has drawn attention to some of the problems and challenges relating to the organization and administration. He however contends that difficulties with regard to the financing relate not to shortage of finance but to the release of finance. He cites the bureaucratic hurdles in financial and administrative matters that have created problems for the NSS.

Dr. Dilsad’s analysis in the first chapter is comprehensive in providing a good narration of objectives and organization of the NSS. He has detailed the “Vriksha ganga project in Karnataka” with the active involvement of NSS units and volunteers in the third chapter of his book. The fourth chapter provides different projects of social work. And the participation of NSS volunteers. Another NSS project under Micro Area integrated Development. A programme at Devar Nimbari has been implemented in collaboration with NSS. The narration is quite informative. The author has provided a detailed description of Adventure promotion and festival activities in chapter six of this book.

His analysis of “Problems and challenges” relating to NSS programmes is based on his personal involvement in NSS at Karnataka University. The final chapter is a summary of his study of different aspects of NSS administration at the University and state level.

Jainendra Kumar Jha (2002) in his book “social welfare and social work” has perceived that social work deals with the problem of human beings and problems cannot be understood without the knowledge
of psychological, sociological, political and ethical nature of human beings and the society. Mr. Jainendra Kumar has stressed that no social worker can ignore the significance of sociological, psychological, anthropological and economic data in the study and the solution of problems of society.

The author has made a drastic statement that social work practices are sometimes suspect sometimes viewed with ambivalence by the public. He has stressed the need for their continuous validation and proven. The author has designed his work to bring together encyclopedic information on social work. He has derived the material from authentic sources eg. reports, manuals, books, abstracts, articles etc. He has organised the whole information under fair major themes namely An Introduction to social work, practice of social work, social welfare and social work and social work and community development.

H.S. Suresh (2002) has made a research study on “Role of NSS Programme Officer in the Effective Implementation of NSS – Problems and Perspectives.” The researcher has set forth an overall objective of examining the factors affecting the role and performance of NSS programme officer. He has further mentioned his other objectives as (i) to study and analyse the profile of the NSS Programme Officer. (ii) to analyse the role concept of programme officer. (iii) to enlist and enquire into the factors determining the efficacy of the role as programme officer. (iv) to identify the possible avenues of intervention for effective role functioning and (v) to draw an action plan to enrich the role performance through training and structural changes.

The author’s analysis of the different role of NSS Programme Officer is revealing Viz. (1) As an organiser (2) As an Educator (3) As co-ordinator
As a supervisor (5) As an Administrator and (6) As a Public Relations Officer.

Suresh has highlighted the significance of NSS in the development of the NSS volunteer and the need for including the spirit of social service in him through NSS. In this important direction the role of NSS officer is crucial. Hence, the whole excursion of Mr. Suresh in his research study is focused on this aspect. The brief analysis and findings of various studies have been quite useful for further research in this field and for the present study in particular.