The scientific inquiries based on systematic thinking, factual observations and past experience, become a sound base of knowledge for the future research work to be undertaken. Before initiating any study a critical and thorough insight of the studies already conducted relating to topic of the problem, therefore, becomes imperative for conceptual clarity and methodological improvement in the research work to be conducted. Keeping the above in view, the present chapter has been arranged to briefly depict the review of the studies already conducted relating to the research problem “socio-economic status and livelihood security of women” under the following five sub-heads:

2.1 Socio-Economic Status of Women

2.2 Entrepreneurial Behaviour of Rural Women

2.3 Women's Involvement in Various Activities
   2.3.1 Contribution of women to agriculture & livestock
   2.3.2 Contribution of women to household income and expenditure
   2.3.3 Impact of women's income on food security
   2.3.4 Women's involvement in organizations

2.4 Livelihood Security, Its Measurements and Coping up Strategies
   2.4.1 Measurement/assessment of livelihood security
   2.4.2 Shocks and coping up strategies

2.5 Socio-Economic Problems/Constraints
   2.5.1 Problems/constraints faced by women being an entrepreneur
2.5.2 Problems/constraints faced by women being a house manager

2.1 Socio-Economic Status of Women

The status of women can be broadly defined as the degree of socio-economic equality and freedom enjoyed by women. Women’s participation on equal terms with men in domestic decision making, expression of their views freely and participation in community life makes them being recognized in the society.

Studies on status of women revealed that status of women was largely influenced by various factors like husband’s education and occupation (Buric and Zeevic, 1967), the level of education (Lamouse, 1969), social setting (Rodman, 1972), the place of residence and age (Acharya and Bennett, 1983).

Vlassoff (1982) examined the status of rural Indian women and revealed that overall level of education was low with only five per cent of females having high school education as compared to 15 per cent of males. Further, it was found that over fifty per cent of females had received no education.

Soni and Jindal (1983) studied the impact of employment on decision making by women in Ludhiana district of Panjab. The study revealed that the economic decision relating to family budget was mostly taken by husbands (40 per cent) of the non-working women, against 26 per cent in case of working women. Majority of wives were found to be deciding family budget in consultation with their husbands in case of working women (50 per cent) as compared to non-working women (30 per cent). Savings and investments were mostly decided jointly. About 18 per cent of working and 8 per cent of non-working women decided independently, decisions relating to children’s education and occupation. The corresponding figures for joint decisions were 65 and 69 per cent, respectively. It was further revealed that 32 per cent of the working women and 20 per cent of the non-working women in the rural area decided purchase of durable goods themselves. However, most of the decisions were reported to be taken jointly.

Zhao (1991) examined the determinants of women’s economic status in rural China. The study focused on women’s labour force participation, decision making power and
consumption of non-staple food and expenditure on clothes. The main hypothesis was that women’s economic status in the household, depends on three levels of influences viz., women’s acquired economic and social power, the socio-economic status of their households and the level of support and opportunities in the community. The results of the multivariate analysis revealed that women’s economic well-being was enhanced by women acquiring independent sources of income, adopting new values of self-esteem through education, benefiting from improvement in the socio-economic conditions of their households and the overall level of development in their community. Further, researcher observed that women’s absolute level of consumption improved with household income, but their relative shares in non-staple food and clothing expenditure declined with the household enhanced economic position.

Oldenburg (1992) studied socio-cultural factors which determine the low status of women in India. The identified factors were the value of children for religious rituals and companionship; the inability of women to return to their natal homes; prohibition on women working outside the home; non-enforcement of laws concerning alimony and child support; restrictions on female ownership/control of land or assets; poor access of women to communal resources; poor access to support systems (such as natal family) and poor access to external support (such as government programs, extension, credit clubs).

Samarasinghe (1993) examined socio-political factors among the Indian Tamil female tea plantation workers in Sri Lanka. He observed that although their wage rate and work hours had been increased, there had not been a corresponding increase in women’s ability to control their income and it remained a male dominated social and political system. The study further explained that status can be improved through the control of women’s income and labour and male dominance both at work and home.

Malhotra and Mather (1994) examined the women’s status in Sri Lanka. The measures of women’s status in the study were household decision making and financial control. It was found from the multinomial logistic analysis that married women have either partial, full or no control of finances. While schooling and work experiences were indirectly connected to financial control and act through increased status in the marriage system. In case of decision making
power, marriage system (residence with parents, presence of children) variables were more important than financial control.

Arun (1994) conducted a study to examine whether land ownership makes a difference of women’s roles in agriculture in Kerala, India. The study reported that women enjoyed high status in Kerala and economic, social and cultural factors interplay for reinforcing the gender differences in ownership, control and access to land through inheritance, marriage or informal networks. The researcher argued that the traditional rights of women to land had not been adequately recognized. The gender gap in the ownership and control of property was the only most significant contributor to the gender gap in the economic well-being, social status and empowerment of women.

United Nation (1995) reported that improvement of women’s political, social, economical and health status was highly important in improving the status of women and it enhances their decision making capacity at all levels and all spheres of life.

Meeker and Meeker (1997) researched on precarious socio-economic position of women in rural Africa. They observed that in rural African societies, women were typically engaged in agricultural, household and income generating activities and also often had a heavier workload than do men. But they typically did not experience equal access to resources like education and economic.

Lieu (1999) carried out a comparative study to examine differences in family and social status in urban and rural areas among different regions, and between men and women in contemporary China. Status has been determined by a score of power to manage family income, decision making power over the family consumption, say in matters concerning children's future, decision making power on reproductive matters and decision making power on matters of self interest. It was revealed that there was weak correlation among all four indexes except reproductive decision making and women's family status which was related to women's income, number of children, and educational level beyond high school.

Haddad (1999) studied the status of women in seven Asian countries, Sri Lanka, Philippine, PRC, Vietnam, India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. The researcher observed
considerable variation in the status of women relative to men in the seven countries, using different indicators such as life expectancy, school enrollment, earned income share, literacy rate, etc. Further, it was found that the status of women was lowest in India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and position and status of women was formed around a series of cultural and economic factors such as resource use, ownership, control, legal and ideological structures, education and information. The status of women strongly influenced their ability to make decision in the spending of household income, the quantity and quality of childcare and health seeking behaviour including family planning decisions.

Sobha (2001) explained that the socio-economic conditions of agricultural women are a reflection of their status in the society and the main factors which had a bearing on their socio-economic status were age, education, income and debt and number of hours spend in the farm.

Balk (2003) carried out a study in rural Bangladesh. The analysis has been focused on two indicators, women’s freedom to move outside their homes (mobility) and women’s authority in household decision making. The findings revealed that both mobility and authority tended to increase with women’s age. Women who lived in the household, headed by their in-laws, had less mobility and much less authority. Women from poor homes had greater mobility, but wealth had little effect on household decision making. Education tended to increase decision making authority but decrease mobility.

Meitei (2004) studied education or earning and access to resources determining women’s autonomy. The study examined the involvement of the women in ten areas of decision making under the two broad categories such as economic and social decisions. Under the economic decisions, decisions relating to expenditure of small day to day needs (daily family expenditure), expenditure on personal needs (personal needs), major financial matters like buying and / or selling of land/TV/fridge/vehicle, etc., (major finances), possession and liquidation of ornaments (ornaments) and save and/or borrowing money, have been considered. Children’s education, treatment for sick child, going to natal kin, and joining friends were included, under the social decisions. Further, it was reported that most of the decisions were taken jointly by husband and wife, while working women took more of independent decision than the non-working women.
Bhadra (2004) examined the status of scheduled caste women in Rajbansis of West Bengal and observed that the status of women depended on their age, family and kinship status, type of household, education, occupation, income and property. The study further revealed that status improved with age, when woman became a chief housewife in a nuclear family or a mother-in-law in a joint family. But the role of education in determining the status of women was very much limited as the majority of the women were illiterate.

Ghosh and Bharati (2005) studied the interrelationship of women’s status in terms of socio-economic inequality between two ethnic groups (munda and poundraksshatriya) in Kolkata and its effect on women’s health at micro level. The results revealed that there was a significant difference between various factors (socio-economic, demographic, diet intake and body mass index) among the ethnic groups that indicated a better situation for the poundraksshariya women. The number of live births, dietary intake and Body Mass Index (BMI) of the women in the two ethnic groups varied differentially among socio-economic factors such as women’s education, working pattern and poverty level of the household, which were the most recognized measures of the women’s status.

Das (2006) examined increasing gender gap and socio-economic status of women in North-East India. It was found that the best possible indicators of the determination of the status of women were education and employment. Education coupled with employment have made women more conscious of their rights and helped in making them assert in the society. Women’s participation on equal terms with men in domestic decision making makes them being recognized in the family. The study pointed out that women’s power of expression, capacity to reach through their views and ideas generally come with education. The educational attainment and participation in to gainful economic pursuit make women strong and determined. The financial freedom that comes with their employment opportunity can’t be denied and these two aspects generally make women capable of asserting their voice both in the family as well as in the society.

While going through the studies reviewed in this sub-head, it is amply clear that status of women depends on socio – economic factors such as education, occupation, women’s
income, decision making power, ownership, control and access to land, financial control, family structure, demographic features, mobility and authority. Some studies highlighted that educational level, decision making power, control of income and lands, mobility and authority of rural women are lower as compared to their male counterpart. The researchers also revealed that status of rural women is positively related to their income, age, education, occupation and family structure (nuclear family). In general, the status of women differs with socio-cultural environment, but none of the studies compared the status of women in the family with different socio-cultural settings. Identification of key determinants of status of women is also highly important for improving their livelihoods, however, scanty literature has been found in this regards. Moreover, such types of research have not been carried out regarding the rural women in hilly areas. Therefore, the present investigation tries to identify and compare key determinants of status of women in hilly areas of two neighbouring countries like India and Sri Lanka.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Behaviour of Rural Women

The entrepreneur is the person who strives to maximize his/her profits by innovations. However, the entrepreneurs are not simply innovators, they are persons with a will to act, to assume risk and to bring about a change through organization of human efforts. Woman entrepreneur is one who wants to set up a commercial venture on her own with determination, zeal enthusiasm, and basic knowledge of business. The basic concept underlying the definition of entrepreneurship is that it connotes innovativeness, an urge to take risks in the face of uncertainties and an intuition i.e. capacity of seeing things in a way which afterwards proved to be true (Vinze, 1987). By a simple definition doing new things or doing things that are already being done in a new way is a part of entrepreneurial behaviour.

Studies on entrepreneurship (Kilby, 1971; Nandi, 1973; Vinze, 1987) revealed that emergence of entrepreneurship depends on certain personality traits like perception of market factors, independence, ability to influence others, decision making, access to and control over resources, risk taking ability and innovativeness.

Buttner (1993) conducted a comparative study on the presence of achievement
motivation, goal orientation, risk taking and independence of the entrepreneurial men and women. The study observed that women entrepreneurs were more adoptive, socially aware and had wider experience in different business areas.

Studies on entrepreneurial behaviour of dairy women (Fulzele and Meena, 1994; Bhatt, 1995; Reddy, 1995) revealed that most of the dairy women farmers had medium level of social participation, value orientation and management orientation whereas; very few of them had high level of training.

Monica and Talukdar (1997) attempted to study variables influencing entrepreneurship of women entrepreneurs in four districts, Kamrup, Sonitarpur, Jorhal and Dibrugarh. The findings of the study revealed that women on an average had medium extent of entrepreneurship and majority of women were sufficiently high where skills were concerned, but where knowledge and attitudinal dimensions were concerned, majority of them had only a medium level of knowledge or a moderately favourable attitude. Researchers further explained that there were significant and positive correlation between the extent of entrepreneurial behaviour and job involvement, achievement motivation and total annual income of the family and the variables role conflict as housewife and role conflict as an entrepreneur exhibited significant negative correlation. It was recommended that more number of special entrepreneurial development programmes should be organized by the promotional agencies and developmental organizations along with development of entrepreneurial qualities.

Lerner et al. (1997) examined the individual factors influencing performance of Israeli women – owned business. They identified five theoretical perspectives to explain performance, such as individual motivation and goals; social learning (entrepreneurial socialization); network affiliation (contacts and membership in organization); human capital (level of education, business skills); and environmental influences (location, sectoral participation and socio-political variables).

Kapoor (1998) studied entrepreneurial behaviour of women in Ludhiana. The investigation focused on four components of entrepreneurial behaviour, risk taking, ambitious behaviour, decision making and goal orientation. It was found that about thirty two per cent of
rural women had no ambition and did not set goals and also their risk taking was found to be low.

Mundhwa and Podheria (1998) examined the entrepreneurial behaviour of dairy women in Mehsana district of Gujarat. The study has considered single dependent variable (entrepreneurial behaviour) and twelve independent variables such as age, education, type of family, farm size, dairy farming income, social participation, milk yield and infrastructural experience. The researchers observed that except age, farming experience and dairy farming income, other variables were significantly different in their entrepreneurial behaviour.

Deepti and Hema (1998) studied entrepreneurial behaviour of milk producers in Bareilly district of Uttar Pradesh. The study focused on women’s social, personal, economic and psychological attributes. The entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women has been analyzed by using thirteen independent variables such as age, caste, religion, marital status, family size, family type, herd size, family land holding, family education status, attitudes towards self employment, attitudes towards income generation, milk production and credit availability. The study revealed that about sixty per cent of women were in medium level of entrepreneurial behaviour followed by twenty one and eighteen per cent were in high and low categories, respectively. It was further found that entrepreneurial behaviour was significantly higher amongst those who belonged to middle age group and higher castes and lower amongst landless rural women. Standard of family education was a significant positive factor to the entrepreneurial behaviour of women.

Jayalekshmi et al. (1999) attempted to examine factors influencing entrepreneurial behaviour of rural women in Trivadrum district of Kerala state. They found that there is positive and significant relationship between caste, educational status of family, educational status of respondent, annual income, information seeking behaviour, mass media contact, social participation, cosmopolitaness, level of aspiration, attitude towards self employment and perceived knowledge about technology with the entrepreneurial behaviour. The study further suggested that promoting and developing entrepreneurship among rural women required
encouragement, training to improve the knowledge and skills, developing initiatives and providing necessary information regarding financial support by development agencies.

Rashiq (1999) examined entrepreneurial behaviour of women in Guwahati and found that women entrepreneurs were more cosmopolite in business dealings and had no hesitation to expand contacts beyond their locality. And they also had risk taking ability and medium risk orientation.

Nayyar (2001) studied entrepreneurship attributes among women entrepreneurs in Chamba, Kullu, Kangra and Mandi districts of Himachal Pradesh. The study revealed that important attributes for women entrepreneurs were self confidence, management skill, and achievement motivation, risk taking ability, decision making ability, amicable nature and conflict revolving ability.

Subrahmanyeswari et al. (2007) attempted to analyze entrepreneurial behaviour of rural dairy women farmers in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh and found that achievement motivation and decision making ability were among the first two ranks, whereas, innovativeness and risk taking ability got the least importance among small and medium dairy women farmers. The study further revealed that majority of dairy women farmers’ possessed medium entrepreneurial behaviour. Land holding, material possession, management orientation, value orientation, income from dairy farming, education and innovativeness were positively and significantly related with entrepreneurial behaviour.

An overview of the studies reviewed above indicated that there are eleven dimensions of entrepreneurial behaviour such as innovativeness, decision making, achievement motivation, knowledge, information seeking, risk taking ability, ability to coordinate activities related to enterprise, assistance of management of services, leadership ability and cosmopolitaness. Many researchers highlighted that women entrepreneurs had medium level of social participation, value orientation, management orientation, knowledge and favourable attitude. It was also observed that there was positive correlation between the extent of
entrepreneurial behaviour and job involvement, achievement motivation and total annual income of the family, educational status of family, educational status of respondent, information seeking behaviour, mass media contact and level of aspiration. However, all these studies have been done related to dairy farming and other enterprises. The present study focuses itself towards above important aspects related to entrepreneurial behaviour of rural farm women in hilly area and compares findings between two countries.

2.3 Women’s Involvement in Various Activities

Widespread ignorance and belief that women in the rural areas do not participate in socio-economic development, because they are confined to homework, are still common. There has been inadequate understanding and evaluation of women’s contribution to household. However, some of the studies given below argue that the women in rural areas are more active than others.

2.3.1 Contribution of women to agriculture & livestock

Aronoff and Crano (1975) on the basis of the study of 862 societies revealed that women contributed appreciably to their respective economies. The world wide percentage of food production contributed by women is 43.88 with a range of 32.24 to 50.73 over specific culture areas.

Miranda (1977) reported that women’s employment in agricultural sector was inversely related to regional development. Data on the labour – force participation of Brazilian women revealed that 8 per cent of the women in developed region were in labour force. The corresponding figures for intermediate and less developed region were 24 and 36 per cent, respectively.

Census of India (1981) reported that women played an important role in agriculture, as agriculture is largely a household enterprise. Recent studies highlighted that women in India are major producers of food in terms of value, volume and number of hours worked.

Spencer (1981) on the basis of series of detailed surveys of both farm and non – farm households in Siera Leone, indicated that women play an important role in agriculture
and contribute at least 40 per cent of the total labour input.

A study of hill region of Uttar Pradesh by Kumar and Singh (1983) indicated the dominance of women workers in agriculture particularly in per capita employment of 51 days for a woman in crop activities against only 19 days for a male worker. Further, it was found that on an average three - fourth of the total work in agriculture was being performed by female workers in the family alone. In addition to this, their monetary contribution (67 per cent) in the total income generated from agriculture was also higher.

Agnihotri (1983) studied the contribution of female workers in the farm sector in Una district of Himachal Pradesh. It was found that 63 per cent of women were participating in work force and 90 per cent of them were associated with agriculture.

Barun et al. (1985) conducted a study on commercialization of agriculture under population pressure in the commune of Giciye, situated in the North-Western part of Rwanda. They found that men contributed on an average 25.3 per cent of the total family labour input as against 74.1 per cent by women. The share of women for all crops and activities was higher than men.

Guleria and Agnihotri (1986) studied the female labour participation in various farm operations in Una district of Himachal Pradesh. They reported that female farm workers accounted for 42 per cent of the total working force and share of female workers in the overall income was found to be 5 per cent higher than male workers.

Gupta and Singh (1986) examined the participation pattern of women in different farm and non - farm activities in Haryana. They found that 14 per cent of total adult female members were engaged in wage earning activities. The remaining members were found to be participating in own farm activities.

Bhati and Singh (1987) estimated the household’s total labour inputs and examined the division of labour in farm household in Himachal Pradesh. It was revealed from the study that women labour accounted for 61 per cent of the total farm work and their participation was greater in activities like animal husbandry than in crop production.

Bhople and Palki (1988) studied socio-economic dimensions of farm women labour in rural India. They reported that rural women perform a variety of roles of which many are
of greater economic significance and farm women play a significant role in domestic and socio-economic life of the society.

Salika (1999) investigated the role of women in agriculture including animal husbandry, sericulture and other allied activities and the involvement of farm women in decision making process in Assam. The researcher revealed that the proportion of females playing a major or equal role was highest in the selection of crop variety while in financial matters, the involvement of women was relatively low.

Singh and Garcia (1999) examined the impact of women participation in agricultural work on their role in decision making process about economic activities and household matters. The study highlighted overwhelming economic contribution of women in productive as well as domestic activities in the hill region.

Singh et al. (2004) studied participation of women in agriculture and found that rural women play a significant role in agricultural activities such as seeding, transplanting, weeding, fertilizer application, plant protection, harvesting, processing, storage, etc. Several of these operations were exclusively carried out by women only. Thus, they directly or indirectly influenced the course of agriculture by participating all above agricultural activities.

2.3.2 Contribution of women to household income and expenditure

Simmers (1976) observed that West African women play significant roles as farmers, traders and entrepreneurs in their own rights and these roles are of central importance to the women, their families and the economies of West African countries.

Silver (1977) while discussing about the role and status of women in France indicated that in the rural sector, the role of the women is essential for the functioning of the farm and the economic survival of the family. The farming woman is a partner to her husband, combining an occupational role with a domestic responsibility. She has always had an important economic function as a producer of goods and often she has also been in-charge of the finances of the rural enterprises.
Kumar *et al.* (1985) made an attempt to study the employment and income pattern of women labour in modern agriculture in Meerut district of Uttar Pradesh. They observed that women devoted 66 per cent of the total labour to agriculture and rest to non-agriculture. Total annual income per women labour amounted to Rs.2489. Out of which about 60 per cent was derived from agriculture, 28.44 per cent from non-agriculture and the rest from owned and other sources.

Sander (1986) carried out a study on participation of farm women in on-farm and off-farm activities and revealed that farm women contributed significantly and substantially to farm family income, farm production over time as well to manage family income.

Noponen (1991) examined female income contribution to household income. The researcher found that, on an average, total female earnings accounted for 42 per cent of overall household income, while the corresponding figure for males was 48 per cent.

Haddinot and Haddad (1995) investigated influence of female income share on household expenditure in Côte d’Ivoire. They observed that women’s share of cash income positively and significantly affected the budget share of a number of goods. Specially, it had a positive and significant effect on the budget share of food and negative and significant effect on meals eaten out, children’s clothing, adult clothing, alcohol and cigarettes.

Tuleja (2000) studied the contribution of female agricultural workers in family income and their status in Haryana. The study revealed that female agricultural workers contributed significantly in household income as all farms and the earnings were found most crucial for the landless and small farm households.

A study undertaken in thirteen villages of Bharmaur tehsil by Chauhan (2000) indicated women shared in farm and off-farm income to the extent of 27 and 12 per cent, respectively, giving an overall contribution of 24 per cent in the household income excluding their contribution as home maker.

Cheryl Doss (2005) conducted a survey to examine how the share of assets owned by women in Ghanaian households affects household expenditure patterns. In this analysis,
assets include business assets, savings, and farmland. The results indicated that women's share of assets had an impact on household budget shares for a number of expenditure categories. Although the number of households in which women own land was much smaller than the number of households in which women own assets, the coefficient on the share of household land owned by women was statistically significant in explaining five of the nine budget categories. In particular, women's share of farmland significantly increased budget shares on food.

2.3.3 Impact of women’s income on food security

In terms of underlying factors, women's control of income is a key promoter of household food security and nutrition. Women are more likely than men to spend extra income on nutrition inputs such as food.

Garcia (1991) examined the impacts of female income on food and nutrition outcomes, using data from 841 households in Philippine. It was revealed that female income share had a positive and significant association with household budget, shares of milk, bread, pork, green leafy vegetables, medical care & children’s schooling and this translated in to a positive and significant association with household calorie availability.

The studies conducted by Thomas (1990, 1992), Hoddinott and Haddad (1995) found that increased non-labour income held by women led to a greater share of the household budget devoted to expenditure on human capital and a higher level of nutrition intake.

Alderman and Garcia (1994) investigated the food security and health security to explain the level of nutritional status in Pakistan. They highlighted the critical role of the women’s education in achieving nutritional goals in rural areas. Women who were educated at least up to the primary level; there was a strong impact on nutrition. The level of child wasting would be reduced by almost one-half of the current prevalence level.

Janseen (2000) conducted a study to examine women human capital and livelihood in developing countries. The researcher observed that enhancing the capacity and capability of women as major contributor to food production needs careful consideration. Also, the study found that there were number of ways to enhance women’s ability to produce food and active better health such as improving control and access to productive resources (credit, agricultural inputs
and markets), improving access to health to raise the health status of women, providing education and training, improving access to services and information including education.

Rathnayake and Weerahewa (2002) carried out a study on assessment of intrahousehold calorie allocation of urban poor in Kandy. The results revealed that mother’s income showed significant positive effect on mother’s and children’s calorie adequacy ratio.

### 2.3.4 Women’s involvement in organizations

Devadas et al. (1975) conducted a study of Balwadis in two villages of Coimbatore and revealed that one-fourth of the mothers who participated in the Balwadis had adopted meal planning and more than half of the mothers had adopted the practices demonstrated, indicating the value of nutrition education imparted to them.

Hanumappa and Sujatha (1984) attempted to assess the functional impact of Mahila Mandals in the process of socio-economic upliftment of rural women of Bangalore. They observed that with the introduction of Mahila Mandals there was increased awareness among rural women and certain improvement in their way of talking and self-care behaviour.

Rao and Verma (1987) observed that 51 per cent of beneficiaries of DWCRA in Andhra Pradesh were engaged in trade like rope making, basket weaving and mat making and 23 per cent in small industry like wig making and dress making.

Mahagen (1992) proposed a model to create employment opportunities for the rural women below poverty line and to generate income for rural poor. She suggested that women can improve their participation in the programmes of rural development to increase their earnings, acquire new skills, reduce their daily workload and have better access to credit through the organization of groups.

Mehra (1997) examined women empowerment and economic development. The study found that some non-government organizations, such as Self Employed Women’s Association (SEWA) in India, have effectively helped to improve women’s economic status.

Puhazhendi and Jayaraman (1999) studied women’s participation and employment generation among rural poor. They reported that the informal - groups, rural poor with active intervention of NGO’s adequately supported by training and financial assistance significantly
improved women’s participation both from economic and social aspects.

Prasad and Singh (2004) conducted a study on participation and role of women in Panchayats in Nau district of Uttar Pradesh. The researchers reported that as leaders, their major concerns for development of their villages were better roads, streets, drainage, water reservoirs and conservation of natural resources.

Raj (2004) examined SHGs’ and women’s empowerment. It was revealed that SHGs’ contributed significantly to the overall development of women in rural areas, by strengthening and empowering. Strengthen and empowered rural women could contribute to the various aspects of rural life.

Gangwar et al. (2005) studied empowerment of women in dairy co-operative members and non-members. The study found that majority of co-operative members and non-members had high levels of involvement in decision making in livestock and household activities, whereas co-operative members were more economically independent and self confident than non-members. They further explained that members of co-operative helped the women to move towards empowerment to a certain level.

From the comprehensive analysis of the literature reviewed infer that involvement of women in various activities and their importance to family income, food expenditure, household food security, family labour, decision making and empowerment have been researched. In addition, women’s involvement in the development of society and the countries economies has been studied. However, the literature has been silent in general towards the involvement of rural women in hilly areas in various activities and also comparison of women’s involvement in various activities in developing countries like India and Sri Lanka as the pattern of women’s participation varies due to socio-economic and cultural differences. Thus, there is a knowledge gap in this field, which the present study will take care of.

2.4 Livelihood Security, Its Measurements and Coping up Strategies

Chamber (1989) defined livelihood as “adequate stocks and flows of food and cash to meet basic needs”. Redelift (1990) stated that security is “ownership of or access to
resources and assets to offset risks, ease shocks and meet contingencies”. According to Chamber and Convey (1992), livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims, and access) and activities required for a means of living. The concept of livelihood as described by Long (1997) express the idea of individuals and groups striving to make a living attempting to meet their various consumption and economic necessities coping with uncertainties. Complain (1998) cited the definition of the world Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) for livelihood, adequate reserves and supplies of food and cash to meet basic needs. According to Ellis (2000) livelihood comprises the assets (natural, physical, financial and social capital), the activities and access to these that together determine the living gained by the individual. Hug (2000) argued that a livelihood encompass income, both cash and kind as well as social institutions relating to kinship, family, neighborhood and village, women groups and property rights required to support and to sustain a given standard of living.

2.4.1 Measurement/assessment of livelihood security

The livelihood assessment process aims to enhance understanding about local livelihood systems, livelihoods, economic, socio - cultural and political system and the constraints, vulnerabilities, marginalization and risks of people.

Bouis (1993) explained two major methods which are widely used to measure food security. The first method was estimate the growth or depletion of food stocks held over the period and second method was 24 hours recalls of food consumption for individual members of household.

Haddad et al. (1994) noted a variety of indirect indicators that can be used as predictor for food insecurity, including asset ownership, household size and dependency ratio.

CARE (Centre for Assistance and Relief Every where), Kenya (1996) assessed livelihood security in Kenya, using livelihood security index. The comprehensive index was made up of four indices that reflect health, educational, food and economic security. They have complied number of different indicators under health security (health services access, population services access, access to water and latrines, prevalence of respiratory problems, diarrhea,
immunization rates and birth spacing), educational security (availability of schools & teachers, affordability and accessibility, quality and use, and literacy rate by gender), food security (months of self provisioning from primary productivity, reliance on coping up strategies, diet diversity, per capita calorie availability and number of meals per day) and economic security (current income balance, current assets balance, acreage per household).

CARE, India (1997) assessed household livelihood security in Tathiraspara village, Bastar. The study revealed that the village was on the fragile end of the livelihood security index and it had an overall score of 1.9 on a scale of one to five. They further explained that six of the eight components of livelihood security areas were below the fragile equilibrium mid point and only index score above three was income security due largely to the skewed result of wage labour from part time employment of mining in the area.

Frank (1999) examined livelihood diversity in developing countries. He revealed that gender was an integral and inseparable part of rural livelihoods and men and women have different assets, access to resources and opportunities. Women rarely owned land, may have lower education, discriminating access and their access to productive resources as well as decision making tend to occur through the mediation of men. Women typically confronted narrower range of labour markets than men and lower wage rates. Therefore diversification was more of an option for rural men than women. The diversification can improve household livelihood security while at the same time trapping women in customary roles.

David (1999) studied household livelihood security in urban settlement. He revealed that livelihood strategies could be complicated and confusing in urban settlements. Contexts were changing and uncertain, with accelerating urban growth, increasing crime, an ill equipped public sector and intense competition for limited resources. Household members employed complex, varied strategies, often living on credit, surviving and competing in markets, undertaking seasonal work and earning incomes in the informal economic within the city. Some groups were specially; vulnerable due to their position in the society. Researcher indicated that women were more severely affected than men by poor and over crowded housing. Women usually look after the children, stay at home during the day, care for sick family members and manage the
household. Therefore, it was badly affected to the livelihood security of women.

Drinkwater and Rusinow (1999) developed CARE’s livelihood security model which was influenced by the definition given by Chamber and Convey (1992). The CARE livelihood security model reflects three basic attributes viz; the possession of human capabilities (education, health, skill, psychological orientation); access to other tangible and intangible assets (social, natural and economic capital) and the existence of economic activities. It was stated that the model is particularly useful analytical tool to understand the needs of vulnerable.

Christina et al. (2001) conducted a study to address the food security in Africa via multiple livelihood strategies of women farmers. They revealed that food insecurity was primarily a problem in Africa. Therefore, different development interventions, both in policy and technology were needed, as a general rule to increase women’s incomes and help make their livelihood sustainable. The ways to improve returns to women’s resources in a broader context and facilitate women’s cash cropping, income generating activities and agricultural labour, as well as encourage providing, productivity enhancing safety nets for the poorest women were the some strategies to improve livelihood security of women in Africa. They further suggested that policy makers should be encouraged to facilitate women’s income generating activities (by expanding micro credits and micro enterprise programs) and multiple livelihood systems appropriate for their environment, resources and household composition, complement them with agricultural research programs aimed at increasing women’s agricultural productivity.

Rahman and Alam (2001) conducted a baseline survey on livelihood security of vulnerable urban households in Slums and low income settlements within the municipal areas of Jessore and Tongi in Bangladesh. The researchers highlighted that the incidence of divorce, separation, abandonment and being a widow is strikingly high in female headed household in both cities, thereby the vulnerability of female headed households require broader family support for their livelihood security.

CARE, USA (2002) documented standard indicators for livelihood outcomes, food, education, health, economic, habitat, nutritional, social network and environment security and these measure lasting changes in the conditions, or aspects of the quality of life.
Azmi (2002a) developed the analytical model to study livelihoods in the village, based on the definition of Drinkwater and Frankenberger (1992) and Drinkwater and Carney (1998). The model analyzed assets (natural, physical, human, social and economic) in relation to structure and process (gender roles, lack of mobility, government policies, community relations, market relations) which enable or constraints the livelihood options of the women and vulnerable contexts (shocks, trends and seasonality).

Azmi (2002b) studied the challenges to women’s livelihood strategies in a dryzone peasant colonization schemes in rural Sri Lanka. The study found that land access for women was an acute problem hindering different livelihood options of the women and it should be changed with implications for the future livelihood security of women.

Mtshali (2002) studied household livelihood security in rural KWA Zulu-Natal in South Africa and identified the main problems in rural areas for their livelihoods as illiteracy, unemployment, poor infrastructure, lack of resources of agricultural production (land, capital, credit, appropriate technology, input, trainings, extension and markets) resulting food insecurity and lack of income to buy enough food. The study also observed that gender was critical in the household structure and processes that relate to rural livelihood.

Frank et al. (2002) conducted a study on livelihood and rural poverty reduction in Malawi. They revealed useful insights about the individuals attempt to construct viable livelihood strategies. One of the key point emerged was landless. Therefore several emerging trends were apparent and one of the important trends was for matrilineal traditions of land inheritance to be replaced by patrilineal forms, with implications for the future livelihood security of women, especially those widowed or divorced who already feature disproportional in the poorest category in the rural communities.

Ali (2005) carried out a study on livelihood and food security in Saturia subdistrict under Manikganj district of Bangladesh. The study found that the gender of the household members was crucial for attaining individual level of food security and women’s social capital played a crucial role in achieving household food security and averting vulnerability. It
was further explained that women take more responsibility in sustaining their livelihoods by engaging in economic activities, particularly young women and widowed or divorced women without son.

2.4.2 Shocks and coping up strategies

Mutangadura and Markaudze (1999) investigated the urban vulnerability to income shocks and effectiveness of current social protection mechanisms. The study identified idiosyncratic shocks as unemployment, retrenchment, death in the family, long illness and divorce, and covariant shocks as general price increases, devaluation, taxes and droughts. Also the study reported a number of coping up strategies such as reduced consumption, switching to cheaper substitution, child labour and subletting.

In 2003 Zimvac conducted a national urban assessment in Zimbabwe, using the livelihoods based vulnerabilities assessment framework. The study examined coping mechanisms among different socio-economic groups and reported that shocks to livelihood security as inflation, cost of services, unemployment, death, illness and hospital bills.

Mutonodzo (2006) examined the coping strategies with limited food, insufficient income, and expenditure reduction in urban household in Harare. The study revealed that about 71 per cent of household conserved expenditure by regularly reducing the number of meals taken per day and rationing quantities of food eaten per meal was the next important strategy employed by 66.8 per cent of households. About 60 per cent of household conserved expenses by eating less preferred foods and borrowing food were the strategy of last resort with 40 per cent of households. Income related strategies included diversification, temporary migration in search of alternative income sources and casual labour. Researcher further observed that shock with greatest score was the general increases in prices and other shocks included operation restore order, payment school fees, medical care and services.

From the comprehensive review of the literature it was found that the various outcomes of livelihood security at the household and community level have been assessed by many researchers but very few studies have been found related to livelihood security of women.
However, no research has been undertaken relating to livelihood security of women in hilly areas. Therefore, the present study aims to assess the livelihood security of rural women in hilly areas of India and Sri Lanka and compares the differences of their livelihoods.

2.5 Socio-Economic Problems/Constraints

The women contribution in performing agricultural activities as well as domestic activities is quite high. But they have to face various visible and non-visible problems being an entrepreneur and a house manager.

2.5.1 Problems/constraints faced by women being an entrepreneur

Yadav (1985), Banarjee (1986) and Dogra (1988) observed that women were unable to generate income due to lack of skill, unawareness regarding credit facilities, lack of technical knowledge and marketing, financial problems and other input constraints.

Balaraman (1988) examined the sex discrimination in farm wages in Tamil Nadu, on the basis of wage rate data. It was found that the wages paid to female workers were roughly 60 to 80 per cent of wage paid to male workers.

Grassman (1988) attempted to study on women in business curriculum materials. It was revealed that women have to overcome several additional barriers such as difficulty of obtaining credit, limited exposure to math and credit, social biases, ambivalence about being a competitive, profit oriented deal matters due to their socialization in to nurturing, mothering and serving others, isolation from business network, balancing home and work roles, developing management style as they may not be sure about their leadership ability and assertiveness, potential negative perception, hostile environment including lack of respect, social conditioning and sexual stereotyping, lack of business management, training and experience.

Azad (1989) analyzed the development of entrepreneurship among Indian women and observed that conflict or the difficulty in managing both the home and job as experienced by married women has a negative influence over Indian women.

Dias (1990) investigated women and micro-enterprise in Colombo. It was identified several socio-cultural, economic constraints of women’s participation in entrepreneurial activities
such as familial responsibilities (lack of child caring facilities and domestic help), shortage of capital, lack of secured credit, low levels of education and technical know how. The study further suggested that attention needed to be given to social support structure that was required to enhance women’s ability to participate in training and related programmes and to enter self employment.

Rao (1991) identified the factors that impede and slow down the entrepreneurial development of rural women in Anantapur district of Andra Pradesh. The findings showed that economic backwardness, lack of family and community support, ignorance of opportunities, lack of motivation, shyness and inhibition, preference for traditional occupations were some of the factors that inhibit the promotion of grass roots entrepreneurship among rural women.

Seetharam (1992) stressed that the employment opportunities for women were reported to be restricted by the factors such as adverse impact of farm technology, restrictions on women’s access to resources, negative attitude for working women by themselves, by men and society, inadequate educational and training opportunities and other socio-demographic constraints. In addition to those, several other problems such as lack of child care facilities, poor skills, lack of training etc. also hindered the expansion of female employment.

Kamulon and Kumar (1992) observed that the lack of infrastructural facilities, non-availability of raw materials, transport facilities and lack of markets were reasons to the slow growth of women entrepreneurs.

Vepa (1992) reported that lack of motivation from family members was a major constraints encountered by women entrepreneurs leading to a great difficulty in combating the opposition first from family members and then from society at various levels. A large number of entrepreneurs were also found having no any awareness about various programmes run by the government and private agencies.

Misra (1995) pointed out that the main problems faced by Indian women entrepreneurs were lack of adequate finance, lack of technical know-how, non-availability of raw materials, inadequate marketing facilities, lack of technical and management skill.
Jayalekshmi et al. (1997) studied constraints faced by rural women entrepreneurs in Thiruvanathapuram and reported that even though rural women have been trained in various technologies, some of them were not able to start their own enterprise due constraints of marketing and lack of financial assistance.

Talukdar et al. (1998) examined knowledge and attitude of women entrepreneurs in Assam. The study observed that 41.6 per cent women had less favourable attitude due to lack of requisite support from concerned technical department, limitation of government policies, lack of support from spouse/family members, negative social attitude toward women entrepreneurs, tendency of others to underestimate a women’s capability of entrepreneurship, higher scrutiny and cumbersome formalities in banks or financial institutions, lack of pertinent knowledge and lack of economic resources under the command.

Punitha et al. (1999) examined the problems and constraints faced by women entrepreneurs in the Pondicherry region. The study revealed that the major problems faced by rural women were competition from better quality products and marketing problems and the least problems were ignorance about schemes, distance from market and ignorance about agency and institutions. It was further indicated that socio-physiological problems faced by women according to their descending order of ranking were conflicts due to dual responsibility, lack of social contacts, lack of motivation from family members, male dominance, lack of emphasis placed on growth, lack of self motivation and absence of appreciation for individual decisions.

Anitha and Laxmisha (1999) studied women entrepreneurship in India. They explained women literacy rate which it self is the cause for low economic status, creates a vicious circle of low social and economic status. The rural female literacy rate was 30.4 per cent, whereas the rural male literacy rate was 57.8 per cent. They further explained that emergence of women entrepreneurs should be viewed as a socio-economic emancipation of women.

Perera (2004) investigated problems of women entrepreneurs in the Matara district of Sri Lanka. The study revealed that women are facing various types of problems related to socio –
cultural such as cultural believes, values, attitudes, behavioural patterns and customers, sub
cultural aspects such as family status, reference group, nationality, social groups, personal
factors such as age, education, occupation, income, economic circumstances, pattern of life
cycles, role as a mother and wife and psychological factors such as motivation towards business,
learning, believes and attitudes.

2.5.2 Problems/constraints faced by women being a house manager

Congress of labour foundation (1990) examined health status of plantation workers in
Nuwara Eliya district of Sri Lanka. It was reported two kinds of health problems experienced by
women related to poor nutrition, unsatisfactory housing and sanitary facilities and conditions and
practices of work. The study recommended that to provide health education, adequate nutrition,
safe drinking water, basic sanitation and provision of suitable clothing and equipment.

Yadev and Verma (1990) investigated main problems faced by women labourers in
Haryana. It was observed that low wages, economic insecurity, education of children, uncertainty
of occupation, marriage of daughters, exploitation by landlords, non-availability of cultivable
lands, good food to eat and scarcity of drinking water were the main problems faced by women.

Miller (1992) reviewed Indian case studies and identified several economic factors
which, were responsible for discrimination against girls in South Asia such as low demand for
female labour in subsistence agriculture, under estimation of the value of non-market activities
and opinion of parents such that girls are less likely to be able to provide supports for parents in
old age.

Pattanaik (1996) reported that women face barriers in three areas i.e. access to
education, reproductive health and credit resources. Women will not have equal access to
opportunities and to the benefits of developments until barriers persist in these areas.

Bhadra (2004) conducted a study on status of scheduled caste women in West
Bengal and found that the Rajbansi women suffered from three types of oppressions under the
specific social conditions. Firstly, their status suffered due to their social status as a whole in the
Hindu caste hierarchy as a scheduled caste. Secondly, they were economically, educationally and politically backward. And thirdly, their status suffered due to gender biasness in their own society.

While the various problems and constraints faced by women in the plains as well as hilly areas have been highlighted by scholars, but no one has tried to compare the problems of women for the proposed study areas. So, the present study attempts to identify and compare problems faced by women in hilly areas of India and Sri Lanka being an entrepreneur and being a house manager.

Overall, it is amply clear that many studies on socio-economic status of women have been carried out at the national and international levels, but there are a few studies relating to Himachal Pradesh and Sri Lanka. Till now no study has come across that has researched issues of livelihood security of women in Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh (India) and Nuwara Eliya district of Sri Lanka. Further, it is also evident from the review of literature presented that the topic of present investigation “socio-economic status and livelihood security of women” has not been researched in a comprehensive manner. Therefore, the present study has been undertaken to fill up this research gap.