CHAPTER – I

Theoretical Framework
THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 Introduction

"If you give me a well educated mother, I will give you a better nation"

Napoleon

*Women in all societies are the transmitters of history, customs and traditions of their people.....and the status and the position of the women in society is the best way to understand civilization ....*

‘You can tell the condition of a nation by looking at the status of its women’

Jawaharlal Nehru

Millions of women’s are raised in an environment of neglect, overwork, and often, abuse, simply because they are female. In many countries women’s are fed less than their brothers, forced to work harder, provided less schooling and denied equal access to medical care. They marry earlier and face greater risks of dying in adolescent and early adult hood. Their impaired health and lost opportunities exact a terrible toll on society and on future generations. South Asian countries and India are societies with strong patriarchal norms, a high degree of son preference and pervasive gender Discriminations.

Gender discrimination and continued gender gap have been the most persistent social problems facing the global community. These problems have received considerable attention particularly during the past three decades through a series of initiatives at international, regional and national levels. This process was formally initiated through the programmes centring on the international women’s year in 1975. However. The overall economic development of a nation requires maximum utilization of human resources without any discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, religion or sex.

Despite the fact that women constitute about half of the population of the world, they have been openly discriminated socially, economically, culturally politically, against their male counterparts. surprisingly, the women who are contributing effectively in the growth and development of their respective nations, sharing variety of responsibilities, playing vital role in upbringing their children and supplementing the
family income continue to be blatantly discriminated. This fact has been aptly emphasized in the Human Development Report as “their doors to economic and political opportunities are barely ajar for women. Legal discrimination and violence against women are widely prevalent”. The report further notes that even though there has been an enhancement of women’s capabilities in every country, women and men still live in an unequal world.

Over the last two decades, gender and development has indeed been discussed a great deal. There have been scores of conferences, trainings and workshops on their subjects. Generally, the discussions have focused on ensuring equal opportunities for women and men, particularly on social and economic rights, mainly in poor economies where human deprivations is frequently depicted in terms of limited and unequal access to food, nutrition, health care, educational and job opportunities. Consequently, women’s political rights have been ignored or neglected, as has been argued by social thinkers, that as a priority women need adequate food, basic health care services and educational opportunities rather than right to participation in politics or public decision making. In the 1950’s many of the newly independent countries began their developmental activities on the models of the western countries. It was believed that industrialization and use of modern techniques in agricultural activities would usher in growth and development for the country as a whole in general and the backward class including women in particular. On these presumptions, Governments of developing countries were betting on the strong assumptions that the benefits of development would trickle down to poor majorities, and gradually whole communities would prosper. Very little attention was paid on poor segment of the population particularly the women. Women’s contribution to the household and to the economy was neither recognized nor valued at that time.

Gender became an issue during the First United Nations Decade, 1960-70, when it was found that planned development efforts which were meant to improve the lives of the community as a whole, were either not helping women or were actually harming them in many ways. Such a state of affair was indeed a major concern especially when the benefits of development was not reaching the poor or to the women. There were evidences of under employment, food shortage and polarization between the rich and the poor. As a result of these, and the pressure from below, the goals of development and the means for their achievement were re-examined. During the Second
Development Decade (1970-1980), NGOs working in rural areas of many developing countries pointed out the absence of participation by the poor and the women in developmental programmes.

It was at this juncture, various concepts like “people’s participation.” A “bottom up approach”, redistribution with growth and so on were debated. In response to these debates, the basic needs approach accompanied by anti-poverty programmes were introduced by the governments of various countries.

It was found that even where families benefited, women in those families did not always share the fruits of benefits. Women’s perspectives, their needs and interests were being ignored by gender development plans. This meant that the inequalities persisted between men and women. Women’s contribution to and participation in the development process was not recognised. Consequently, women remained marginalized and disempowered.

1.2 Gender Inequality

The goal of feminism as a political movement is to make women and men are equal, legally, socially and culturally. Gender inequality takes many different forms, depending on the economic structure and social organization of a particular society and on the culture of any particular group within that society. Although we speak of gender inequality, it is usually women who are disadvantaged relative to similarly situated men.

Women often receive lower pay for the same or comparable work, and they are frequently blocked in their chances for advancement, especially to top positions. There is usually an imbalance in the amount of housework and child care a wife does compared to her husband, even when both spend the same amount of time in paid work outside the home. When women professionals are matched with men of comparable productiveness, men still get greater recognition for their work and move up career ladders faster on an overall basic, gender inequality means that work most often done by women, such as teaching small children and nursing, is paid less than work most often done by men, such as construction and mining.

Gender inequality can also take the form of girls getting less education than boys of the same social class. Nearly two-thirds of the world’s illiterates are women,
but in western societies, the gender gap in education is closing at all level of schooling. In many countries, men get priority over women in the distribution of health care services. Contraceptive use has risen in industrial countries, but in developing countries, complications in child birth are still a leading cause of death for young women. AIDS takes an even more terrible toll on women than men globally, since women's risk for becoming infected with HIV during unprotected sex is two or five times higher than in men. In May 2003 about 40 million people were living with HIV/AIDS, and that more than half were women. Sexual politics influence the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Many women with HIV/AIDS have been infected through early sexual exploitation, or by husbands who have multiple sexual partners but who refuse to use condoms.

Sexual exploitation and violence against women are also part of gender inequality in many other ways. In wars and national uprisings, women of one racial ethnic group are often raped by the men of the opposing racial ethnic group as a deliberate weapon of shaming and humiliation. Domestically, women are vulnerable to beatings, rape, and murder—often by their husbands and boyfriends, and especially when they try to leave an abusive relationship. The bodies of girls and women are used in sex work — pornography and prostitution. They are on display in movies, and advertising in western cultures. They may be forced to bear children they do not want or to have abortions or be sterilized against their will. In some countries with overpopulation, infant girls are much more often abandoned in orphanages than infant boys. In other countries, if the sex of the fetus can be determined, it is girls who are aborted.

Most women in industrial and post industrial societies do not spend their lives having and caring for babies and most women throughout the world do paid and unpaid work to supply their families with food, clothing, and shelter, even while they are taking care of children. The modern forms of gender inequality are not a complementary exchange of responsibilities but an elaborate system within which, it was estimated by a United Nations report in 1980, women do two-thirds of the world’s work, receive 10 percent of the world’s income, and own 1 percent of the world’s property. The gender gap in paid work is narrowing, but women still do most of the domestic work and child care, and at the same time do agricultural labour, run
small businesses, and do a great deal of home-based paid work, all of which is low-waged labour.

Millennium development goals highlight the priority accorded to gender equality and women’s right as core issues of development. Achieving goals relating to gender equality and gender empowerment are critical for achieving all the major MDGs. However, South Asian countries and India are societies with strong patriarchal norms and high degree of son preference. Consequently, gender discriminations are pervasive. This has been a long recognised problem with resurgence of research interest on the subject. Extremely high levels of gender discrimination against females have been reported in the provision of health care, nutrition, education and resource allocation in northern and western states of India. For instance, the natural biological laws of human reproduction of mankind for balancing its natural sex ratio, has been distorted by man-made norms, customs, traditions, religious beliefs and more recently by sophisticated medical technology to result lower sex ratio in India. In India, there has been a steady decline of sex ratio from 972 in 1901 to 933 females per 1000 males in 2001. From 1961 to 1991, sex ratios for children under age 10 became more masculine all across India (Bhat, 1989; Das Gupta and Bhat, 1997; Desai, 1994; El-Badry, 1969; Miller, 1989; Parasuraman and Roy, 1991). In South Asia and India traditions, values and customs crusted over time have resulted in the insatiable desire for sons. Sons are preferred over daughters for a number of economic, social and religious reasons, including financial support, old age security, property inheritance, dowry, family lineage, prestige and power, birth and death rituals and beliefs about religious duties and salvation (Dyson and Moore, 1983; Arnold et al, 2002; Kishore, 1993;Das Gupta, 1987; Das Gupta and Mari Bhat,1997; Basu, 1989, Chen et al, 1981; Levene, 1987; Miller, 1981; Caldwell and Caldwell, 1990). Consequently, women and girls are accorded lower status in the Indian society. Women in India face discrimination in terms of several political, and economic opportunities as a result of their inferior status. Majority of women cannot inherit parental property and political and employment participation are very limited. Gender inequalities prevail in work, education, allocation of food, health care and fertility choices. On the other hand, at the family level women are exclusively burdened with household chores—cooking, cleaning, collecting fuel and water and caring elderly and children (Arokiasamy, 2003).
Pathways of gender bias

1.2.1 Education and employment:

The economic and social rates of returns of education are quite high, and on the whole, higher for women than for men. In patrilineal and patrilocal communities, daughter's education is viewed as a waste, because expected returns from educated daughters do not exceed the costs, then female education as an investment becomes unattractive to parents. Yet in most developing countries, women are relatively less educated than men. Girls are either not sent to schools or do not receive the same quality and level of education, as do boys. In India, the gender inequality in enrolments is worse at the secondary and tertiary level than at the primary level. Although a benefit of women’s education is well recognised, a number of barriers contribute to the gender gaps, with varying intensities across the states.

1.2.2 Child mortality:

In the absence of a biological basis, evidence of excess female child mortality is an important indicator of gender inequalities. A recent review of demographic health survey findings revealed that 27 out of 44 DHS countries had higher girls than boys mortality for children aged 1-4, although the average excess female mortality in 44 countries overall was only 2 percent (Arnold, 1997). In India, the levels of excess female child mortality as a result of son preference have increased during the last several decades (SRS). NFHS-1 (1992-93) indicates that child mortality for girls in India as a whole, at 42.0 per 1000, was 43 percent higher than for boys at 29.4 per 1000 (International Institute for Population Sciences, IIPS, 1995). The corresponding figure from NFHS-2 was 42 per 1000, which was 49 percent higher than boys at 28.

1.2.3 Nutrition:

Girls are more likely to be malnourished than boys in both northern and southern states (Arnold et al., 1998; Sen and Sen Gupta 1983; Pebley and Amin, 1991, Wedley, 1993). Gender differentials in nutritional status are reported during infancy, with discriminatory breastfeeding and supplementation practices. Infant girls are breastfed less frequently, for shorter duration, and over shorter periods than boys (Wyon and Gordon, 1971; Kielmann et al., 1981; Das Gupta, 1987). However, national family health survey indicated some variable evidences where boys and girls are about
equally likely to be stunted, underweight but boys were slightly more likely than girls to be wasted (Mishra et al, 1999).

1.2.4 Health care provision:

A frequent debate in the demographic literature focuses on the origin of differences in Morbidity and mortality of children, in particular, the relative role of biological and behavioural factors (Lopez and Ruzicka, 1981; Preston, 1976; Langford, 1984; Waldrom, 1983; Hill and Upchurch, 1995; United Nations, 1998). Overall, biological factors are considered to be less important, while discrimination of girls in nutrition, preventive and curative health care seeking have an impact on morbidity and mortality. Female selective infanticide is an extreme form of societal discrimination, but its prevalence is very very small to make a significant impact on excess female mortality. Sex selective abortion is another severe form of gender discrimination, which recent studies have documented.

Differentials in treatment of children by sex are known to be directly linked to the differences in mortality of boys and girls (D'Souza and Chen, 1980; Das Gupta, 1987). Gender differences in health care between girls and boys are the direct consequence of discrimination against females in seeking health care. In India, discrimination of girls in both preventive (immunization) and curative (treatment of illness) care are also reported with varying degrees amongst the states. Studies have recognised this as the main pathway for excess female child mortality. Even when such discrimination is not fatal, it can still produce greater frailty among survivors and thus is an important child health issue in itself (Mosely and Becker, 1991; Mosley and Chen, 1984). Poor health has implication for surviving girls. Their poor health in reproductive years may be perpetuated across generations (Merchant and Kurz, 1992). Studies across India have found that boys are much more likely than girls to be taken to a health facility when sick (Caldwell, Reddy and Caldwell, 1982; Das Gupta, 1987; Ganatra and Harve, 1994; Govindasamy and Ramesh, 1996; Kishor, 1995). Boys had higher immunization rates than did girls in all except Goa and Karnataka, although the extent of this difference varied by states (Kurz and Johnson-Welch, 1997).

1.3 Regional Inequalities

A major area of concern and focus in India is the remarkable degree of within regional commonalities and across region contrasts in culture, gender bias, development
and demography. Several researchers have recognised a cultural divide between north and south Indian states. North Indian kinship structure with exogamous marriage system favour strong patriarchal value and lower female autonomy compared to south Indian kinship structure of endogenous marriage system (Dyson and Moore, 1983; Karve, 1965; Sopher, 1980). Though, recent studies have found some blurring of north-south disparity in gender discrimination.

The main objective of this analysis is to examine the regional differences in gender bias against female children. A multiple indicator approach is used unlike, earlier studies, which have focused on selective or individual indicators when dealing with the issue of gender bias against female children. Recognising several pathways of gender bias which cumulatively contribute to excess female mortality and gender inequalities, gender biases are examined on five sub domains namely, school attendance, nutrition, immunization, treatment and child mortality. The levels of gender bias on two available indicators of immunization and school attendance from the two sets of data NFHS and MICS are also compared in order to see the consistency of the two estimates. Accordingly, gender biases are examined. The levels of gender bias in adult literacy and work participation are also compared with the gender biases Indices for children.

1.4 Reports of Commissions

The first Minister of State in the Department of Social Welfare, Smt Phuerenu Guha, proposed the Constitution of a Commission of Enquiry to study the Status of women in the country. After General Elections in 1971, the Government constituted the “Committee on the status of Women in India” (CSWI) in September of that year which examined the nation building process from women’s perspective.

According to the committee the Guiding Principles and Criteria were based on the values and goals enshrined in the Constitution, namely, equality and social justice.

The committee drew attention to the wide diversities in gender roles in India’s plural society. Questioning the continued ‘invisibility of women’ in where they were largely involved, the CSWI advocated for a renewed concern that reflect real life issues and aspirations of the majority of women. There is no doubt that the Report of the CSWI. — “Towards Equality” has been a land mark in the social history of India heralding a conscious change in attitudes, behaviour, law, establishment of special
institutions and creating both infrastructure and environment for equality of women. The quarter century that has passed by since the report has indeed created a lot of waves of activity and awareness.

- The Sixth five year plan (which was first full five year plan after the CSWI Report) incorporated an exclusive chapter on women's development highlighting the various areas needing focussed attention in social and economic development. The major thrust of the VI plan in the field of welfare of women is their economic upliftment through greater opportunities for salaried, self and wage employment. Appropriate technologies, services and public policies for this purpose were suggested. This plan paid specific attention for the removal of socio economic biases resulting in the neglect of female children and women. Measures for their improvement of health and nutritional status were suggested. The improvements in the socio-economic status of women depend to a large extent on the social change in the value system, attitudes and social structure prevailing in the country. (The extract of the chapter in the Sixth Five Year Plan is given in Appendix I).

- A whole National Machinery including the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) and National Commission for women has been established with a number of institutions to play enabling roles to create the environment for the advancement of women ad realization of gender justice. Be it class discrimination or violence against women; custodial deaths or ethnic clashes, the (NHRC) of India has voiced its concern and, questioned the law and order situation whenever it has failed to its normal course. The Protection of Human Rights Act, 1993 which established India’s National Human Rights Commission in the same year defines ‘human rights’ as rights relating to life, liberty, equality and dignity of the individual guaranteed by the Constitution or embodied in International Covenants. As an autonomous national institution for the protection and promotion of human rights, the NHRC has an important role to play in pressuring the Government to ratify and enforce human rights tools. The NHRC is empowered to study treaties and other international instruments of human rights and make recommendations for their effective implementation.

The functions given to the National Commission for women states that it will investigate and examine all matters for women under the Constitution and other laws.
To review, from time to time the existing provisions of the Constitution and other laws affecting women and recommend amendments thereto so as to suggest remedial legislature measures to meet any lacunae, inadequacies or shortcomings in such legislations.

The functions assigned to the Commission are wide and varied covering almost all facets relating to safeguarding women’s rights and promotion of empowerment. The Commission continues to pursue its mandated activities: review of legislation, interventions in specific individual complaints of atrocities, denial of rights and sexual harassment at place of work. Remedial action to safeguard the interests of women is suggested to the appropriate authorities. The commission has accorded highest priority to securing speedy justice to women. The commission also organizes Parivarik Mahila Lok Adalats, offering counseling in family disputes and conducting training programmes for creating legal awareness among women.

The National Literacy Mission was launched as a ‘Technology and Societal Mission’ with, strong orientation to women’s participation. The National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched on May 5, 1988. The NLM aims to make men and women, who have not been covered by the formal school system, functionally literate. The target under NLM is imparting functional literacy to the threshold sustainable level of 75% by the year 2005.

The main purpose of NLM is mass mobilisation through development of improved teaching learning materials, training of resource persons by imparting training for 200 hours over eight months and creation of continuing education system by provision of resource support by Jan Sansthans.

It is estimated that 62% of the learners and 40% of the instructors are females. The SC and ST constitute 22% and 12% of the coverage, respectively. It can be stated that NLM has contributed to women’s literacy and empowerment.

The National Policy on Empowerment of Women was announced in April 2001. The goal of this policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. The policy widely disseminated so as to encourage active participation of all stakeholders for achieving its goal. The objectives of the policy aims at creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential so that women can
enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedom on equal basis with men in all spheres political, economic, social, cultural, and civil. Equal access to women to health care, employment, education, social security and public office and elimination of discrimination and violence against women in all forms. This can be achieved by changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women.

According to a recent UNIFEM report, 2 million women are engaged in Commercial sex in India, 25% of whom are below the age of 18 years. In another study conducted by a local NGO in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, 518 Women have been mercilessly killed after being branded as witches in the four districts of East and West Singhbhum, Ranchi, Gumla and Hazaribagh in the last seven years. The actual figures are much higher as many such deaths go unreported. A study conducted by WHO states that, violence against women causes more disabilities in the world to females between the ages of 5-30 than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents or even war.

Constitutional Set up

**Constitution**: The Preamble to the Constitution of India aimed at securing such enduring values as justice, equality, fraternity and dignity. These precious gifts were to be made available to all its citizens, all men and all women. So, to attain these national objectives the Constitution enacted a framework of Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles, Part III of the Constitution enumerated several Fundamental Rights and Freedoms such as freedom of speech, protection of life and personal liberty.

To ensure equality of the sexes the Indian Constitution provided Article 14. Article 14 of the Constitution provides that the state will not deny any person equality before the law and equal protection of law within India.

Constitution also gave Article 15 which prevented discrimination against women. Article 15(1) of the Constitution provides that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. Article 16(1) and article 16(2) prohibits discrimination in general and also discrimination on the ground of sex in employment and those employed under the State. Article 15 (3) of the Constitution specially provides at the state is permitted to make special provisions for the benefit of women.
Article 39(a) of the Constitution provides that the state shall in particular direct its policy towards securing that citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means of livelihood. Article 39(b) of the Constitution provides that the state directs its policy towards ensuring equal pay for equal work for men and women. To further this provision, the Parliament has enacted the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976 for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers and for the prevention of discrimination on the ground of sex, against women and the matter of employment or for matters connected therewith.

Article 39(c) of the Constitution requires that the State secures health and strength of workers, men and women and that children are not abused and citizens are not forced by economic necessity to enter vocations unsuited to their age and strength. Article 42 of the provisions provide just and humane conditions of work and maternity relief.

Article 51(A)(c) imposes a Fundamental Duty on every citizen to renounce practices derogatory to the dignity of women. The Constitution was also amended by the 73rd and 74th Amendments to provide for reservation of 1/3rd seats for women in all institutions of local government and posts of chairpersons in such bodies.

Law: The Indian legislatures have passed various laws from time to time to protect and promote the cause of women and to remove their disabilities. Of course, many such laws were enacted in the earlier decades as part of the Government's efforts at social reform or labour welfare. But the post independence era saw several of these laws being amended in response to the egalitarian urges of the new constitution. Some of these laws have been dealt.

The Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929

The Act, duly amended in 1938, 1951, 1968 and 1978, applies to all persons in India irrespective of their caste, community and religion. The marriageable age for the groom is 21 years and for the bride is 18 years. The Act prescribes punishments for an adult male contracting a child marriage, any one who performs, conducts or directs the child marriage and a male parent/guardian who promotes, permits or solemnizes a child marriage. Although the Act prohibits and prescribes punishment for child marriage, it does not in any way affect the validity of such a marriage.
The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961

The object of the Act is to impart social justice to women workers. It protects the dignity of motherhood by providing for full and healthy maintenance of the woman worker and her child during the period of her confinement. The Act provides for payment of maternity benefits in cash for a certain period before and after confinement. It further provides for grant of leave and other medical facilities. The Act entitles the woman worker to nursing breaks until her child attains the age of 15 months. It prescribes the period during which the employer is prohibited from giving to a pregnant woman employee any arduous work, or work which involves long hours of standing, or work which in any way is likely to interfere with her pregnancy or the normal development of the foetus, or is likely to cause miscarriage, or otherwise adversely affect her health.

The Indecent Representation of Women (Prohibition), Act, 1986

The Act prohibits indecent representation of women through advertisements or in publications, writings, paintings, figures or in any other manner, it further prohibits sale, distribution and circulation of material containing indecent representation of women.

The National Commission for Women Act, 1990

The Act empowers the Central Government to constitute the National Commission for Women, consisting of a chairperson, committed to the cause of women, five able, knowledgeable and experienced members dedicated to the cause of development of women, and a Member-Secretary. All the Members, including the chairperson, are to be nominated by the Central Government. The Act provides for Expert Committees to be appointed by the commission, procedures to be regulated by the commission and most important, various functions to be discharged by the commission like investigating and examining all matters relating to the safeguards provided for women under the constitution and other laws, to present annual reports to the Central Government upon the working of those safeguards, participate and advise on the planning process of socio-economic development of women and many other functions which will be dealt later. Through this act the commission enjoys powers of a civil court in trying a suit.
On the other hand regarding the State’s approach to women’s issue, the judiciary has also contributed its share to the promotion of women’s cause through some creative interpretive judgements and historic rulings which have either themselves become law or have led to suitable legislation being enacted. Even if at times the rulings, of lower courts in individual cases have disappointed those working j the women’s movement, the general tenure of response of the higher judiciary to women’s issues has been quite progressive.

Women have been ‘given their rights through constitutional provisions, laws and the ruling. But in fact these are de jure rights of women, so to make them de facto entitlements, they have to be leaked by certain schemes or programmes and through help of ‘National Machinery’. The term ‘National Machinery’ came into common usage during the international Decade for Women and the three world conferences on women which were held in 1975 in Mexico City, 1980 at Copenhagen and the third world conference on women was held in Nairobi in July 1985. The main objective of the National Machinery was seen as the integrated planning and implementation of comprehensive strategies and plans for women’s advancement. The need for a separate Ministry/Department for Women was identified in India as a priority during the International Decade for Women.

Large number of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) also work, for the development of women in various fields. They are a helping hand to these various departments since there work is to recommend new measures and implement various programmes. There are several voluntary organizations in different states who works for women development, welfare, empowerment and upliftment. ‘Swayamsidha Mahila Mandal of Latur, Maharashtra works for destitute and deserted women, the poor, the homeless and the vulnerable.

‘Adithi’ of Patna, Bihar, tackles social taboos against women and livelihood needs of women. Its aim is to empower women and girl children and eradicate poverty. ‘Mangalam Society’ of Pondicherry, has pioneered a project on Justice delivery of women by women through motivation, awareness, empowerment and development of women. ‘Dhan Foundation of Madural, Tamil Nadu, has catalysed women through self help to become self-reliant and economically independent. ‘Arpana Research and Charities Trust’ of Haryana works towards empowerment of the under-privileged, the
poor and the deprived Women in Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Western Uttar Pradesh, and Delhi.

These voluntary organizations act as a helping tool in the progress of women. Since the efforts are voluntary in nature, so their whole purpose remains the development of women in all respects and provide them social security. These organisations are in almost all the states of India so women of all region, religion, caste and strata are covered by them and they work for their benefits without any interest.

In spite of various voluntary organizations in the states, there are several women Development Departments at State level also which deals with programmes and policies for women. To undertake this task they are assisted by Directorates of Women or Social Welfare. There is also a Women Development Cooperation in most of the states apart from State Social Welfare Advisory Boards implementing programmes for the advancement of Women. There are also State Commissions for Women in about 13 states.

The Ninth Plan (1997-2000), specifically stipulated identifying ‘Women Component Plans’ for which at least 30 per cent of funds were utilized for Women development schemes. There are women specific welfare schemes/programmes that receive funds under the annual budgetary allocations such as Mahila Samridhi Yojana, Balika Samridhi Yojana, Working Women’s Hostels, Swashakti Project, and other schemes. The Women Component Plan (WCP) introduced as a major strategy for the first time during the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) was reviewed in August, 2000. It took note of funds having been made available by a number of Ministries/Departments such as Health and Family Welfare, H.R.D., Labour, Agriculture, Rural Development, Social Justice and Empowerment, Tribal etc. to benefit women. Some states such as Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala had also earmarked funds under VVCP.

Actually, a journey through India’s plan documents is like an uphill climb with each successive plateau affording a wider horizon so far as the women’s issues are concerned. However, to effectively implement the agenda for women’s equality and empowerment, it is imperative that strong and dedicated institutional structures be in place.
Institutional Set Up

The Department of Women and Child Development, as stated above being the national machinery for empowering the women in the country was made responsible for mainstreaming women in the national development by raising their overall status on par with that of men. To give its support to the department various agencies are associated with the Department. The first organisation created outside the government structure to look after women’s welfare and development was the Central Social Welfare Board. The other agencies followed much later according to the priorities that emerged in the course of development in India, as well as at the global level. The priorities of the period are reflected in the main objectives of the agencies.

The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) which is an apex organization at the national level, was established in 1953 as an agency to channel grants to the voluntary organisation or NGO’s already in the field and encourage and facilitate their partnership with the government in various development activities, particularly those related to women and children. The most important programmes of the Board are condensed courses of education, vocational training, socio-economic development programmes, awareness generation programmes.

Rashtrriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) was established in 1993 to promote credit for women through self-help groups. It provides micro finance services to poor women and also gives grants for training in establishing micro-credit activity and for formation of self help groups. The term micro credit generally used to refer to tiny loans of a few thousand rupees.

The National Institute of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), main responsibility is to undertake training of trainers in the areas of women’s development, and child development. It creates networks with NGO’s involved in training of workers and also undertakes research on various social issues.

The National Commission for Women was set up in 1992 as the highest statutory body for overseeing and safeguarding and protection of women’s rights and privileges. Similar Commissions were set up in many states also. The Women’s cells set up in the Central Ministries/Departments of Labour, Industry, Rural Development, Science and Technology are expected to develop linkages between the national machinery located in the Department of women and Child Development and all other women related
Ministries/Departments. Within the Women and Child Department, a Committee on Gender Mainstreaming under the supervision of Prime Minister’s Office (PMO) monitors 47 beneficiary oriented schemes. This is facilitated by the gender focal points in other departments. Also in March, 1997, a Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women was set up to monitor the progress towards gender equity and empowerment of women.

**Parliamentary Committee on Empowerment of Women**

A Joint Committee of the Parliament on Empowerment of Women has been constituted to keep women’s issues under constant monitoring and review and to watch progress in pursuance of plans of action evolved at international and national levels. The functions of the Committee on Empowerment of Women are:

- To consider the reports submitted by the National Commission for Women and to report on the measures that shall be taken by the Union Government for improving the status/conditions of women in respect of matters within the purview of the Union Government including the Administrations of the Union territories;
- To examine the measures taken by the Union Government for Comprehensive education and adequate representation of women in Legislative bodies/services and other fields.
- To report on the working of the welfare programme for women;
- To report on the action taken by the Union Government and Administrations of the Union Territories on the measures proposed by the Committee; and
- To examine such other matters as may seem fit to the committee or are specifically referred to it by the House or the speaker and the Rajya Sabha or the Chairman, Rajya Sabha.

Various other committees were also set up from time to time, to have a look at the constitutional and statutory provision and to evaluate the impact of these provisions and of the different schemes meant for economic and social development of women undertaken by central and various state departments. Many of these committees made searching analyses of several schemes and laws meant for the development of women. The following important committees are concerned directly or indirectly with the development of women:
1. National Committee on Women's Education (1958-59)
2. The Committee on Status of Women (CSWI), 1974.
3. The National Committee on Role and Participation of Women in Agriculture and Rural Development (1977-78).
4. The National Committee on Women Prisoners (1986).

The report of the National Committee on Women's Education underlined the need to priorities women's education. Like wise, the committee of Women in Agriculture reviewed the policies in these areas. On the other hand, committee on women prisoners examined the condition of women prisoners. It also made several recommendations relating to necessary prison and legislative reforms and of other custodial institutions and for the rehabilitation of prisoners in so far as women convicts are concerned.

The National Committee for Self Employed Women and women in the informal sector (Shram Shakti Report) examined the entire gamut of issues facing women in the unorganised sector and made a number of recommendations relating to employment, occupational hazards, legislative protection, training and skill development, marketing and credit for women in the informal sector.

1.5 Definition of Gender Bias

According to Macmillan dictionary unfair difference in the treatment of men or women because of their sex.

Sexism, a term coined in the mid-20th century, Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, 6th edition is the belief or attitude that one gender or sex is inferior to, less competent, or less valuable than the other. ...

When examining gender bias, it is important to define and understand the term. Gender is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary as "classification of sex." According to this same source, bias is defined as "preference or inclination that inhibits impartiality; prejudice" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1983). Thus gender bias is separation of gender in a way which prefers one sex over the other. Gender bias in technology refers to preference for or favouring of one sex over the other in computer
use and/or access, software use and/or manufacturing, and Internet use and content. As can be seen, gender bias in technology is a multifaceted and complex issue.

Gender bias means discrimination over sex. Gender bias is a separation of gender in a way which prefers one sex over the other. It is called as a negative perception of a male and female.

Gender bias is defined as "preference or inclination that inhibits impartiality or prejudice".

The factor leads to Gender Bias:

1.6 Male Preference Starts Before Birth

In India generally people are going for second child if the 1st is a female but if the 1st or 2nd child is a male then they prefer abortion. If by the test it is knowing that the coming baby is a boy than that pregnant lady get well treatment & caring. But it is different in the case of a female. In South Korea, nearly 80,000 female foetus were aborted between 1986-89. In India only everyday minimum 7000 female foetus are aborted. In Haryana there have male preference is more than to females. So the sex ratio is 861-1000 and very surprisingly it is 798-1000. This abortions are the cause of male preference.

1.6.1 Gender bias in higher studies:

Either for poverty, social stigma or the fear of crime as rape, prostitution & trafficking, they are staying apart from getting higher education. the families are sawing less interest to encourage girl child for higher education as IIT.

1.6.2 Infertility:

In the Indian Society if a women is unable to conceive a baby after one year of married sexual life, that is called Infertility. In this case both male & female are responsible, but initially in that case only the female partners are answerable or blamed.

1.6.3 Right over decision making:

Generally in our society a adolescence women have little right over sexual & reproductive decision making. Most of the time to conceive a baby the decision of male partner is taking into account. The normal drive that is sex drive is a desire for both
partners. But it is usually found that the male partner always take advantage during this act. Even in decision making procedure within the home they are given less concern.

1.6.4 Absence of freedom

Female don't enjoy as much freedom and liberty as man. It is observe that women have always depend on their parents before marriage & after they get married they depends upon their husband & in laws.

1.6.5 Crime against women:

Women are the victims of crimes of numerous type at the hands of Man. They are abused & exploited mentally & physically. They are even burnt for dowry, victims of rape, prostitution, sexually harassment and trafficking.

1.6.6 Poverty:

Generally though the male partner of a family is so rich, many times we found that the female partner don't get sufficient financial support which fulfil their basic needs because they are the home-makers.

1.6.7 Absence of employment opportunity:

Unemployment is the most serious problem faced by the women. There is always a lack of job for the educated women. Today also in the Army sector they don't get the facility to work in defence.

In many of Official sector, they are exploited by their official staffs. In some other States as Bihar, Haryana, Jaipur or in the country Pakistan till now female are deprived from employment due to social stigma & atrocities.

1.6.8 Disease & other health hazards:

There have a Gender Bias in the field of caring. Generally females are getting less importance in the field of health after & before marriage. Mainly they live in stress, strain & anxiety. Female are being weak for lack of proper nutrition & care. In Indian society generally in case of poverty, a wife always desires that the available resource be utilized for the care of her husband & family. So many times she may be hidden her personal problems. That's why Gender Bias is called as one's own negative perception which dominates oneself.
1.7 Violence

"From the cradle to the grave, women are objects of violence from those nearest and dearest to them. And it is a never ending cycle for there is considerable evidence of international transmission of domestic violence".

— M.D.R. Freeman, violence in Home (1979), 239

Development is about protection of human rights of the concerned populations. It pre-supposes active participation of the populace in the decision-making processes while social justice remains one of the most important and cherished goals of development. However, contradictions do remain as a result of various processes not only among nations at a global level, but also significantly within sections of population within country. People continue to be marginalized on the basis of class, religion, ethnicity, colour, sex, and in India specially, on the basis of gender constitutes a serious issue which effectively means that half the human race is unable to realize its potential and condemned to sub-optimal standards of existence. This problem has received world-wide attention and several efforts have been made to bridge the seemingly ever-widening gap. Yet even after years of efforts to integrate women into the mainstream development process the effectively of the same remains to be questioned owing to a multitude of factors which aid the continued marginalization of women. Women’s access to education, health, employment and political spaces still remain distant goals in many nations of the world. One of the most serious impediments to women’s development is the phenomenon of continuing and increasing violence against them. Needless to say, this constitutes a serious violation of women’s human rights. Violence against women is one of the most significant, yet little understood and acknowledged factor instrumental in the phenomenon of marginalization of women in the development process. Gender violence manifests itself in various forms female foeticide and infanticide, sexual abuse, incest, molestation, sexual harassment at work on the streets, marital rape, domestic violence in the form of wife assault and women battering. In some places, there exists culture-specific forms of violence against women like female genital mutilation in some African countries and harassment / murder / beating for dowry in India. Of all the forms of violence that women face, domestic violence remains the least reported and largely suppressed.
For women, violence is a phenomenon which starts at conception and carries on through their entire life span. In India, pre-birth selection and consequent infanticide is a common occurrence and the preference for a male offspring widespread. Discrimination continues by way of access to adequate food, prompt medical facilities, burden of housework, care of siblings and so on leading to lack of education and consequent lack of awareness and empowerment and imparting of skills. Adolescence brings with it the complete withdrawal of the little freedom of mobility, fear of and occurrence of sexual; both within and outside of the family. Vulnerability is further compounded by early marriages and early child bearing and the disastrous consequences of the same on the health of women. In India, specifically, child marriages further accentuate the girl’s vulnerability. The reproductive age is, for a lot of women, punctuated with physical, mental and emotional abuse by their husbands. Millions of Indian women face severe harassment due to unfulfilled dowry demands and many are victims of homicide and are even driven to suicide. All these foster a deep and inescapable sense of dependency in women who are left with no alternative but to continue to live with and depend on abusive partners for want of any other choice. Additionally, women constantly need to negotiate their space and contend with abuse at the workplace too. An important fact is that women may experience violence either once in one of her life-cycle phases or be continually exposed to multiple instances of violence at various points in time. It has, however been established beyond doubt that domestic violence is probably one of the most endemic forms of violence against women throughout the world.

Women constitute about one-half of the global population, but they are placed at various disadvantageous positions due to gender difference and bias. They have been the victims of violence and exploitation by the male dominated society all over the world. Ours is a tradition bound society where women have been socially, economically, physically, psychologically and sexually exploited from time immemorial, sometimes in the name of religion, sometimes on the pretext of writing in the scriptures and sometimes by the social sanctions. The concept of equality between male and female was almost unknown to us before enactment of the Constitution of India. Of course, the preamble of the constitution, which is the supreme law of the land, seeks to secure to its citizens including women folk justice —social, economic and political, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and
opportunity and promote fraternity assuring dignity of the individual. The difference in
treatment between men and women by the state is totally prohibited by the constitution
of India. But the equality of status guaranteed by the constitution is only a myth to
millions of women for whom life is stalked by various kinds of violence within their
homes.

Domestic violence is the most serious violation of all basic rights that a woman
suffers in her home at the hands of members within her own family. The manifold
problems associated with domestic violence have been systematically exposed by data
and in depth work undertaken by several people in the women’s movement. Indeed, a
number of recent studies such as the National Family Health Survey and National
Crimes Records have identified the homes as the site of violence against women and
girl children. Almost every six hours, somewhere in India, a young married woman is
being burnt alive, beaten to death, or forced to commit suicide. At least 20% of married
women between the age of 15 and 49 have experienced domestic violence at some point
in their lives, domestic violence has not only serious consequences for the health and
well-being of the individual women, but it also serves to maintain their subjugation as a
class. It is generally denying the woman her rights as a individual.

Violence is quite common in almost all the developing countries. Though
mostly identical, yet, some of the customs, which are reflected in the culture of each of
the particular societies differently, creates important distinctions. The opponents to
these customs have failed time and again to evoke the desired response despite the
Customs being reiterated again and again in many written works. In the present paper,
Some of the customs, prevalent for years in India, have been identified to reveal the
Gender-based violence in addition to the day to day harassment being faced by the
Women. Some recommendations that are always in the discussion at policy level but
with No fruitful result have also been reviewed and an attempt has been made to put
forward some simple suggestions to check gender-based violence, particularly, in the
developing World. It is a harsh reality that the woman in India has been ill-treated for
ages in our Male dominated society. She is deprived of her independent identity and is
looked upon as a commodity. She is not only robbed of her dignity and pride by way of
seduction by The men outside, but also, may become a victim of cruelty by her
saviours, within the four Walls of her own house. However, her trauma does not end
here, it may even go up to the Extent of forcing her to commit suicide or she may be
burnt to death for various reasons including that of dowry. This type of violence transgresses the boundaries of caste, class, region or religion and is prevalent in almost all societies. The atrocities committed on women can be divided into various groups: *Physical Violence* may include assault, battery, serious injuries or burns etc. *Sexual violence*, which means robbing the dignity of woman not only by indecent behaviour but it, may take the extreme form of rape. Female genital mutilation (FGM) removal of clitoris and other parts of a woman or girl child is often practiced in African countries. *Verbal violence*, which means indecency or use of abusive and filthy language against a woman or her near and dear ones. *Social violence*, which includes demeaning, disparaging and humiliating a woman or her parental relatives and friends. *Emotional violence*, leading to internal deprivation of love and affection, concern, sympathy and care, it also includes Depriving her custody of children. *Financial violence*, which means depriving her of financial means and bare necessities of daily life, it also includes taking away the assets, which a woman possesses or earns. *Intellectual violence* means denial of rights to take part in decision-making and discussion for pressing issues. *Other forms of violence*, which may include denial of education, access to health facilities, reproductive rights, etc (Nigam 2002).

Violence and constant criticism lead to a loss of self-esteem and confidence. If a woman is constantly told that she is worthless, she may come to believe it and begin to blame herself for the situation she is in. Paradoxically, the abused women may feel guilty. This is partly a consequence of the unfair responsibility often placed upon women in a marriage or partnership for its emotional health and stability.

Suicide or attempted suicide or at least thought of suicide are the most extreme manifestation of the women’s self-blame recrimination and internalizing the conflict. The presence of children in a violent relationship creates additional stress for a woman, who may fear for their safety. Children who survive domestic violence may experience a number of difficulties. This may include: stress-related illness, confused and torn loyalties, lack of trust, unnaturally good behaviour, taking on the mother role, an acceptance of abuse as ‘normal’, guilt, isolation, shame, anger, lack of confidence, fear of a repeat or a return to violence, and so on. There is a relationship, too, between domestic and children abuse. Over one half of children. Violence against the women is the major precipitating context of child abuse. Children whose mothers are ‘battered’
are more than twice as likely to be physically abused as are children whose mothers are not ‘battered’.

Domestic violence is not limited to any social class. The men who are violent to the women come from all socio-economic classes. There has been some discussion about the relationship between domestic violence and social class. Some studies have reported a greater prevalence of domestic violence among working class couples. However, there is much stronger evidence suggesting that domestic violence is not the preserve of any one social class.

Domestic violence may be more visible in lower socio-economic groups because the area in which they live have a greater police presence, or it may be more in middle class families as they are less willing to admit it’s (domestic violence) occurrence. They are also less willing to draw outsider’s attention to problems they experience and make more use of private medical care and other resources.

Violence within the home constitutes, more often than not, a ‘private’ affair because of the high value attached to family as an indisputably sacrosanct social institution. In fact, this belief disables rightful cognizance of the fact that more often than not, the family, in reality, is the site of and the root of unequal gender relations and oppression of women. This in fact, puts violence (which is systematically meted out to women within the family) above public scrutiny, thereby creating a public/private dichotomy with respect to violence against women. Not surprisingly, thus domestic violence, goes largely un-noticed or more importantly, hushed. It has also been quite apparent for a long time now that violence against women within the family does not constitute an occasional of social control. One of the main causes for the non-recognition of domestic violence as a serious social crime has been the fact that the phenomenon has been shrouded in myths and stereotypes.

The issue of domestic violence is essentially the issue of the ‘personhood of woman’ whether in her matrimonial home or in her parental home. It is not limited to the harassment of young wives for more dowries or their being set afire by alleged stove burst. The issue deals with all forms of violence against women in all the roles they play in society: daughter, sister, wife, mother, and mother-in-law, daughter-in-law or sister-in-law.
While bride burning is one of the most extreme forms of domestic violence other forms should neither be ignored nor trivialized. Sexual abuse of children and the neglect of aged parents are just two forms of domestic violence that do not get enough attention from either the public or the law and policy makers.

1.7.1 Definition of violence:

According to Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, violence means "exertion of any physical force for instance: (a) violent treatment or procedure, (b) profanation infringement, outrage assault, (c) strength, energy, activity displayed or exerted, vehement, forcible or destructive action or force, (d) vehemence in feeling, passion, order, furry, fervour.

According to Encyclopaedia of crime and justice, in a broad sense, "violence is a general term referring to all types of behaviour either threatened or actual, that result in the damage of destruction of property or the injury or death of an individual". In a limited sense, violence means "all types of illegal behaviour, either threatened or actual that results in damage or destruction of property, or in the injury or death of an individual". In general, the definition covers that behaviour, generally considered as violent including such crimes as a criminal homicide, forcible rape, child abuse, aggravated assault and most kinds of collective violence.

According to Black's Law Dictionary, "violence means unjust or unwarranted use of force usually accompanied by fury, vehemence, or outrage, physical force unlawfully exercised with the intent to harm".

L.B.Curzon's Dictionary of Law defines violence as "any conduct so that it includes violent conduct towards property as well as towards persons, and it is not restricted to conduct causing or intended to cause injury or damage but includes any other violent conduct".

1.7.2 Definition of domestic violence

According Black's Law Dictionary, "domestic violence means violence between members of a household, usually spouses, an assault or other violent act committed by one member of a household against another".
Definition of gender-based violence

Gender-based violence refers to a range of harmful customs and behaviours against girls and women, including intimate partner violence, domestic violence, and assault against women, child sexual abuse, and rape. It generally deprives from cultural and social norms that imbue women with power and authority over women.

1.8 Quality of life

Quality of life’ this century we have witnessed significant progress in the diagnosis and treatment of disease. The effects of disease and its treatment on patients have traditionally been assessed by studying clinical outcomes such as crude or overall survival, disease-specific or corrected survival, disease-free survival, recurrence-free survival, and length of hospital stay. These end-points, as well as socio-economic factors, such as time spent off work and treatment costs, are incorporated into clinical trials in order to determine the optimum treatment of the disease being studied. However, the disease and its treatment may have an impact not only on survival (quality of life), but also on the well-being of the individual.

1.8.1 Definition of quality of life

There is no universal agreement on the definition of ‘quality of life’. ‘Quality of life’ is a term which has been applied to various disciplines, such as politics, economics and religion. However, this term has been used mainly in medical studies. Quality of life as applied to medicine is more specifically known as ‘health-related quality of life’ or ‘subjective health status’. ‘Quality of life’, in a medical context, measures the effect of illness, disease and its treatment on the patient’s welfare by going beyond the physician-dominated indicators of the patient’s progress. J. Camilleri-Brennan and R.J.C. Steele (1999).

Quality of life is fast becoming a standard measure of outcomes in clinical trials cost effectiveness analysis and clinical practice. a confluence of forces including rising health care costs, concern over reported poor quality of life of psychiatric patient living in the community and in awakening recognition that customary measure of treatment measures are inadequate has focused attention on the need to measure an improve quality of life for persons with mental illness. (Marion A. Becker; Bret R. Shaw, Lisa M Reib)
QOL has been variously defined, as an individual's emotional response to his or her life circumstances, the gap between these circumstances and their expectations, and their ability to meet their personal needs. Schipper et al. provide a useful functional definition, which incorporates five broad domains: physical, occupational, psychological, social, and somatic. All investigators agree, however, that the definition of QoL must be measurable, possible to evaluate over time, and subjective, and must address key domains.

Scott Osberg et al. (1986) investigated the predictors of life satisfaction and quality of life among severely disabled elderly adults. Markides and Martin's (1979) path analysis model was adapted specifically to elderly persons with severe disabilities. The adapted model explained about 40% of the variance in quality of life among both men and women, with functional capacity being the most important predictor.

Kalichman et al. (2000) examined the prevalence and characteristics of suicidal ideation among middle-aged and older persons who have HIV infection or AIDS. The study showed Persons who are in midlife and older and are living with HIV-AIDS experience significant emotional distress and thoughts of suicide, suggesting a need for targeted interventions to improve mental health and prevent suicide.

Dominick et al. (2004) examined the relationship of specific arthritic conditions, such as osteoarthritis (OA) and rheumatoid arthritis (RA) with health related quality of life (HRQOL). Subjects with OA and RA had poorer scores than those without arthritis on all HRQOL items, including general health, physical health, mental health, activity limitation, pain, sleep, and feeling healthy and full of energy.

Rukwong et al. (2007) explored as to how middle-aged women with disabilities in Isaan perceived their current quality of life. The findings indicate that gender and culture play significant roles in the lives of disabled women in Isaan culture. Based on study findings, providing gender- cultural sensitive nursing care is essential to delivering comprehensive and effective healthcare to women with disabilities.

Mathur (2009) examined the predictors of depression among ageing women (n = 400). The results showed that the level of economic status followed by education and social support are the prime factors contributing depression in aged women. Findings
also suggest that the change in lifestyle and spiritual health are the means to achieve holistic health.

1.9 Level of Education

Level of education means the kind of education they have received or the degree they whole.

1.10 Adulthood (20-39 years)

The terms “adult” comes from the same Latin verb as “adolescence”---adolescence which means to grow to maturity .it comes from the past participle of that verb —adults — meaning “grown” to full size and “strength” or “matured” (Elizabeth B. Hurlock).

1.11 Middle-age (40-60 years)

The onset is marked by physical and mental changes as in the end at sixty, a decline in physical vigour and mental alertness markes the end of Middle age and the beginning of or old age (Elizabeth B. Hurlock).

1.12 Operational Definitions of the Terms Used

Gender bias: In this studies measured by the tool prepared by the investigator to see the level of gender bias in the society.

Violence : In this studies measured by the tool prepared by the investigator to see the violence involve physical injury, cases of verbal abuse ,threats, deprivations, discriminations, and violence against women in the society.

Quality of life: In this study has been taken as the total marks secured by the women in quality of life assessment scale developed by Marion A .Becker; Bret R. Shaw, Lisa M Reib.

1.13 Statement of the Problem

"The investigator has tried to study the gender bias violence, quality of life and level of education among adult women and middle-aged women."
1.14 Significance of the Study

In South Asia and India traditions, values and customs crusted over time have resulted in the insatiable desire for sons. Sons are preferred over daughters for a number of economic, social and religious reasons, including financial support, old age security, property inheritance, dowry, family lineage, prestige and power, birth and death rituals and beliefs about religious duties and salvation (Dyson and Moore, 1983; Arnold et al, 2002; Kishore, 1993; Das Gupta, 1987; Das Gupta and Mari Bhat, 1997; Basu, 1989, Chen et al, 1981; Levene, 1987; Miller, 1981; Caldwell and Caldwell, 1990). Consequently, women and girls are accorded lower status in the Indian society. Women in India face discrimination in terms of several political, and economic opportunities as a result of their inferior status. Majority of women cannot inherit parental property and political and employment participation are very limited. Gender inequalities prevail in work, education, allocation of food, health care and fertility choices. On the other hand, at the family level women are exclusively burdened with household chores- cooking, cleaning, collecting fuel and water and caring elderly and children (Arokiasamy, 2003).

Violence is quite common in almost all the developing countries. Though mostly identical, yet, some of the customs, which are reflected in the culture of each of the particular societies differently, creates important distinctions. The atrocities committed on women can be divided into various groups: Physical Violence may include assault, battery, serious injuries or burns etc. Sexual violence, which means robbing the dignity of woman not only by indecent behaviour but it, may take the extreme form of rape. Female genital mutilation (FGM) removal of clitoris and other parts of a woman or girl child is often practiced in African countries. Verbal violence, which means indecency or use of abusive and filthy language against a woman or her near and dear ones. Social violence, which includes demeaning, disparaging and humiliating a woman or her parental relatives and friends. Emotional violence, leading to internal deprivation of love and affection, concern, sympathy and care, it also includes Depriving her custody of children. Financial violence, which means depriving her of financial means and bare necessities of daily life, it also includes taking away the assets, which a woman possesses or earns. Intellectual violence means denial of rights to take Part in decision-making and discussion for pressing issues. Other forms of
violence, which may include denial of education, access to health facilities, reproductive rights, etc (Nigam 2002).

QOL has been variously defined, as an individual's emotional response to his or her life circumstances, the gap between these circumstances and their expectations, and their ability to meet their personal needs. Schipper et al. provide a useful functional definition, which incorporates five broad domains: physical, occupational, psychological, social, and somatic.

Therefore, it is clear that women's problems are a current issue of the present day society. So the investigator with all the limitations modestly attempted to understand gender bias/violence, quality of life among women. The investigator has selected two age groups of women adult and middle aged women for the study. The choice of two age groups was made in order to find out the effect of aging upon the variables of the study. Middle aged women may suffer more discrimination and violence than adult women (at least on emotional level) due to their decreased energy. It is possible that they also suffer from lack of care which they need due to the aging process. The level of education affects gender bias, violence and quality of life in other words whether the level of education helps them in improving their status in general.

1.15 Objectives

The present study as conducted to achieve the following objectives and sub objectives. Main objectives along with sub objectives are given below:

**Objective-1:**

To compare the level of gender bias amongst adult women and middle aged women.

**Sub objectives**

To achieve the objective 1, following sub objectives were formulated.

1.1 To compare the level of gender bias amongst working and non working women.
1.2 To compare the level of gender bias amongst slum and non slum women.

**Objective-2:**

To compare the level of violence amongst adult women and middle aged women.
Sub objectives

Following sub objectives were formulated for objective no. 2

2.1 To compare the level of violence amongst working and non working women.
2.2 To compare the level of violence amongst slum and non slum women.

Objective-3:

To compare the quality of life amongst adult women and middle aged women.

Sub objectives

Following sub objectives were formulated for objective no.3

3.1 To compare the quality of life amongst working and non working women.
3.2 To compare the quality of life amongst slum and non-slum women.

Objective-4:

To find out whether level of education differentially effects on gender bias /violence and quality of life and domains.

1.16 Hypotheses

In order to achieve the above mentioned objectives the following hypothesis and sub hypothesis were formulated and tested:

Hypotheses-1:

There will be no significant difference in the level of gender bias amongst adult women and middle-aged women.

Sub Hypotheses

1.1 There will be no significant difference in the level of gender bias amongst working and non working women.
1.2 There will be no significant difference in the level of gender bias amongst slums and non slums women.

Hypotheses-2:

There will be no significant difference in the level of violence amongst adult women and middle-aged women.
Sub Hypotheses

2.1 There will be no significant difference in the level of violence amongst working and non working women.

2.2 There will be no significant difference in the level of violence amongst slum and non slum women.

Hypotheses-3:

There will be no significant difference in quality of life amongst adult women and middle-aged women.

Sub Hypotheses

3.1 There will be no significant difference in quality of life amongst working and non working women.

3.2 There will be no significant difference in the quality of life amongst slum and non slum women.

Hypotheses-4:

There is no significant difference in the level of education differentially effects on gender bias/violence and quality of life and domains.

Delimitations

1. Only school teachers were considered for the study women having other profession like doctors, nurses were not studied due to lack of time.

2. Socio-economic status, marital status, religion, region family background etc. were not taken into consideration.

3. The data has not been collected from the main city of Aligarh (upper forte and other areas).

4. The data was confined only to Aligarh Muslim university and vicinity areas. The data may be collected from other cities and suburbs outside Aligarh.