2.1. Introduction:

An attempt is made in this chapter to review the relevant literature which could serve as a necessary empirical, theoretical and intellectual backdrop for the present study. It is pertinent to note here that for an empirical study such as present one it is rather imperative to place it in the context of existing empirical and theoretical knowledge to contextualize the findings of the present study. A review of literature as the present one could also enable one to identify the gaps in the empirical literature in the context of which the findings of the present study could be taken as warranted in filling up of those gaps. Such a review would also enable the researchers to apprise themselves of the theoretical approaches and orientations that are in vogue in the study of the phenomenon under investigation as well as acquaint themselves with the methodological tools, techniques and approaches that have been employed in its study. It is also assumed that a review as such as the present one would provide the researcher the requisite intellectual and empirical insights and inputs in approaching the phenomenon being investigated into. Lastly, it is hoped that such a review would also provide necessary, textual and the recall backdrop against which the findings of the present study can be more relevantly and meaningfully analyzed and interpreted.

It is contemplated that a review of literature should focus on the issues that have been already addressed in the empirical as well as theoretical literature focusing on the phenomenon under investigation pretending to the causes, the extent, the nature as well as the
determinants. At the same time it should also take stock of the perspectives approaches and orientations on the one hand and methods, tools and techniques on the other, employed in the study and the analysis of the factors and issues stated above. A good review of literature should aim at the thematic classification of the studies focusing on diverse issues pertaining to the phenomenon under investigation and analyze the major findings that could be taken as extending the limits of our knowledge about the phenomenon instead of ending up as a mere survey of literature published on the in subject. It is precisely owing to these reasons an attempt is made in this chapter to analytically a focus on relevant literature pertaining to problems of scheduled castes and widows, provisions of Indian constitution, Government policies to develop the social status of scheduled castes and scheduled caste widows, etc and their impact on scheduled castes in general and scheduled caste widows in particular. However, it needs to be mentioned here that in a doctoral thesis as the present one completed under the constraints of time and resources it will not be possible to do enough justice to the richness of the literature and as such, few of the significant studies made in the relevant literature published are covered in the review of literature.

2.2. Review of Literature:

It is noted that the secondary literature is published on two aspects, that is scheduled caste women and widows and not specifically on the scheduled caste widows. Hence, the collected secondary literature is reviewed under the following heads as under.
Scheduled Caste Women:

*Ghosh and Ghosh (1997)* published book on “Dalit Women”. The book defined the term ‘Dalit’ and described the historical background to the castes and the status of Dalits since ancient days. The position and status of Dalit women is vulnerable as they are deprived by their gender and caste. The authors discussed the position of Dalit women in Dalit society and general Indian society. The laws passed to safeguard the rights of the Dalits are discussed in detail. The book also covered the different aspects related to Dalit housewives, Dalit Artisans, Dalit employees, Dalit women in rural and urban areas.

*Meenakshi, et al (2000)* in their paper “Estimates of Poverty for SC, ST and Female-Headed Households” published in ‘Economic & Political Weekly’. This paper computes poverty rates for scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and female-headed households. It also highlights the necessity of making adjustments for household size and composition while making welfare comparisons. The study founded that these adjustments indicate a much greater degree of impoverishment among SC and ST communities than is indicated by the more conventional head count ratios based on the official poverty line. Higher poverty among female-headed households becomes apparent only when demographically-adjusted measures are used.

*Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt (2001)* published paper entitled “From Gin Girls to Scavengers: Women in Raniganj Collieries” in ‘Economic & Political Weekly’. In the beginning, the coal mining industry employed women from the adivasi and lower caste communities in various stages of production. Their role continued to be significant as long as technology remained labour-intensive and
collieries were small and surface-bound. The expansion of the industry and increasing mechanization saw a decline in the women’s participation. This paper based on research in the Raniganj coal belt in Eastern India describes how the work of resource extraction becomes gendered, the growing marginalization of women, and their increasing alienation from access to environmental resources and their transformation into illegitimate and invisible beings.

Vijayalakshmi (2004) published a working paper on “Citizenship, Differences and Identity: Dalit Women and Political Inclusion”. The paper examined the issues related to citizenship and political participation of Dalit women. The disadvantages of caste, class and gender and the exclusionary mechanisms entrenched in hierarchical social relations have had differential outcomes for Dalit women in Citizenship and Politics. The experience of marginality, which they encounter, defines how identity is perceived and constructed. The participation of Dalit women in citizenship is constrained by high levels of deprivation, minimal participation in civil society and low political activity of any kind.

As stated by Meena Anand (2005) in her book entitled “Dalit Women: Fear and Discrimination”, Marginalization and racial exclusion of Dalits is a burning issue today. This book on Dalit women goes back into past and looks at the history of Dalit alienation. Issues like racial conflict, racism and justice, relevance of human rights to Dalits, caste and colour prejudices, etc find description in the book. Discrimination on different contexts finds its manifestations in physical segregation of communities, restrictions on resources like water and land, social prohibitions, restriction on entry to religious places, etc. The book enlighten on such things in a
country where Constitution guarantees equal rights and privileges to every citizen.

Singh and Pandey (2007) published “Empowerment of Scheduled Caste Women”. Basically the book discussed on the Self-Help Groups and its benefits on rural poor. The study has been carried out in Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal covering a sample of 1120 beneficiaries and 173 officials and non-officials, 224 Self-Help Groups, 143 Villages, 28 blocks and 7 districts. The book theoretically emphasized on educational and economical empowerment, poverty, land reforms, etc of the rural scheduled caste women in India. It also deals with the status of Scheduled Castes in two states mentioned above. It is also concerned with empowerment of Scheduled Caste women and delineates the empowerment, women’s education and employment, government policy and women empowerment, etc. The book focused on Self-Help Groups for the Scheduled Caste women, their formation, profiles, bank linkages, etc in Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal States.

Darshan Singh (2009) published “Development of Scheduled Castes in India: A Review” in ‘Journal of Rural Development’. The polity of our country has realised the significance of the development of weaker sections specially the scheduled castes since Independence. Consequently, planned efforts have been made for their upliftment by the government. This paper has examined the progress made with regard to their social (health, housing, workforce participation, availability of basic amenities and wage employment under income generation schemes), educational and occupational status. Based on secondary data, it has been found that no doubt, a positive change on various socio-economic parameters has been
recorded but, that change has touched merely less than half of their population. Further, the gap between the mainstream and scheduled caste population still persists significantly in Indian traditional society. Therefore, there is an urgent need to reorient and focus the strategy in order to support the lesser privileged by providing qualitative education and infusing among them the individualistic and moralistic values of self-denial, temperance, forethought, thrift, sobriety and self-reliance essential to bring these downtrodden into the national mainstream.

Somashekharappa (2010) writes on “Dalit Employee: A Sociological Study of Inter-personal Relations at Work Place”. The book is about interpersonal relations of Dalit employees with the non-Dalit employees as obtained in the perceptual reality of the Dalits working in the formal organizations covered in the Public, Semi-public, Private, Semi-private, Co-operative and Local Body Institutions in Hubli-Dharwad Urban agglomeration limits situated in the backward region of north Karnataka in India. In this explorative analysis, efforts are made primarily to establish how Dalit employees feel accommodated in the modern complex work organizations amidst a host of employees, employers and executive bosses from the upper caste background in whose association the Dalits have never worked historically. The onset of British rule coupled with Westernization, Industrialization and urbanization provided new vistas to the Dalits to start coming into the mainstream of the society. Emergence of independent India, with having its own constitutional provisions for participation of all castes and creeds in its nation building process has further facilitated the traditionally deprived section of population in their genuine contribution towards it. The Constitutional Policy of Protective Discrimination in the form of
reservations to provide social justice has really helped the Dalit women in having carved a space in public life for themselves. However, these are schisms still prevailing as the traditional Hindu behavioural patterns linger in the deep seated psyche of the society. The present study is an attempt to empirically showcase this through the views of 300 samples of Dalit women employees.

Asrani and Kaushik (2011) published on “Problems Perceived by Scheduled Caste Women in Haryana” in ‘Studies of Tribes and Tribals’. About one-fifth of the population in Haryana belongs to scheduled castes, who are reported to be victims of social neglect and atrocities. Data were collected from 300 scheduled caste women from six villages through structured interview schedule with the major objective to explore the problems faced/perceived by them. Findings revealed that some socio-cultural problems still exist in villages such as untouchability, not being allowed in public places etc. However, economic problems were the most serious problems perceived by majority of respondents followed by educational problems.

Desai (2012) published “Caste and Patriarchy and Exploitation of Scheduled Caste Women” in ‘International Journal of Social Sciences and Interdisciplinary Research’. Caste system is a peculiar feature and complex system of Indian society. Caste is studied with different approaches and the theories such as Manu’s theory, Resley’s theory, anthropological, sociological approaches. Originating from the Portuguese word, caste meaning breed and now defined by the Encyclopedia of Social Sciences as an endogamous and hereditary subdivision of ethnic group occupying a position of superior or inferior rank or social esteem in comparison
with such other divisions. The caste system of India has now become one of the most rigid and defining social institutions in the world. This system of defining caste from birth has created rigid barrier of mobility within the country. The word patriarchy literally means the rule of the father or the patriarch and originally it was used to describe a specific type of male dominated family. Now it is used to more generally to refer to make dominate women and to characterize a system whereby women are kept subordinate in a number of ways. There exists a religious practice called Devadasi Cult, under which a girl is dedicated to or married not with mortal man but to idol or object of worship or a temple. This cult is prevalent even today throughout India and more particularly in the north Karnataka especially in the districts of Belgaum, Bijapur, Gulbarga, Bidar and in Maharashtra, Solapur, Kolhapur, Satara and Sangli where number of scheduled caste women are dedicated to temple. After dedication these women live life as prostitution. Even these women are major factors for persistence of this cult. The vested interest of upper castes for gain accessibility to desire of women of lower castes is to satisfy their extra marital sexual needs. Now this cult became major fitting center of prostitution. The present research paper highlighted the major aspects of the Devadasi cult.

Surendra and Ramadevi (2012) published “Social Empowerment of Scheduled Caste Women” in ‘Golden Research Thoughts’. The Social Empowerment of Women includes equal access to Education, Health, Environment, Shelter, Nutrition, etc. Equal access to education for women and girls will be ensured. Special measures will be taken to eliminate discrimination, universalize education, eradicate illiteracy, create a gender-sensitive educational system, increase enrolment and retention
rates of girls and improve the quality of education to facilitate life-long learning as well as development of occupation/vocation/technical skills by women. Reducing the gender gap in secondary and higher education would be a focus area.

Ashalatha (2013) published on “Status of Dalit Women in India: Caste and Gender based Exclusion” in ‘Paripex: Indian Journal of Research’. The paper tries to highlight the status of Dalit women in India in a fastly globalizing world. In this paper the author wish to present the devastating effects of the caste system on the educational, social, and economical status of Dalit women in modern India. The aim of the paper is to highlight the harsh reality of the suppression, struggle and torture Dalit women face every day of their miserable lives. The hardships of Dalit women are not simply due to their poverty, economical status, or lack of education, but are a direct result of the severe exploitation and suppression by the upper classes, which is legitimized by Hindu religious scriptures.

Patil (2013) writes a paper entitled “Revitalising Dalit Feminism Towards Reflexive, Anti-Caste Agency of Mang and Mahar Women in Maharashtra” in ‘Economic & Political Weekly’. This paper revisits the project of Dalit feminism through the social spaces that structure the assertions of dalit women from the Mang and Mahar castes in Maharashtra. It attempts to expand the theoretical possibilities of Dalit feminism through engaging with the conceptual categories of Karl Marx, Walter Mignolo and Oyeronke Oyewumi and repositions the contextual specificity of the social reproduction of Dalit women’s social location-based knowledge. Thus, it critically examines the leftist critiques that reduce dalit feminism to an extension of identity politics.
It also questions the non-committal inclusive avatars of feminism that welcome the category of dalit feminism, as any other feminist claims without recognizing the epistemic turn offered by Dalit feminism.

**Widows:**

Caton and Merielli (1930) described that Hindu widowhood as a life of agony, pain, suffering and austerity in their book entitled “Home and Marriage in the Key Progress: A Survey of the Status and Conditions of Women in India”. It is a life which has been inflicted by social customs. The authors described the customs and practices of widowhood of Hindu women.

Hanumantha Rayappa and Umarani (1987) had conducted a study on the ‘Incidence of Widowhood in Karnataka’ with the following objectives. (1) To examine the present trends and differentials in the incidence of widowhood from 1921 onwards and (2) the causes and consequences of widowhood. Trends were mostly obtained from census data and the differentials were taken from survey data. The study included 182 sample widows drawn at random from Lingayats, Vokkaligas, Brahmins, Schedule Caste, Kuruba, Kujan, Scheduled tribes, other castes and other religions. They estimated that the mean age at widowhood for those got widowed by the age of 45, ranged from 30 years in the decade 1901-11 to 35 years for the decade 1961-71.

In their paper entitled “Widows and Health in Rural North India” published in ‘Economic & Political Weekly’, Chen and Dreze (1992) reported that the labour force participation rates of widows in India tend to be a little higher than those of married women of the same age. Because widows tend to be concentrated in
the older age groups, their average labour force participation rate is lower than that of married women. When widows do participate in salaried work, it is mainly in the form of part-time, low paid employment in institutions such as village balwadis. The extent of remunerative self-employment among widows living in households without an adult male turns out to be strikingly restricted. This finding, which confirms the results of an earlier study of North Indian widows (Dreze, 1990), illustrates the employment restrictions that result from the gender division of labour and related social norms as well as from the disadvantages that widows face as participants in the rural economy.

Biradar (1993) conducted a research study under the title “A Sociological Study of Integration of Widows among Veerashaiva Community in Hyderabad Karnataka Region: A Case Study of Gulbarga city”. The research study is based on sample survey of widows of Veerashaiva community and the rituals followed by these widows are highlighted. Few of the restrictions are imposed on these widows, but Veerashaivism does not allow such restrictions. Hence, it is concluded that there is need to remove restrictions on Veerashaiva widows.

Chakravarti (1998) in their paper entitled “Gender, Caste and Labour: The Ideological and Material Structure of Widowhood”, attempted to explore the relationship between gender, caste and labour, in the context of widowhood. The study analyzed widowhood among the upper castes, an issue that has dominated the consciousness of the society for over a century. Patriarchal practices among the different castes, though dissimilar are part of a larger structure of caste, production and reproduction. Thus, traditional
patriarchal practices could be very distinctive for different castes making for a hierarchy of cultures and a system of production in which the low castes labour reproduce labour whereas the high castes do not labour and reproduce only specialists: ritual specialist or a literati which performs specific types of non-manual work.

Chen (1998) in her introduction written to the edited book entitled “Widows in India: Social Neglect and Public Action” stated that the well-being of widows is not just a question of economic security, but also one of dignity, self-respect and participation in society. Many widows in his sample suffered from different forms of social isolation, psychological abuse or emotional distress. He found that the social marginalization of widows frequently took one or more of the following forms:

1. Rumours and accusation: Widows are often accused of being “responsible” for the death of their husband, regarded as sexually threatening, and generally considered as inauspicious.

2. Enforced dress and behaviour codes: Many widows are under strong pressure to observe restrictive codes of dress, appearance and behaviour. Some of the traditional restrictions (e.g. Shaving of head) have become quite rare, even among the upper castes, but others (e.g. Not wearing the symbols of marriage) remain widespread.

3. Social ostracism: A widow is often excluded from the religious and social life of the community, due to her perceived inauspiciousness.

4. Physical violence: Violence against widows primarily takes the form of sexual harassment (young widows being considered as sexually vulnerable and/or promiscuous) or
property-related violence (many widows being seen as unwanted claimants on ancestral property).

Gulati and Gulati (1998) studies on the social security pensions which are basically intended to provide income support to persons adversely affected by events like retrenchment, sickness, physical disability, old and/or widowhood. The analysis of widows’ statistics shows that the proportion of the aged widows and elderly in the state’s population will go up from the present 7.55% to 10.2% in 2010. Hence there is need for increase in the social security schemes for the widows and elderly people.

Gulati and Gulati (1998A) in their paper entitled “The Poor Widows in Kootam: A Study of Widows in a Squatter Settlement”, described on the profile of Jayamma, a widowed Brick worker. Her story is not a combination of the experiences of many different people, but also it also conveys the problems of poor widow in Kerala. The story is encourages the present widows in employment and living meaningful life.

Gulati (1998) in his paper entitled “The Poor Widows in Kootam: A Study of Widows in a Squatter Settlement” reported on the widows in a poor habitat called ‘Kootam’, which is made up of 60 households and located on the outskirts of Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. The paper analyzed the different aspects such as employment, age at widowhood, living arrangements, etc of the widows living in the kootam. The major points emerged are (i) widows are drifted to poorer localities (ii) the unnatural deaths are common among the poor and lead the widowhood at young age (iii) the male members are supporting widows (iv) only limited widows are getting social security benefits (v) all the younger widows are
participated in employment and income generation, whereas elderly widows above 60 years are not participating in employment.

Menon and Bhasin (1998) in their paper entitled “Partition Widows: The State as Social Rehabilitator” emphasized the life of the widowhood happened due to partition. The article described the historical stories of different partition widows. The article also emphasized that the state is playing an important role in social rehabilitation of the widows in post-Partition India by formulating social security schemes.

Misra and Thukral (1998) writes on “Widows and Property Rights: A Study of Two Villages in Bihar” which is based on study conducted to know about the property rights of the widows in two villages of Bihar, namely Aropur and Hariharpur of Saraiya block in Muzzaffarpur district. The authors surveyed 16 widows belonging to Hindu religion, but belonging to different castes and communities, their families and the land and revenue officials at the block level. The study revealed that even though these widows have right to their husband’s land and property, they do not exercise complete ownership rights on the same.

Nandwana and Nandwana (1998) in their paper entitled “Land Rights of Widows in Rajasthan”, focused on the land rights of widows in two villages: Kavita and Kadiyan, both of Badgaon block of Udaipur district in Rajasthan. The study was conducted on 57 widows living in these villages. The study highlighted the legal provisions pertaining to widows as per Hindu inheritance law and compared them with the rights which the widows were able to exercise in reality. As such the study explored a number of issues
such as the Hindu Law of Succession; Statutory Land Rights in Rajasthan; customary land rights in Rajasthan; why widows are unable to exercise their land rights and recommendations to protect women’s land rights.

In her study on the “Hindu widows: A Study of Deprivation” in Dharwad District (Karnataka State), Patil (2000) has analyzed their social, economic, cultural and psychological deprivation. The primary data was collected from 300 sample widows -150 rural and 150 urban - using the interview method, Chi-square test, student T test and simple descriptive percentages were used to analyze the data. The author found in his study that the mean age at widowhood of rural widows was 38.11 years and of urban widows was 41.50 years. The mean duration of widowed life for rural widows was higher (14.20 years) than that of the urban widows (12.65 years).

Malathi (2001) has published her paper entitled “Empowerment of Widows”. It is based on study conducted on Socio-Economic Status of Hindu Naidu widows in Walajapet Taluk, Vellore District, Tamil Nadu - A Three Generation Study. There were 340 widows in her sample frame which comprised of 100 young, 114 middle and 126 old generation widows. Descriptive percentage and other statistical methods were used to analyze the data. The study reports that the mean period of widowhood of the respondents of young widows was 13.5 years, a middle-aged widow was 14.7 years and the old generation was 10.7 years. She also found that the old generation widows had a long married life and hence had a shorter duration of widowhood. Conversely, the young and middle-aged widows have a short span of married life, hence they have a longer period of widowhood.
Sinha and Sinha (2001) write on “Ranveer Sena and ‘Massacre Widows’ in ‘Economic & Political Weekly’. The ongoing conflict between the landlord-backed Ranveer Sena and the Naxalites in Bihar acquired a new dimension during the 1999 Lok Sabha election season with the Sena fielding a candidate and parading ‘massacre widows’ before the electorate. Given the background of massacres in the state widowing many more dalit women than upper caste ones, the campaign ploy has provoked a debate centered of class, caste and gender.

Madrigal, et al (2003) published a paper entitled “Widow and Widower Remarriage: An Analysis in a Rural 19th Century Costa Rican Population and a Cross-Cultural Discussion” in ‘American Journal of Physical Anthropology’. Although the topic of remarriage features saliently in the cultural anthropological literature, it is virtually absent in the biological anthropology journals. This is perplexing, given that remarriage affects the differential reproductive success of males and females in a community, and could well impact a community’s population structure. In this paper, we research remarriage practices in a rural 19th century community in Costa Rica. Although authors find support for the proposition that males are more likely to remarry than females, it is found that widows who remarry are not all young and able to reproduce. The findings support the cross-culturally-generated suggestion that a female’s ability not to remarry is tied to her to ability to own property. Remarriage is a topic of interest to biological anthropologists from a cross-cultural and bio-cultural perspective.

and Health Outcomes: The Women’s Health Initiative” in ‘Health Psychology’. This study examined whether widowhood was associated with physical and mental health, health behaviors, and health outcomes using a cross-sectional ($N=72,247$) and prospective ($N=55,724$) design in women aged 50–79 years participating in the Women’s Health Initiative observational study (85.4% White). At baseline, married women reported better physical and mental health and generally better health behaviors than widowed women. Whereas women who remained married over the 3-year period showed stability in mental health, recent widows experienced marked impairments and longer term widows showed stability or slight improvements. Both groups of widows reported more unintentional weight loss over the 3-year period. Changes in physical health and health behaviors were inconsistent, with generally small effect sizes. Findings underscore the resilience of older women and their capacity to reestablish connections, but point to the need for services that strengthen social support among women who have difficulty during this transition.

Manju Mehta, et al (2006) writes on “Effect of Widowhood on Repression – Sensitisation Tendency” in ‘Journal of Indian academy of Applied Psychology’. The present study was undertaken to see the effect of widowhood on repression - sensitization tendency taking four groups of women i.e. non working widows, working widows, non working married and working married women, who are middle aged and residing in urban setting. The study was conducted on 70 widows (35 non working and 35 working) and 90 married women (45 non working and 45 working) aged between 35 to 50 years using R-S scale by Mehta and Koradia was used to assess the repression - sensitisation tendency. Data was analyzed using ‘t’ Test.
The findings reveal that widows were found to be having significantly higher level of sensitization tendency in comparison to married women irrespective of non working/ working status of theirs or of married women.

John Sender and Carlos Oya (2007) published a working paper entitled “Divorced, Separated and Widowed Female Workers in Rural Mozambique”. Compared to other rural women, a high proportion of female wagemakers in rural Mozambique are divorced, separated or widowed. The paper explores the factors underlying this difference and establishes a significant relationship between labor market participation and female divorce or widowhood. The association is likely to work in both directions. Moreover, contrastive exploration suggests that divorced/separated women differ from non-divorced women in many other important respects: They tend to get access to better jobs; also, divorced and separated mothers are remarkably good at investing in their daughters’ education compared to other mothers and to male respondents. The paper concludes by stressing the limits of regression techniques in teasing out causation and the interactions between variables, and by suggesting that policies to increase female access to decently remunerated wage employment could make a substantial difference to the welfare of very poor rural women in Africa and their children.

Anupriyo Mallick (2008) writes on “Narratives of Aged Widows on Abuse” in ‘Indian Journal of Gerontology’. Based on in-depth interviews with the widows in the age group of 60 years and above, residing in various old age institutions in Kolkata and its adjoining areas, this paper examines the sufferings and humiliation
(in terms of abuse and neglect) the women are subject to undergo by their dear and near ones, after the death of their husbands. The paper also seeks to analyze the implications for policy, programmes and practices related to abuse and neglect.

Madhurima (2008) published a paper entitled “Elderly Widows as Victims of Physical Abuse: A Qualitative study in the state of Punjab” in ‘Indian Journal of Gerontology’. The rise in the proportion of the aged has posed new challenges for both developed and developing countries. In the traditional Indian society, old people were assigned a position of respect and honour. The most important duty of the son(s) was to look after the aged parents. Failure on the part of the son(s) was considered a serious demerit and social opprobrium. Such a system provided economic, social and emotional security to the aged. Further, the institution of joint family, caste and village community which formed the building blocks of traditional structure in India, assured economic security and high social status to the aged. However, due to changing aged pyramids, value systems and withdrawal of family support system, domestic maltreatment of the elderly in India is emerging as an important social problem. The aged parents who enjoyed the higher status are now at the mercy of their son(s). The condition of widows is very serious due to their complete dependency on their sons or daughters or relatives. The widows’ social circle is limited to their family. It causes a rude shock to them when they are physically abused by their sons / daughters-in-law or have to leave their families to seek support from formal agencies (Vidhwa ashrams run by philanthropic agencies) as the last resort.
Trivedi, et al (2009) published an article entitled “Psychological Aspects of Widowhood and Divorce” in ‘Mens Sana Monograph’. Despite advances in standard of living of the population, the condition of widows and divorced women remains deplorable in society. The situation is worse in developing nations with their unique social, cultural and economic milieu, which at times ignores the basic human rights of this vulnerable section of society. A gap exists in life expectancies of men and women in both developing and developed nations. This, coupled with greater remarriage rates in men, ensures that the number of widows continues to exceed that of widowers. Moreover, with women becoming more educated, economically independent and aware of their rights, divorce rates are increasing along with associated psychological ramifications. The fact that widowed/divorced women suffer from varying psychological stressors is often ignored. It has been concluded in various studies that such stressors could be harbingers of psychiatric illnesses (e.g., depression, anxiety, substance dependence), and hence should be taken into account by treating physicians, social workers and others who come to the aid of such women. A change in mindset of the society is required before these women get their rightful place, for which a strong will is needed in the minds of the people, and in law-governing bodies.

Madiwalappa (2011) conducted a research study entitled “Employment and Widows: Their Changing Role and Status in Urban Setting”. Totally 375 employed widows and 125 unemployed widows living in Gulbarga city were surveyed through interview schedule. It is concluded that the education and employment of the respondents is a major strength in the livelihood of the widows. Still it is remarked from the study that there is need to
provide awareness about the legal provisions and welfare policies of
the governments for the empowerment of widows. The Voluntary
Organizations and Non-Governmental Organizations have to act in
this regard.

Comparative Study of Married Women and Single Women
(Widow) in Tamilnadu, India” in ‘International Journal of
Current Research”. This study explores why women in India
experiences of impact of partners presence and absence in their
professional perception. Two focus groups were conducted in Tamil
and English language with working high profile (class-I level) women
of Institutions and other organizations. 50 married and 50 single
women (widow) participated with a mean age of 42 years (range 29–
52 years). Normative survey method was adopted in this study. The
study was carried out with five dimensions are 1) Professional
competency 2) Professional qualities 3) Professional attitude. 4)
Professional psychology. 5) Concern to the society. The appropriate
statistical techniques were applied to draw the results. The findings
are interpreted in light of participants’ professional perception in the
presence of husband and absence made much affect on professional
perception.

But the study revealed that their partners really helped in improving
their skill by the way of suggestion and the ability of partner they
reached the present position without much difficulty.

According to Emmanuel Janagan Johnson and Shyamala
(2012) as stated in their paper entitled “Widow Remarriage: A New
Dimension of Social Change in India” published in ‘International
Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences’, a good marriage does
not simply happen. Widow Remarriage is a big question and a task for the women in India. In this study the author highlights the problems faced by the widows, the impact of widow remarriage and its consequences in the society and the changes it brought as a new dimension of social change in India. The finding evidently shows that social stigma on widows is not in practice in India at present. This is a welcoming and good sign for the growth of the country. Widows are permitted to take up jobs, attend functions and ceremonies. The level of suppression of widow in the name of widowhood is gradually vanishing.

Katia Sarla Mohindra, et al (2012) writes on “Debt, Shame and Survival: Becoming and Living as Widows in Rural Kerala, India” in ‘BMC International Health and Humanity’. The health and well-being of widows in India is an important but neglected issue of public health and women’s rights. The authors investigated the lives of Indian women as they become widows, focusing on the causes of their husband’s mortality and the ensuing consequences of these causes on their own lives and identify the opportunities and challenges that widows face in living healthy and fulfilling lives. Data were collected in a Gram Panchayat (lowest level territorial decentralised unit) in the south Indian state of Kerala. Interviews were undertaken with key informants in order to gain an understanding of local constructions of ‘widowhood’ and the welfare and social opportunities for widows. Then we conducted semi-structured interviews with widows in the community on issues related to health and vulnerability, enabled to hear perspectives from widows. Data were analyzed for thematic content and emerging patterns. The authors synthesized our findings with theoretical understandings of vulnerability and Amartya Sen’s entitlements
theory to develop a conceptual framework. Two salient findings of the study are: first, becoming a widow can be viewed as a type of ‘shock’ that operates similarly to other ‘economic shocks’ or ‘health shocks’ in poor countries except that the burden falls disproportionately on women. Second, widowhood is not a static phenomenon, but rather can be viewed as a multi-phased process with different public health implications at each stage. More research on widows in India and other countries will help to both elucidate the challenges faced by widows and encourage potential solutions. The framework developed in this paper could be used to guide future research on widows.

Yoshihiko Kadaya and Ting Yin (2012) published a working paper entitled “Widow Discrimination and Family Care Giving in India”. The purpose of this research is to address the lack of a region-wide view of widow discrimination in India, the home of 42 million widows. This study analyzed the household data collected in face-to-face interviews from January to March of 2011 in six major Indian cities including Delhi, Mumbai, Bangalore, Chennai, Kolkata, and Hyderabad. It was revealed that widow discrimination does not prevail across the nation. That is, this research did not deny the existence of traditional widow discrimination in some areas, but demonstrated that this phenomenon does not represent the whole nation if we focus on the widow’s old age and the treatment by their family. Certainly, this research has some limitations, including the fact that the observations came only from cities. However, this is pioneering research, and more significantly, it addresses the lack of a region-wide view analysis of widow discrimination in India with an aging population.
Anji and Velumani (2013) published a paper entitled “Contemporary Social Position Widowhood Among Rural and Urban Area Special Reference to Dindigul District” in ‘International Journal of Advancements in Research and Technology’. Widows are discriminated even by their family members and they are restricted physically and socially. They are not allowed to wear coloured sarees, bangles, forced to wear unattractive attire, ornaments, hair style, etc. These kinds of restrictions were very rigid in the community. Further their presence is prohibited in social, cultural and religious ceremonies. Society does not permit them to re-marry, which is a violation of human right. Even though the Indian Constitution guarantees equality to all, discrimination against widows is still prevalent, and widowhood is overwhelmingly a woman’s problem. The authors made present work to study the socio, culture conditions of widows in Dindigul District in Tamilnadu and too reduce barriers in developing personal and changing the social attitude and also to look at their conditions from a gender perspective manner. Semi-structured interview method was used to collect the primary data. Totally 500 widows living in Dindigul district were surveyed. The authors suggested to free vocational training program based on their education qualifications. Further, the childrens of widows should be given with compulsory education up to Under Graduate level and preference or reservation should be given to get Government jobs. It is also suggested to the Government to provide loans to widows without any surety. Further, it is essential to give financial support to widows’ minimum of Rs. 1 lakh for the marriage of their girl children.

Devi Kittu and Rotti (2013) published a paper entitled “Indepth Interview of the Status of Widows in Rural Areas of
In India, National Family Health Survey: (NFHS - 2) data has given an estimate that there are more than 33 million widows comprising of 8% of the total female population. The widows are surrounded by cultural and social practices that seldom she can come out from them. The objectives are to determine the social, cultural deprivation faced by them after widowhood and to describe their attitudes towards widow’s remarriage. Widows opined that younger widows without children can remarry. Widows said their relatives treated them badly and were blamed for the death of the husbands. The widows felt shocked and angered towards the last rites. Majority of widows did not have bank account. Majority of the older widows opined that getting rice for food itself was difficult, but for the younger widows educating their children was difficult to be met. Widows who had attained widowhood after 50 years opined that they expected the government to supply rice. Younger widows emphasized the government should give some loan for their survival. Majority of the widows were socially and culturally deprived.

Kanchan Bharati and Charan Singh (2013) published working paper entitled “Ageing in India: Need for a Comprehensive Policy”. In many countries people are living longer and enjoying better living conditions than ever before, as a result of increased life expectancy and medical advancements. Besides being a demographic feature, it also has socio-economic connotation in terms of the various challenges that aged population faces in the broader social context. Unlike previously, in recent times, the function of the family as primary care-giver to the aged has undergone change due to structural changes—both internal and external, most importantly to nuclearisation of family. As a result, one finds the partial shift of
caring responsibility of aged on the government/state in the form of various social and economic security programmes. Though, such measures have provided the sense of economic security among the people accessing them, there is a need for lifelong measures that can have greater impact upon the life of aged. The present paper discusses the scenario of aged and the role of governments support with respect to economic security. The paper also depicts aged as a resourceful group because of their contribution which in many cases, turns out to be significant for the family. Finally, paper also attempts to favor active aging, by remaining active for a longer period, aged may remain healthy by delaying various health risks along with reducing their dependency even during later years of life. In many countries people are living longer and enjoying better living conditions than ever before, as a result of increased life expectancy and medical advancements. Besides being a demographic feature, it also has socio-economic connotation in terms of the various challenges that aged population faces in the broader social context. Unlike previously, in recent times, the function of the family as primary caregiver to the aged has undergone change due to structural changes—both internal and external, most importantly to nuclearisation of family. As a result, one finds the partial shift of caring responsibility of aged on the government/state in the form of various social and economic security programmes. Though, such measures have provided the sense of economic security among the people accessing them, there is a need for lifelong measures that can have greater impact upon the life of aged. The present paper discusses the scenario of aged and the role of governments support with respect to economic security. The paper also depicts aged as a resourceful group because of their contribution which in many cases, turns out to be significant for the family. Finally, paper also attempts to favor active aging, by
remaining active for a longer period, aged may remain healthy by delaying various health risks along with reducing their dependency even during later years of life.

**Ukachukwu Nnodim, et al (2013)** published on “The Effectiveness of Widow Support Systems in the Rural Areas of Rivers State, Nigeria” in ‘Studies of Tribes and Tribals’. The study examined the effectiveness of widow support systems in the rural areas of Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives were to identify available support systems for rural widows in Rivers State and to determine how effective the support systems were to meet the needs of widows in the study area. The sample size for the study was 300 rural women selected using multiple sampling techniques. Data were obtained using structured questionnaire and recorded responses during Focus Group Discussion (FGD) sessions. Data gathered were analyzed using percentage mean and standard deviation. The findings include: availability of support systems ranging from traditional to conventional, the support systems were ineffective to meet the needs of rural widows. It was therefore, recommended that, governments (Federal, State and local) should do more to alleviate the sufferings of rural widows through the implementations of all rights obligations (International and locals) and the institution of social service programmes targeted towards widows. Also widows should form associations, an umbrella body through which they can make their voices heard by those in position to help them live meaningful lives.

the status of widows in India since ancient age. The reform movements against restrictions imposed on widows were also analyzed. Non-Government Organizations must take on the role of social reformers and press ahead to make life easier for her. Non Governmental Organizations should take steps to conduct mass marriages of widows which will help their cause to a great extent. Education of widows should be given utmost priority. If possible, training for employment or compensatory job opportunities should be examined; for example where a relative is given a job in lieu of the deceased. Non-Government Organizations must take on the role of social reformers and press ahead to make life easier for her. Non Governmental Organizations should take steps to conduct mass marriages of widows which will help their cause to a great extent. Education of widows should be given utmost priority. If possible, training for employment or compensatory job opportunities should be examined; for example where a relative is given a job in lieu of the deceased.

Barnali Sarkar (2014) published an article entitled “Murderous Ritual versus Devotional Custom: The Rhetoric and Ritual of Sati and Women’s Subjectivity in Amitav Ghosh’s Sea of Poppies” in ‘Humanities’. The representation of the practice of sati, the immolation of widows on their husbands’ funeral pyre, has garnered interest for long from postcolonial and feminist discourses among others. While advocates of Western modernity perceive sati as a murderous ritual, the proponents of orthodox Hinduism, on the contrary, claim sati to be a courageous cult of “wifely devotion”. In both bigoted beliefs, as poststructuralists observe, women largely appear as “mute objects”. Amitav Ghosh’s Sea of Poppies (2008) brilliantly sidelines the conundrum of polarizing representation of sati
along the East-West axis and reflects instead the subjective experience of women as sati. The article examines how the rhetoric and ritual of sati in the novel enable marginalized women to acquire consciousness of their subjectivity in a colonized society. To this end, the paper analyzes deconstructive readings of sati, such as by Gayatri Spivak, and explores the way the novel uses religion as a ploy, which, instead of perpetrating violence, confers a subjective entity on the sati that can even subvert the constrictive norms of a colonized society.

**Dipti Maayee Sahoo (2014)** published a paper entitled “An Analysis of Widowhood in India: A Global Perspective” in ‘International Journal of Multidisciplinary and Global Research’. Widows are more than victims; they are mothers, caregivers and heads of households. Widows of all ages and their children should be treated as full and equal citizens and their rights should be protected. National laws and policies should be guided by the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UN Women advocates for the empowerment of widows everywhere and supports this in Asia, Africa and Latin America. We work in partnership with widows’ organizations so widows can live free of stigma and discrimination, with dignity, rights and economic independence, and have a voice in decisions that affect their lives in the household and the public sphere. This is part of our broader work to support women’s economic empowerment, political leadership and participation, women’s role in peace and security, ending violence against women and girls, and gender-responsive budgeting.

of Sociology and Anthropology’. The armed conflict in the State of Jammu and Kashmir has touched the lives of all people living in the valley in some way or other. Though, many women have become direct and indirect victims of this conflict. They have faced violence either indirectly in the form of loss/death of near and dear ones or become the direct victims of torture, assault, etc. The paper is a sociological account of the experiences of the women who have lost their husbands to this conflict going on in the Valley from the last two decades. The researcher utilizes the research tools of in-depth interview to understand and highlight the loss, deprivation and social stigma faced by these women which has more or less become ‘Social Reality’ of their lives. It focuses on the personal narratives of these women highlighting the multiple experiences of deprivation and loss faced by them. The social stigma faced by these widows is also analyzed but at the same time, the paper highlights an important fact that in the struggle for survival these women have emerged stronger and an overwhelming majority of them is heading the households they live in.

Jhimli (2014) writes on “Depiction of Widowhood in Bengali Films with a special emphasis on Sati, Chokher Bali, and Swet Patharer Thala” in ‘Research Journal of Language, Literature and Humanities’. The paper is based on three Bengali films the paper tries to reflect on the role of films in depiction of social issues. ‘Widowhood’ which is a specific social construct in Indian society is taken as the basis of analysis with three Bengali films Sati, Chokher Bali and Swet Patharer Thala. The paper shows how widowhood got important treatment in different time period in Indian films mainly Bengali films.
According to Ramesh Ashappa (2014) as stated in his book “Widows in Indian Society”, the widows have also equal status in society like other women. But, due to the restrictions they are not able to live their life comfortably. Even Government has announced many schemes such as Widows’ Pension, Old Age Pension, etc, but the development among widows is meager. There is need to explore the problems and challenges faced by widows in society. The book seeks to analyze the socio-economic and religious life of the widows in Sedam taluka of Gulbarga district. It uncovers the different problems and challenges of widows that are faced by widows in different castes and communities. As discussed above, even Government has formulated many schemes; still there is need for more welfare schemes for widows. The work also analyzed the benefits from government schemes gained by widows and still there are majority of widows, who have not gained from any of the welfare schemes. The author made sincere effort to look into the real life problems of the widows and suggested for the empowerment of widows. It is a significant contribution to the empirical literature on Sociology of Gender as weaker sections of the society as it seeks to provide theoretical and empirical insights into the socioeconomic and religious profile of widows and problems faced by widows in Hindu society. The study explores critically into the attitudes of society towards widows as experienced by the widow respondents in the study. The present book is a worthy and sincere attempt in this direction as it addresses to a wide range of socioeconomic, cultural and religious problems of widows.

Saloni Chopra and Jessica Pudussery (2014) published on “Social Security Pensions in India” in ‘Economic and Political Weekly’. Social security pensions in India have acted as a vital
source of stability for approximately 2.6 crore elderly, disabled and widowed persons today. A 10-state survey in 2013 revealed that the pension scheme was running reasonably well. There is strong evidence to support the fact that the money is reaching the intended beneficiaries without any major leakages. The patterns of usage of the pension are indicative of its importance in the lives of the beneficiaries. An evaluation of the scheme also brings to the fore issues related to the diminutive amount, inefficient disbursal mechanism, cost of collection and the lack of a fixed pattern of payment.

Salunke (2014) writes on “Socio-Economic status of Tribal Widow in India” in ‘International Journal of Pharmaceutical Science and Health Care’. There is a structure in Indian Social system which is made to treat women with discrimination. Further, the treatment widows receive is more discriminative. The status of women of in tribal society is better than these of established developed society. Through it seems to be true at surface level but in theoretical perspective women in tribal society have secondary status. The present research analyses economical, educational and social status of widows in tribal society. For this 150 respondents are chosen from 39 villages. Primary sources include interview schedule, observation, while reports, books, newspapers etc. are in secondary sources. It is found that the treatment widows in tribal society receive is not as like as the widow receive in Hindu society, but in terms of quality it is secondary. Widows with children have more problems to face in their life.
Thereza Mathias, et al (2014) published an article entitled “A Descriptive Study to Assess Psycho-Social Adjustments of Young Widows in Mangalore” in ‘International Journal of Scientific Research’. The death of a spouse is one of the most profound and life-altering events adults will ever experience. The aim is to determine the psycho-social adjustments faced by young widows. Descriptive survey design with 100 widows was selected from Mangalore district through purposive sampling. A 3-point scale to assess the psycho-social adjustments was developed with 35 items. The tool was given to seven experts for the content validation. Reliability of the tool was established by using Cronbachs Alpha($\rho = 0.75$). The tool was translated into Kannada. The collected data was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings show that 69% of the young widows have average adjustment and 31% have poor adjustments. Occupation and living with children had significant association with psycho-social problems among young widows. Assessing the psycho-social problems among young widows will help to develop strategic welfare schemes to young widows, a area totally neglected by the society.

John Kaviarasu (2015) writes on “Widows in the Sub-Standard Settlements of Chennai City: Problems and Prospects” in ‘European Academic Research’. Problems faced by widows in India are innumerable. They are discriminated, abused, insulted and neglected by the society. In general, people in India have a different outlook about them. Majority of the population in India does not like the presence of widows during the celebrations of marriage and some auspicious functions of the families. The lives of widows are subjected to deprivation, struggles and various forms of abuses, which makes them disempowered. The objective of this paper is to
bring out the sufferings, problems and struggles of widows who live a nightmarish life without basic amenities in the slums of the city of Chennai and further this paper suggests some remedies and possible solutions to NGOs, government and educational Institutions to better the socio-economic living conditions of widows. The Department of Outreach in Loyola College has been reaching out to three zones of the corporation of Chennai and doing community service in 30 slums. The registered number of widows goes up to 120 at Tenampet slum alone in the corporation of Chennai. Based on the availability of the widows during the day time in their residence, primary data were collected from 50 widows by adopting a convenient sampling method. The descriptive research design was used in this study to document the results. The major findings reveal that widows in slums face multitude of problems. To put an end to such problems, comprehensive set of steps are to be taken by the government, voluntary organizations, social workers, researchers and education institutions. Most of the suggestions are streamlined towards the empowerment of widows which will bring about a change in their socio-economic conditions. Above all, society’s attitude towards the widows has to change.

2.3. References:


