CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

“Empowering women is a pre-requisite for creating a good nation”
- APJ Abdul Kalam

This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part represents literature review and the second part deals with the theoretical framework of the study.

2.1 Literature Review

This section deals with the following four aspects:

- Financial entitlements and capabilities of women
- Women and socio-economic development
- Women and decision making
- Gender inequality

2.1.1. Financial Entitlements and Capabilities of Women

Sen (2000) highlights the fact that development includes removal of various obstacles that leave people with little chance and opportunity to exercise their capabilities. To him entitlement is the ownership or command over goods or assets.

After analyzing the cases of ten women in Ambajogai Block of Beed District in Maharashtra, Pattil (2013) reveals that legal support is essential for women to get justice and to exercise the rights. Purposive sampling method was employed to choose the women. She insists that, for the preparation of a suitable environment for women, each individual should be aware of freedom and rights.
A study conducted among Gram Panchayat, Taluka Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat members, secretaries account writers and Self Help Group (SHG) members in Mysore District of Karnataka, Ramesh (2014) highlights that through Panchayat Raj institutions women get a lot of opportunities for political empowerment. Again their capabilities can be improved by providing education, public health, water and sanitation.

Gupta (2009) provides an insight into five distinct types of freedom - political freedom, economic facilities, social opportunities, transparency guarantees and protective security and claims that each of these distinct types of rights and freedom help to improve the general capability of an individual. They may also serve to complement each other. He suggests that public policy to develop human capabilities and to achieve rights in general can work through the enhancement of these distinct but interrelated instruments of freedom.

Mandal (2008) gives a vivid picture of the term ‘capability’. To him capability stands for the actual freedom of choice a person has over alternative lives that he or she can lead. His study is based on Indian philosophy.

Roy (2012) through an intra-country analysis of secondary data reveals that all women rights are human rights. Quoting the Fourth United Nation World Conference on Women at Beijing 1995 she re-emphasizes that human rights of women and girls are an inalienable, essential, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal implementation of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women and girls is a main concern for administrative authorities and the United Nations and is essential for the empowerment of women.

Mathur (1992) comparing women belonging to lower and upper strata of society reveals that the women of the lower castes, tribes and economically unprivileged groups have traditionally not merely been allowed to work outside the home, but expected to do so as part of their duty to support themselves and their dependents. As opposed to this the upper caste women and women from
middle class, were not only discouraged but prevented from seeking employment. The main reason for this was that the economic freedom and opportunities to interact with men were construed as having the potential to jeopardize the established normative code for women from the middle and upper social castes and classes.

Srivastava and Srivastava (2010) opine that employment is crucial for poverty reduction and for enhancing women’s status. However, it is potentially empowering and liberating only if it provides women an opportunity to improve their wellbeing and enhance their capabilities. This study is based on rural women in the country.

Sharma (2014) stressing the invisible role of women in family and society explains the role expected from women once they get married. Their preference has to be the family and all else, including employment that could be something they enjoy doing, must be set aside.

Gopalakrishnan (2012) correlates the capability of women with her practical knowledge in financial dealings. Everybody should know how to open a bank account, how to deposit and withdraw money, how to use the debit card in ATM etc. Husbands need to ensure that their wives are aware of the financial dealings. Again should share the details of their assets and liabilities with their wives-what loans they have taken and what is the EMI for each of them etc.

Based on the studies conducted in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan, Dube (2009) observes that parents prefer to give higher education to sons rather than to daughters, mainly because boys are considered positive economic assets to the family. Because daughters leave their parental homes after marriage, sons are looked upon as a form of asset and insurance by the unpredictable world of peasants and the urban lower middle class. It has been suggested that the preference should be discouraged by focusing the need for girl’s and women’s education in the overall economic development of the country.
Pointing out the transition in the process of educating women, Joshi (2004) expresses his views on the present status of women in India is determined to a considerable extent by their employment position. Today economic freedom and higher social status are the two major factors which inspire women to seek gainful employment in our society. But according to the traditional view education of women is not for employment purpose alone but to enable them to better perform their gender roles in the family and society. Now this situation is slowly changing and women are increasingly going for gainful employment.

Women empowerment is a multi-dimensional process as it includes economic, legal, psychological, political and other facets of individuals and groups. Following the findings of a case study Govindappa and Rayadu (2012) advise that to strengthen the society, women must be empowered. It is also a social process that helps people to gain control over their own lives and resources.

Bhatt (2010) is of the notion that inequality exists not just here in India but all around the world. In every part of the world, girls and women face obstacles in their day-to-day life which simply do not exist for men. This discrimination is often justified on grounds of tradition, culture and religion. This is not just unfair but stifles our future growth and prosperity.

To Rakesh (2014), education is important for everyone, but it is especially significant for the attainment of financial freedom and entitlements of women. Education is the starting point to achieve opportunities and capabilities in life. Educational attainments of women can have ripple impacts within the household and across generations.

Food and nutrition security are the basic conditions for human resource development. Considering the contribution of rural women to food security, Radha (2009) observes that healthy women capital is the real asset of a nation. Sustainable development is possible only with educated, healthy and well-nourished, people both men and women.
Based on country-wise survey of women’s status, Todaro and Smith (2012) are of the view that globally women tend to be poorer than men. They are more deprived of health, skill and education and freedoms especially economic freedom.

After discussing, the crisis of Indian masculinity, Kapur (2012) opines that, now women need not more protection and security but education. Only through education they can identify their rights and entitlements. It is the duty of parents and society to raise sons by motivating them to respect the other sex also.

Laxman (2010) points out that with regard to the measures to improve the welfare of women, Hillary Clinton the present President Candidate of the US, emphasis that, there is no distinction between human rights and women’s rights. Even though many measures are adopted for the welfare of women, they still remain poor, under nourished, unemployed and uneducated. Global economic progress can be achieved only by investing in the potential of world’s women and girls.

Falcao and Khanuja (2015) highlight the need of health promotion schemes for women. Lack of health, education, income, shortage of nutritious food etc. are the major obstacles for attaining entitlements and enhancing capabilities. To promote the health status of poor women, in 2010 the Ministry of Women and Child Development launched the Indira Gandhi Matritva Sahyog Yojana. The scheme provides partial wage compensation to pregnant and lactating women for ensuring better health and for the utilisation of health care facilities.

Pointing out the basic issues of women in the world, Meier and Rauch (2005) suggest that basic education of women is the foundation for developing the flexible skills and capabilities needed to participate in knowledge-intensive economic activity. Those who lack access to education, are likely to be excluded from the new opportunities and where long standing gender
inequality in education persists, women will be at an increasing risk of falling behind men in their ability to participate in development.

2.1.2 Women and Socio-Economic Development

In a study conducted among 435 beneficiaries of Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) Scheme, in Prakasam district of Andra Pradesh, Sreelakshmmamma (2008) points out that growth planners and policy framers, globally have often failed to understand women’s needs and their ideas in designing projects and programmes for their development. Nevertheless, women form the key factor for the development of any society. In every part of the world women play two roles: at home as housewives and outside as employees. Both are equally important for the development of any society and country as a whole.

Based on secondary data, Nauawond and Uliveppa (2010) reveal that empowerment is a multi-dimensional process which should enable the individuals to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life. Empowerment of women brings equal status to them by ensuring opportunity and freedom. To be self-reliant, women should find appropriate employment. It supports themselves and also contributes to raising the economic status of her family as well as nation.

Jain (2011) observes that the key area in the empowerment of women is the economic area. Emergence of women entrepreneurs in the society is an indicator of women’s financial independence and their better social status and position. All over the world, women’s role in economic activities is increasing. In India too women are engaged in large numbers in almost all the spheres of economic and social activity. The study is based on secondary data.

In a study conducted by Azim (2013) in the Muzaffarpur District of Bihar, among 160 women respondents from 25 SHGs reveals that the women’s earnings from various SHGs enhanced the standard of living of their family and
it provide them respect in family and society. SHGs also develop awareness among women regarding loan policies, savings and investment rules.

With the support of statistical data Muraleedharan (2012) narrates an incredible story of empowerment of women in Kerala. The study is about Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the state. Kerala is unique in India for the extent of women’s participation in MGNREGS. The number of women who are engaged in this programme is the highest in the country.

Chitkara (2001) reveals that to attain sustainable development, women, especially rural women play a vital role in protecting and managing natural resources. Their role in agriculture and allied activities and also in the family, make them more valuable and unavailable in the society and nation. The study focuses on the rural women of India.

In an empirical study among employed women, Mediratta (2009) finds that there are many reasons which inspire women to take up work outside their homes, economic necessity being the prime cause. Other reasons consist of desire for attaining financial independence, utilizing individual calibre, supplementing household income, securing equal status and utilizing time and energy to reduce monotony and boredom from their family life. The author states that education of women is a must in bringing about advancement in their employment status. In the area of skill and training women stand behind men. Thus, adequate training is also needed to enable women employees to be better equipped to respond to the technological advances, new economic changes and motivate occupational shift wherever possible.

Dolli (2010) through an analysis of secondary data on empowerment of women has identified that women are the key agents of sustainable development and women’s equality and empowerment are seen as central and more holistic approach towards establishing new paths and process of development.
Citing the significance of women empowerment Ruby, Devasia, and George (2009) observe that in the society women are the weakest links, so that they may be strengthened for strengthening the society as a whole and this is possible only by empowering them. Their observations are based on secondary data on marginalized women.

By analyzing secondary data on role conflict of women, Menon (2004) states that empowerment does not mean setting women against men, but making both men and women realize their roles and status and develop a situation for harmonious living in the present conflicting society. It means sharing of work roles, distributing their values and attitudes to the changing world, and undertaking new kinds of adjustments and understanding and trust with each other. Empowerment of women is a novel ideology for spreading democratic values into family and society. Empowerment is an all round process of enabling women to realize their rights, potentiality and power in all walks of their lives.

Based on case studies of women entrepreneurship, Malanne and Blake (2012) observe that, women owned small and medium sized enterprises lead to economic growth and create jobs. This is true in almost all the countries of the world. Women who are successful in business are also capable of being leaders in their communities and countries. Women’s success in entrepreneurship in many countries is often limited by obstacles that undermine their ability and power to start or to expand their business. Women entrepreneurs due to the lack of access to market and credit find problems in running business. The author also point out that while this obstacles are common to both men and women, women alone face different kinds of challenges in managing household responsibilities along with their official obligations.

Enquiring the role of women through historical survey, Jha (2009) opines that, from time immemorial it has been realized that women play a vital role in the socio- economic transformation of a country.
In an empirical study conducted in Malda, North Bengal among 50 married working women, Kaila (2005) reveals that their dual role causes physical tension, anxiety and worry. 76% of respondents opined that they cannot do household work properly due to lack of time. According to him women play a key and significant role in the rapid economic and social development and they have been participating as workforce in record numbers over the last four decades.

Dhal (2014) based on the research on gender bias highlights that women at large are proving to be the most vulnerable section of every society, who bears the maximum brunt of the ongoing process of social and economic transformations in every part of the world. In a rapidly changing social and economic scenario, women are unfortunately placed at the receiving end of the development process and its socio-political consequences in every society.

Citing the significance of gender equality at higher education Mishra (2013) strongly argues that the Indian government needs to prioritize and enhance opportunities of access to higher education for women at the end of the senior secondary education especially in rural, remote and tribal areas. To her the increased contribution by both men and women possessing higher education with relevant skill development can go a long way in ensuring holistic national development towards the millennium development goals. For attaining a sustainable economic growth both formal as well as non formal education for women is indispensible.

After the evaluation of the contribution of women in economic and health spheres, Choudhary (2013) holds the view that, literacy and elementary education fulfil social and human development needs and is an instrument for better health and income generation, the higher education of women promotes social and occupational mobility and leads to intellectual and personal development, quite often resulting in generating elitist culture. Based on secondary data during the period 1947-2012 the author stresses that, higher education is seen as a crucial step in personal, familial and societal mobility.
Citing the potential of women as entrepreneurs Kamalakannan (2005) observes that the contribution of women in socio-economic development of a country is vital. It is necessary to develop entrepreneurship among women and encourage them to take up independent income generating activities so that significant workforce of the country may be utilized more efficiently in order to increase production and per capita income. He emphasises the role of financial institutions in the development of women entrepreneurs.

The linkage between women, natural resources and the domestic economies of poor rural households in India are fairly clear and they can be categorized into three patterns. First, natural resources are central to the livelihoods in India. Second, women are the primary gatherers and managers of biomass goods in poor rural households. And third, women’s roles and responsibilities are pivotal not only to the management of natural resources but also to the management of domestic economy. These views are shared by Sinha (2015) in her article on development role of women.

Exploring literature on religious and social support to women as agents of development Komath (2013) opines that women’s work is not reckoned as income generating activity. This is primarily so, because of the devaluing attitude of the society towards the work done by the woman folk. Thus, the question of development needs to be re-framed in the perspective of the rights of the people.

Ramasundharam (2011) explains that Indian women were traditionally housewives; education to them was given only to the level that everyone wanted to be educated. Now India has the largest number of professionally qualified women. This includes female workers at all levels of skills – form surgeons, pilots to bus conductors and labourers. Her findings about the contribution of working women are presented in her article.

A comparative study of the contribution of men and women towards domestic duties was undertaken by Thomas (2013). His observations are based on NSS reports. In 2009-2010, out of every 1,000 females (all ages) in India’s
rural areas, 347 were attending to domestic duties. In the case of urban females, this number was even bigger: 465 per 1000. The number of rural and urban men who were attending to domestic duties was found only 5 per 1,000 and 4 per 1,000 respectively. According to him, labour force includes not only the employed but also unemployed persons who are actively seeking jobs. In India, substantial numbers of women who are not counted in the labour force are, as described in the official statistics, ‘attending to domestic duties’ in their own households.

After thorough search of secondary data on women in the labour force in the developing countries, Basu and Maertens (2012) are of the opinion that measuring participation of women in economically productive work is an area fraught with huge estimation problems. This is true not only for India but for the entire developing world. Women are involved in all kinds of productive work both inside and outside home, but tend to be underestimated and denied their involvement. They call the attention of governments to have a fresh look at this issue.

2.1.3 Women and Decision Making

Narayan (2005) presents her observations of a study conducted by Karen Oppenheim Mason in five Asian countries-India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Philippines and Thailand-among rural and semi-urban married women. Although paid work is positively associated with having a greater say in the household’s economic decisions in all these five countries, the strength of this relationship varies, being relatively weak in Pakistan and strongest in Thailand. Besides, in at least three out of the five countries, women’s paid employment is not related to having a say in decisions about family size, to enjoying freedom of mobility and to being unafraid of disagreeing with the husband.

In a study conducted in Jaipur city of Rajasthan among 150 men and 150 women, Choudhary (2007) highlights that, education of parents and their occupational status facilitate or hinder the educational and occupational careers of women. It also affects their ability in decision making in the family.
Trivedi (2013) after studying intra-household and inter-household decision making roles of women in Indian society observes that, economic empowerment of women is mainly based on their participation in decision making powers with regard to access and distribution of resources, incomes, investments and expenditure at all levels. The whole effort of empowering women is to enable them or make them capable of utilizing their rights in decision making at all levels and in every field of life as equal partners of development.

Krishnankutty, Menon, and Francis (2009) advocate that women are caregivers in all societies and at the same time are relatively deprived and powerless. Therefore, women should not be conceptualized as beneficiaries of welfare schemes, but as active participants in the growth and development process.

Subrahmanyam (2014) through a Kerala based study convinces that Indian traditions have struggled to foster a higher sense of respect for women. To her, the grammar of gender relations in India is universal respect for women, and this automatically implies unasserted but well-recognised rights of women. Therefore, despite all the intellectual disputes and conflicts, Indian womanhood practices have preserved the uniqueness of Indian women and respect for them. The paradigm of respect for women in India transcends and avoids the conflict prone gender rights paradigm. The author also points out that women who are respected in family or society should have decision making power also.

Pai, Bharati, Ghosh, and Vasula (2009) opine that for women, a combination of domestic drudgery and economic activities are the special features and they are caught in ‘non-monetized’ subsistence production and domestic duties. Even when women assume a wage earning role they are not able to take decisions of their own. They have to spend several hours doing work for which no payment ensues.
Devi (1987) by analyzing secondary data on involvement of family members in decision making in a family reveals that decision making is an activity by which a cause of action is consciously chosen from available alternatives. This process involves the stages of awareness of the situation, evaluation of the alternative and taking the final decision. With reference to decision making in the family, while in the first two stages almost all members of the family may be involved, but in the final stage someone will have the final say. This generally rests with the person who has complete responsibility on the family front.

Shivalingappa and Nagaraj (2011) are of the opinion that empowerment is a process which challenges traditional power equations and relations. Abolition of gender based discrimination in all fields and structures of society and engagement of women in policy and decision making process at grassroots and public levels are few dimensions of women empowerment.

Through case studies on SHGs, Kavitha and Nagaraj (2011) highlight the meaning of empowerment as betterment or improvement otherwise tremendous changes in position than the previous position. To them women empowerment is identified with women’s ability to take their own decisions and also to influence the social decisions which may be expected to result in the advancement of socio-economic conditions of the society.

By going through the secondary data on empowerment, Gudaganavar and Gudaganavar (2009) observe that empowerment is a multifaceted concept. It is both a means and a goal. It is the power which includes ability to take decisions at family, group, community and national levels. It also involves influence over the rules and norms in a society; thereby it awakens self esteem and self confidence.

Neupane (1998) conducted a study in Dhading district of Central Nepal among 100 respondents and found that both men and women participate in different agro forestry activities such as land preparation, planting, tree crop management, livestock rearing fodder and fuel wood collection and marketing.
But despite women’s heavy participation, in agro forestry activities, their involvement in decision making remained low due to traditional gender relations within households.

Considering the impact of globalization on empowerment of rural women, Kumar (2009) notes that population involves women folk who constitute almost half of it. However, rural women have acquired a secondary status in family and social life in economic activities and decision making. Their involvement in work productivity, employment generation and income oriented activities are hindered by many socio-economic barriers.

Through a multi-dimensional approach to women and globalization, Jabben and Alan (2009) emphasizes that education is the prime factor for women’s development and empowerment. Through education it is possible to improve women’s opportunities for participating in the various fields of life including decision making.

Kumari (2009) is of the opinion that a woman should be able to realize her goals in life, able to resist what she does not want to do, able to take decision on her own, able to sustain her without being emotionally dependent on others and competent in handling the affairs of their intellectual, domestic and social life. Her study is about eradication of domestic violence by educated women in India.

Through a study in Thrissur District of Kerala among 502 households Menon and Nair (2008) shares the view that working women have a decisive role in household decision making. The greater a woman’s relative economic power, the greater is her control over her own life. Her self-esteem grows when she earns income.

Ray (2009) stresses that the role of women is widely recognized as vitally important to international development issues. His study focuses on gender equality, ensuring involvement but includes an understanding of the various roles and expectations of the genders within the community.
Evans (2009) by a comparative and cross cultural method of study of gender relations finds that men and women - oppressors and oppressed-confront one another in their everyday lives. They are not just role players acting out a prepared script. Human actors in specific social contexts can and do oppose each other; men do exercise power over women and women do experience pain and humiliation.

Das and Pritirekha (2010) who based their findings on case studies of women in political spheres, conclude that unless women are equipped with confidence and power, the future of India would continue to remain weak, for which women need to get into decision making positions by any possible means. Unless they are brought into the mainstream of politics with proper representation in the decision making bodies in India, women empowerment is not possible.

A study by Joykutty (2014) on working women and their status in India explains that, historically women in India have not enjoyed a good status in workplace settings whether in managerial or operative roles. Since time immemorial, women have been suffered with works of all sorts all through their lives. From reproduction to all household duties and outside work their roles as workers is vital, unique and burdensome. But they are discriminated and exploited all over.

World Economic Forums (WEF) has ranked countries in terms of Global Gender Gap Index and India is ranked 114 among 134 nations. Based on this finding of 2011, Kolasker and Dash (2012) explain that women lagged behind men both in opportunities and access to resources. They pointed out the need to change the social attitude towards women’s role in society and economy.

Pointing out the observation of the Supreme Court of India, Rajagopal (2016) expresses his views that Indian women are no longer passive recipients of the state’s welfare schemes, but active agents of change. Development in its
true sense is possible only with their economic empowerment. The author has suggested the policies and laws to be framed for empowering women.

After evaluating property rights of women, Aparna (2013) observes that, in a patriarchal structure women are considered secondary human beings and subordinate to men. The subjugation of women who are dependent on male members economically have no position in the decision making process, even in household matters.

Sarangi and Mishra (2013) through their study conducted in tribal and non-tribal districts of Odisha state, suggest that the empowerment of women shall be viewed as all round development in their status and manifestation of their potential in all walks of life. This is realized through many inter-related and mutually reinforcing factors such as awareness building with regard to their socio-economic conditions, discrimination, rights and freedom towards gender equality, skill development and capability building in order to acquire ability to plan and pursue economic activities, participation in the decision making process in the home as well as in the society and strengthening actions for achieving gender equality.

Government of India as per Census Report (2011) observes that literacy level and educational development are considered the key variables affecting demographic indicators like fertility, mortality rate and migration. It greatly contributes in developing quality of life, particularly with regard to life expectancy, infant mortality, learning and nutritional levels of children.

Pal (2013) based on secondary sources of data on women in administrative positions states that, women’s role in governance is very significant. While measures have already been taken for grassroots democracy by reserving seats, the de-facto effect on women’s decision making must be revealed. Apart from that, all women representatives must be treated as equal to their male counterparts by the local administration.
After studying various governmental policies to empower women, Sharma (2013) expresses her view that, women empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources-material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money, access to money and control over decision making in the home, community, society, nation and to gain power.

Tyagi (2015) in an empirical study of rural and urban women in selected districts of U.P. is of the view that the disabilities and constraints of women on decision making from the socio-cultural situations, indicate that the majority of women are still very far from enjoying the rights and opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution. The social laws, that sought to mitigate the problems of women in their family life, have remained unknown to a large mass of women in this country, who are as ignorant to their legal rights today as they were before independence.

Through a historical evaluation of the role of women in Indian economy, Ganesamurthy (2008) reveals that empowerment of women would mean equipping women to be economically independent and personally self reliant with a positive self esteem to enable them to face any difficult situation. Moreover they should be able to participate in the developmental activities of the nation. They are said to be empowered only when they are able to engage in the process of decision making.

Observing the share of women in family resources in India, Mishra and Pandey (2013) find that women in wealthier families generally have more voice. What matters is a woman’s own income and assets as well as her ability to take decision in the household. The author suggests that all these will increase the bargaining power of women and their ability to influence choices in the household.

Rao and Latha (1999) in a case study state that, in developing countries many women work as unpaid family labours in subsistence agriculture and household enterprises. Many women also work in the informal sector, where
their remuneration is unstable. And whatever other work women do, they also have the major responsibility for most household work, including the care of children and other family members.

Ravi and Sajjanhar (2014) bring out the link between marital violence and property ownership. A study conducted in Kerala highlights that women owning immovable property are found to face a significantly lower risk of marital violence than property less women. These women owning assets have some sort of decision making power on movable and immovable properties and they have wider access to economic, social and political power.

Sharma (2011) in the Karnataka Household Asset Survey (KHAS) which was conducted among 4010 households observes that just because a woman could claim that jewellery was her personal asset as she would have brought it with her to her marital home, or would have been gifted it during the time of marriage, but actually have no say if the family wanted to sell it for an urgent financial need. Women’s ability to make such decisions is difficult to quantify in numbers but the qualitative survey, which forms part of the study, underlines the reality of women’s decision-making powers within a household.

Throwing light on Towards Equality: Report of the Committee on the Status of Women in India, Jain (2016) emphasizes that for decades, the women’s movement has been underlining many important aspects of women’s role in the economy, as was outstandingly articulated in. The movement has been focusing on the need to recognize the vital role which women play in the economy and argues for their participation in policy, data collection and programme design. It has been highlighting that economic agency or a livelihood is a crucial requirement for self-confidence and self-affirmation. It also emphasizes that financial power within and outside the household improves the decision making power of women.

Bringing into limelight the question whether globalization will bring more unequal gender relations, Bradshaw, Castellino, and Diop (2013) put forward a novel stream of thinking. In the majority of cultures unequal gender
and generational relations exist within households with the male ‘head’ having a high level of control. A woman going out to work is often read by society as meaning the man is unable to look after his family, making men reluctant and thus limiting women’s participation in paid work through violence or the threat of violence. When women are allowed to engage in paid work, it can improve their voice in the home and ability to influence household decision-making. It can also lead to disputes in home, especially if women earn more than men, or women’s employment coincides with men’s under or unemployment. In the last decade, a ‘crisis in masculinity’ has been realized, relating to the changes in men’s roles and positions through processes of globalization, suggesting a need to focus attention on men if these changes are to bring transformative progress towards greater equality, rather than further harm women.

Pointing out the experience of conducting a case study in Iran about decision making Rezapour and Ansari (2014) show that males usually have power in economic resources. They manage the general financial affairs of the family. This is what decides the framework of many other concepts of family life. In an investigation about the husbands who have professional occupation and their wives, the decisions were divided into decisions which were very important and decisions which were considered to be important for both man and woman. A lot of very significant decisions which relates to financial affairs were only made by husbands. Important decisions like education and marriage of children were often made by both. But women were just responsible for decisions which were considered to be unimportant and trivial by both husband and wife, for instance, choosing the house interior decorations.

By giving a glimpse at the strategic shift in approach towards women’s protection in the 12th Five Year Plan, Mahesh and Yogesh (2013) emphasise that, asset ownership has a positive impact on the status and bargaining power of women it also enhances the bargaining power of women in decision making in household.
Desai (2010) going through the family welfare programmes clearly states that, economic independence of women is important as it enhances their ability to take decisions and exercise freedom of choice. Many of the working women, who have control over their own income, do contribute towards the financial needs of family as and when required. They often participate in important discussions in family and their opinions are given due weightage before any final decision.

2.1.4 Gender Inequality

Shrivastava (2010) conducted a survey in Bikaner Panchayat Samiti of Jaipur among 80 respondents. The survey reveals that, rural women are engaged in a wide range of agricultural and food processing activities such as cleaning and storing of grains and pulses, grinding flour, hand pounding of cereals, drying and preservation of fruits and vegetables etc. All these duties consume maximum time of a home maker. Thus, the multi-furious activities performed by women make their lives quite miserable, compelling them to live in hardship and drudgery. But the miserable condition of women at home is not considered by others at large serious enough for ramification.

Thattil and Prasad (2010) through a study conducted among 20 women managers in Kerala, reveal that, women managers play a dual role, as managers of their homes and managers of their organizations. A home-job - family balancing is critical in the managerial duty of every woman.

Kumar (2009) states that gender discrimination remain pervasive in many dimension of life world-wide. This is despite considerable advances in gender equality in recent decades. The nature and extent of discrimination vary considerably across counties and regions. In no region of the developing world are women equal to men in legal, social and economic rights. Gender gaps are widespread in access to and control resources, economic opportunities, decision making power and political voice.
Madaswami (2016) reveals that gender based discriminations prevails in many nations of the world. Through a study conducted by ‘World Economic Forum’ in 2014 claim that equal justice would be ensured to women across the world only by 2095, another study carried out by the same agency state that gender equality could be achieved only by 2133 as the atrocities against female registered worldwide growth. The menaces like starvation, unemployment, ignorance and corruption can be resolved only when men and women work together for the nation, without any discrimination.

A study conducted by Barik (2009) in Bhubaneswar of Khurda District of Odisha among 137 respondents, reveals that aspects of student’s home life can be expected to play a strong role in the formation of their educational aspirations. Parents who are more educated are likely to plan higher education for their children. Education both for men and women is a major factor for attaining gender equality.

Vohra (2009) opines that in general women are exposed to some psychological risk factors at work, such as negative stress, psychological and several harassment and monotonous work more often than men. Because of their low status in the job hierarchy, women impose less control over their work situation, a condition associated with cardiovascular, mental and psychological ill health. The over burden of paid and unpaid work adversely affect the health of women. Consequently, job related problems, fatigue, problems related to not taking food in right time, infections and mental health problems are very common among women than men.

A survey conducted by Malayala Manora daily, “Veetu Joli Oru Joli Alle” (2015) among 3000 women in Kerala reveals some important opinions, experiences and dissatisfactions faced by women at home and society. Majority of respondents opine that they expect support, consideration, love and co-operation from their counterparts. 93% of respondents opine that after marriage they have lost their dreams and desires regarding life. 90% of respondents do
not get help from husbands in household work. 89% of employed women find difficulty in managing household work and work outside home.

Pal (2014) emphasizes the NFHS-3 survey which throws light on the fact that 40 percent of married women have been subjected to spousal violence. But it also found that 54 percent of the women it surveyed agreed that wife-beating was acceptable if the wife went out without telling her husband, argued with him, refused sex, neglected children, did not cook properly, was suspected of being unfaithful or showed disrespect toward her in-laws.

John (2016) states that inequalities between men and women and the consequent cry for equal status are as old as modern civilization itself. Discrimination against women has also been age-old all over the world. Reformers and rational thinkers have been demanding equality for both the sexes in matters of education, employment, inheritance, marriage, politics, and religion. Their quest for equality has given birth to the formation of many women’s associations and the launching of women movements.

Ferber (2003) observes that women acquire less human capital because spending a little time in the labour market they expend so much effort on housework.

Based on his observations on entitlements, inheritance and land rights of women, Kelker (2014) opines that globally gender inequality in the ownership and control of land and other productive assets is clearly related to women’s poverty, inequality and exclusion from economic and political governance. Ownership of land and other assets by women are found to be extremely unequal. Recently, there has been an increased recognition of the importance of, control and ownership of land and other productive assets by women.

Pal (2013) is of the view that women’s discrimination is a specific phenomenon in Indian society. Even now they are poor by treated by their family, in terms of lack of nutritious food, low educational achievements and participation in public and private fields.
Kripalini and Bhat (2003) are of the opinion that although the constitution of India promises equality of status and opportunity for women in all spheres of life, it remains mostly in principles and not so much in deeds. Women spend more time in general work in comparison to men but are less paid. Besides, women enjoy less freedom in household matters and less autonomy in their jobs. The social awareness among women through education will help to a great extent to narrow down the gender inequality.

Pattil (2011) finds that the high rate of illiteracy and low economic status of women in India underline the economic need for increasing their earning power by providing more and more of income generating assets. Provision of education, employment opportunities and income to rural women are the measures to improve their nutrition, health and social status.

Rajan (2011) observes that empowerment is a process directly relate to power i.e., the power to control resources and assets. Women empowerment means providing women social, political, economic and religious freedom and right so that their position becomes equal to men in the society.

Parthasarathy (2011) finds that the status of women in society deteriorated day by day and whatever rights they are supposed to have been enjoyed along with men in the early Vedic era are denied to them.

Sharma (2011) reports a study by ILO. As per the study, the amount of time women in different countries spent on unpaid work is very much as compared to men. For example, in India, Mexico and Turkey women spend 4.3 to 5 hours more than men on unpaid work whereas the difference is just 1 hour between women and men in the Nordic countries. In India while women cooked, cleaned and fed the children, fathers, husbands and sons spend time in sleeping, eating, talking to friends, watching television and relaxing.

Tapan’s (2010) survey among 259 respondents reveal that out of the 259 respondents who were engaged in some sort of income generation, about 58% were free to spend their income according to their will.
Nagar (2008) reveals that women have a smaller likelihood of being in regular wage and salaried employment than men. Again, women’s share of supplementing family workers exceeds the rate of men in almost all countries in the world. In economies, with a high share of agriculture in national income, women work more than men in this sector. But they earn less. Thus, there exists wage discrimination at a remarkable level.

Irshad (2013) states that women who exhibit their independence in institutions of education and economics are deemed sceptical and ambiguous by the society. They are the low waged labour available in the market and have little or negligible effect on influencing the patriarchy that mitigates their efforts of asserting their independence.

Bhaskaran (2011) points out that access to land and rights over land have been an issue of foremost priority to all movements for rights of equality and social justice of the dispossessed and marginalized communities.

Lal (2005) states that women are primarily associated with home, but men with outside world. As home makers, females are supposed to cater to domestic duties, such as processing, storing, cooking and serving food, cleaning house etc. Women’s share in productive activities is unseen. Women, whether they work in agriculture, factories or mines, in construction sites or those engaged in household industries or white collar jobs are expected to be home makers. The problems linked with dual responsibilities of women may be viewed as those of burden of work, interpersonal relations within the family and work site of role conflict. Gainful employment of wives is recognized by husbands because it reduces financial burden and improves the standard of living of the family.

Ram (2004) after studying the socio-economic problems faced by women observes that employment of women is a modern phenomenon in Indian society, especially in rural areas. It is a part of modern culture introduced deliberately. The working women especially in rural areas are bound to suffer from different kinds of difficulties and problems arising from
the conflicting demands put on her. Actually she is likely to torn between the two pressures- one, to be a dedicated housewife and the other, to be an efficient, capable and skilful employee.

Menon (2011) reveals that in an ideal world, women should feel free to travel anywhere at any time of the day or night. But the world which we live is not an ideal one. Therefore, women and children should be more careful. Of course women have additional greatness in all fields of life and historically it is proved beyond doubt that they can do anything men can do and even much more. But lack of recognition and gender inequality still exists there.

Nayak (2010) points out that gender based violence, which is not just physical or sexual — but mental, verbal, emotional, financial and intellectual — is a serious problem in our society because it is deep rooted in the cultural and social relations between the two sexes.

Verma (2011) conducted a study among 150 women in Osun state of Nigeria to evaluate the role of women in development process of an economy. Both primary and secondary data have been used for the study. Random sampling technique was used for the selection of samples. The study reveals that, women’s realization of their actual problems, especially discrimination and exploitation will help them to bridge the gender gap caused by inequality.

Connected to the social mind-set of India, Nayak (2012) throws light on the fact that in our country the dominant ideology with respect to gender discourse is both patriarchal and patrilineal in nature. This male dominant power dynamics creates the rationale which formulated a sort of a validation in the social psyche for gender disparity and even for gender-based crimes. It also constructs a social mind-set which considers boys as assets and girls, nothing more than a burden for family as well as nation.

Swamy and Kumar (2007) conclude that a majority of women are to be found in the vast rural unorganized sector. Low wages, longer hours of work, low productivity, low skill and lack of job security are the common features of
this sector. Low employment status and poor socio-economic conditions are mainly due to the inability of women to acquire skill and training. This is attributed to the existing social relations between men and women as well as the attitude of the society.

Argiropouls and Rajagopal (2003) highlight that the main causes of poverty of women in India are inequality, unemployment and social repression.

Suchinmayee (2008) reveals that despite a significant amount of their contribution to development, women’s work remains ‘invisible’ and ‘unrecognized’. Most of the work done by women in household industries and in agriculture sector if unpaid is not recognized as work in the data systems.

Jha, Mehta, and Menon (2004) observe that certain changes should occur in the family of employed women for resolving the conflict of two roles - as a house wife and employed. Otherwise the working women will be subjected to multiplicity of roles which involve differences of patterns, leading to crisis of adjustment and management.

Smith (2013) is of the opinion that the most common understanding of ‘gender’ among the public is that, it is a substitute for the term ‘woman’. Some people take the term to mean the social facts of men’s roles as ‘men ‘are important to an understanding of the social facts of human organization.

Singh (2014) states that there is considerable improvement in the participation of girls during post independence period. But a large number of girls still face problems in entering school and continuing their studies. Therefore, challenges and barriers in achieving gender equality remain vital. For gender equality, it is significant to enhance the pace of primary education in India.

Kallupura (2015) states that the status of women in early agricultural societies is relatively high. Women are not only the base of life, makers and providers of food and helpmates of men, but also the supreme symbols of
fertility. However, women’s status deteriorated over time as societies became more patriarchal.

Pathak (2009) opines that in our country, at present, the rights of women for succession to any property vary from one religion to other depending on the personal laws followed by them. There is no uniformity in the succession laws related to women in different religion.

It is well recognized that in the recent literature of economic inequality, the gender inequality has occupied a prominent position remarks Sarkar and Narayana (2007). In fact, the discrimination against women, in a society has raised the question of social and economic empowerment of women through their participation in the development process. Amartya Sen has also raised his strong voice pertaining to the exploitation against women in society. Alongside he has also focused the urgency of social, economic and political empowerment of women through social awareness and consciousness.

Sing (2015) describes that gender inequality both leads to and is a result of food insecurity. Due to unequal and subordinate gender power roles, rural women face lack of access to and control over critical livelihood and productive resources.

Agarwal (2016) states that gender inequality, in relation to other forms of inequality such as class, caste, or race, has some distinct characteristics. First, gender inequality exists not only outside the household but also centrally within it. Secondly, gender inequalities stem not only from pre-existing differences in economic endowments like wealth, income, etc. between women and men, but also from pre-existing gendered social conditions and social perceptions. And thirdly, gender inequalities not only pre-exist in the noted forms, but also arise from newly defined rules and procedures that develop the functioning of the governance of the institution itself.

“Streekalude Joli” (2016) in Malayala Manorama Daily mentions a study conducted in India by Centre for Strategic and Information Studies US
and Nadhan Associates which reveals that the best state in India for women to work is Sikkim and the worst one is Delhi. Kerala holds 7th rank. The study was conducted on the basis of four factors — the laws regarding working hours of women in factories and other unorganized sector, the response towards legal structure, towards crime against employed women, the ratio between total workforce and women labours and the privileges given to women entrepreneurs.

The latest report of World Economic Forum (WEF), predicts that it may take another 170 years for attaining economic equality between men and women (“Attaining Economic Equality between Genders will take another 170 Years,” 2016). Though the same agency had predicted 118 years for achieving gender equality a year ago, the drastic change in pay and workforce participation around the world forced the WEF to hike the period to 170 years. The report which mentions about the slow and gradual improvement in political gender gap also underlined the correlation between women’s political leadership and wider economic participation. According to the WEF, the economic gap between men and women during the past year has reversed back to where it was in 2008, a matter of concern for gender equality.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section deals with theories on women’s subordination, theories on family decision making, theories on gender differences, psychoanalytic theory, functional theory, theory of preference, the neo-classical model of the family, object relations theory and the male bread winner theory.

2.2.1 Theories on Women’s Subordination

The term women’s subordination refers to the inferior position of women, their lack of access to resources and decision making and to the patriarchal domination. The feeling of powerlessness, discrimination and experience to limited self-esteem and self-confidence jointly contribute to the subordination of women. It is a situation where a power relationship exists and men dominate women. Subordination takes the forms of discrimination,
disregard, insult, control, exploitation, oppression and violence within the family, at the work place and in the society (Sultana, 2011).

Discrimination on the basis of sex had its origin in ancient societies and it flourished through the passage of time. Explanations for gender inequality are many but a social psychological rationalization is concerned not simply why sex or gender discrimination exists but how it spreads through the societies. The social psychological explanation, instead of looking into the connecting thread or the factor explaining the existence and prolongation of gender biases in human society, tries to narrate how through the process of socialization and social learning, role of sex and sex related behaviour are inculcated and perpetuated in the society.

### 2.2.1.1 Natural Basis of Woman’s Subordination

The explanation of ‘natural differences’ for woman’s subordination is given in the context of the Greek society. It was based on the assumption that there are biological differences between man and woman as both are gifted unequally by nature. Prominent interpretations in modern society for woman’s subordination are i) Biological Explanation ii) Natural Inequality View and iii) Social Consent and Contract Theory (Pandey, 1989).

### 2.2.1.2 Biological Explanation

It can be found that a set of classical and modern scholars like Aristotle, Murdock, Bowlby, Parsonstook, Tiger and Fox, referee in biological explanations to justify woman’s inferior status in the society. This group held the view that female is biologically different from male and these differences in biological characteristics are the base of woman’s subordination which ultimately led to sex based division of labour in societies across the world. In fact there are two distinct views to this biological explanation, namely; i) woman’s natural inferiority outlook and ii) woman’s natural superiority view, but both reach the same conclusion, though through different paths.
2.2.1.3 Natural Inequality View

The most accepted explanation for woman’s subordinate position in society before 18th century was that men by nature are superior in rank and hence a natural rank order was there among them. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher had expressed this view clearly in his masterpiece ‘Politics’.

2.2.1.4 The Social Consent and Contract theory

The idea of ‘individualism’, a century old theory is considered one of the most popular misconceptions about man. The philosophers like Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau advocated this idea which had wide acceptance in Europe during 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. They hold the view that prior to the emergence of a civil society, men lived in a sort of pre-social order, labelled as the state of nature and by virtue of a contract and approval among themselves, society came into reality.

Thomas Hobbes, a prominent teacher of ‘consent and contract’ theory argued that all authority relationships are based on consent, even in the case of parent and child. The domination of parent over infant originates not from procreation but from ‘consent, either expressed or by other sufficient arguments declared’. Hobbes’s, notion of consent is simply the fact of power and submission. He held the views that fear and liberty was compatible. Hobbes, an individualist, is an exception among other consent and contract theorists as he always argued for the freedom and equality of all individuals in the natural state, irrespective of man or woman. There is no assumption that woman will always ‘consent’ to (submit to) the authority (protection) of a man.

Rousseau professed that women should be kept away from the participatory and voluntary political system because of their ‘natural’ characters and their harmful influence upon the morals and civic virtues of men. In accordance with tradition, Rousseau demarcated women into good and dissolute, or whores. As per Rousseau, women can remain good only if they confine themselves within the protection of domestic life. He supported gender
Chapter 2  

Review of Literature

segregation and advocated mingling of opposite sexes only where it was proper for them to do so. This is ‘the plan of nature’, which gives separate tastes to opposite sexes, so that they live apart each in his way (Pandey, 1989).

2.2.1.5 Women Subordination in Engels’s View

Frederich Engels has conducted a detailed analysis on the status of women in different economic systems of productions. There was no systematic inequality between the sexes (Chrysochou, 2013). According to him, women were originally equal to or more powerful than men in commune form of production with matrilineal family setups. Women were pushed to inferior status when private property came into existence as a system of production. The dominance of men over private property, his ability for surplus production, changed the society from matriarchal to a patriarchal one where the woman and often slaves became the property of the father and the husband. Again they assume the role of proletariat in every society.

2.2.1.6 Marx’s View on Woman’s Subordination

Historical Materialism, the theory and mode of study developed by Karl Marx recognizes the ways in which financial system structures society as a whole and influences day to day life and experiences. In historical materialism, economic and, technological factors have a great role in deciding the base structure of the society. The base structure recommends a range of systems and institutions aimed to further the interests of those in powers, repeatedly at the cost of exploiting the working class. According to Marx, gender oppression is closely linked to class oppression and the bond between man and woman in the society is similar to the relationship between proletariat and bourgeoisie. In his view, woman’s subordination is a function of class oppression that is maintained (like racism) as it serves the interests of capital and ruling class. It divides man against woman, privileges working class man relatively within the capitalist system with the intension to secure their support, and legitimates the capitalist class’s refusal to recognize and pay for the domestic labour, assigned
Chapter 2 Review of Literature

to woman. To Marx, women’s position and status in society could be used as a measure of the development of the nation as a whole (Brown, 2014)

2.2.2 Theories on Family Decision Making

2.2.2.1 Family System Theory

The family system theory is a theory of human behaviour that views family as an emotional unit (Kerr, 2000). This theory states that family is a system in which each member is assigned specific role to play and rule to respect. Members in the system are supposed to respond to each other in a certain way in accordance with the role assigned to them, which is determined by relationship agreement. In family system, patterns develop within the boundaries of the system as certain family member’s behaviour is caused by and causes other member’s behaviour in a predictable way. Preserving the same patterns of behaviour within a system may lead to a balance in the family system, but it also leads to dysfunction in some cases. For example, the son may be compelled to take up more responsibilities in a family where the father is depressive and lethargic. The change in roles may be useful to maintain stability in the system, but it may also push the unit towards a different equilibrium and the newly attained equilibrium may bring dysfunction in the system as the son could not be able to keep up this overachieving role over a long period of time.

2.2.2.2 Bargaining Theory

Bargaining power is influenced by the resources owned and controlled by each person both within and outside the family (Wiro, 1999). Earnings from outside home have a strong impact on creating a difference within a family. Factors such as better education, paid employment and working outside home contribute not only to the immediate welfare but also to the development of skills and a better fall-back position for the future.

According to the bargaining theory, a family comprises of different individuals and a conflict of interests among the members in the unit may arise
during the passage of time. As per the bargaining theory, these clashes of interests make bargaining a necessary situation in the household life and create a family environment that is not universally governed by altruism. Within the family unit and in the mathematical study of game theory, scholars have derived two distinct types of bargaining viz. cooperative and non-cooperative. In cooperative model of bargaining (also known as non-unitary and collaborative decision making model), the outcome of the negotiations are equally beneficial to all the members of the household and therefore is considered a more ‘natural’ means of analyzing the family unit in comparison to non-cooperative model of bargaining which is also known as Unitary model where personal interests motivate members of the family rather than the desire to work in a collaborative manner and for obtaining the optimum utilization of the benefits of all family members.

### 2.2.2.2.1 Co-operative Bargaining Model (Non-Unitary Model)

A viable alternative to unitary models of the family must recognize, in a non-trivial fashion, the involvement of two or more agents with distinct preferences in determining family consumption: Bargaining models from cooperative game theory satisfy these conditions. A typical cooperative bargaining model of marriage begins with a family that consists of only two members: a husband and a wife. Each has a utility function that depends on his or her consumption of private goods ($U^h(C^h)$ for the husband and $U^w(C^w)$ for the wife). If agreement is not reached, then the payoff received is represented by the “threat point” ($T^h(Z),T^w(Z)$) - the utilities associated with a default outcome of divorce or, alternatively, a non-cooperative equilibrium within the marriage. The threat point depends, in turn, upon a set of exogenous distribution factors $Z$.

- **Nash Bargaining Solution**

  The tools of game theory are applied in the bargaining models. Nash was the first to introduce a bargaining problem (Wiro, 1999). The basic concept for co-operative bargaining games is the so called Nash bargaining solution.
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

The practical advantage of the Nash Model is that it is able to specify and interpret the role of explanatory variables in a demand system. The number of explanatory variables is much greater in the Nash Model than in the unitary model. The Nash model in the practical sense provides a natural scope for analysing problems of mutual decision making in generating households and in the allocation of resources within households.

2.2.2.2 Non-cooperative Bargaining Model (Unitary Model)

Non-Cooperative models assume that individuals are not able to enter into enforceable agreements with one other. An individual’s decisions are conditional on the action of others in the household. Two models provide the theoretical underpinning of the unitary or common preference approach to family behaviour: P.A. Samuelson’s Consensus model and Gray S. Becker’s Altruist model.

- Consensus Model

The Consensus model is introduced by P.A. Samuelson to exhibit the conditions under which family behaviour can be rationalized as the outcome of maximizing a single utility function. Consider a two-member family consisting of a husband and a wife. Each has an individual utility function that depends on his or her private consumption of goods but, by consensus, they agree to maximize a social welfare function of their individual utilities, subject to a joint budget constraint that pools the income received by the two family members. Then, we can analyze their aggregate expenditure pattern as though the family were a single agent maximizing a utility function. That is, the household maximizes $U(c^h, c^w)$, where $c^h$ and $c^w$ are the private consumptions of husband ($h$) and wife ($w$), subject to the budget constraint $p(c^h + c^w) = y = y^h + y^w$ which pools the individual incomes of husband and wife. This problem generates demand functions $c^i = f^i(p, y)$ that depend only on prices and total family income and that have standard properties provided the utility functions are well-behaved. Thus, the comparative statics of traditional consumer demand theory apply directly to family behaviour under the consensus model.
Chapter 2  Review of Literature

Samuelson did not, however, purport to explain how the family achieves a consensus regarding the joint welfare function, or how this consensus is maintained (Lundberg and Pollak, 2008).

- Altruistic Model

The Altruistic model proposed by Gray S. Becker furnishes an account of how resources are distributed within a household. As per Backer’s view, a family unit comprises of a group of purely selfish but rational ‘kids’ and one selfless parent whose utility function replicates his/her concern for the wellbeing of other members in home. He held the view that presence of an altruistic parent who makes positive transfers to each components of the family is sufficient to stimulate the selfish kids to act in an obviously selfless way. The unselfish parent will adjust transfers so that each “rotten kid” finds it in his interest to select actions that optimize the income of the family. As the result oriented distribution is the right step that optimizes the altruistic utility function subject to the family’s resource limitations, the implications of the altruistic model for family demands coincide with those of the consensus model (Becker, 1990)

2.2.3 Theories on Gender Differences

Gender differences are the core of human resource development (Murphy, 1995). They are significant for eradicating poverty, enhancing agricultural productivity, changing trade relations, reducing demographic development and protecting environment. Women’s participation in social affairs is crucial to the approach to development and can play a vital role in environmental protection. Understanding the rights, duties and roles of men and women in various strata of growth process helps the policy makers and strategy formers for adopting suitable and effective development programmes.

2.2.3.1 Theory of Conflict

The conflict theory was derived from the ideals of Karl Marx who assessed that the society is a dynamic entity constantly undergoing changes
Chapter 2  Review of Literature

driven by class conflicts, whereas functionalism evaluates society as a complex system striving to achieve equilibrium (www.boundless.com). The conflict theory views social life as a competition. As per conflict perspective, resources like money, land, sexual partners etc. are limited and the individuals in the society compete for this limited resource. Struggle over insufficient resources is at the heart of all social relationships and competition rather than consensus is the core of human relationship. Religion, government and other such broader social structures and institutions represent the competition for resources and the inherent inequality competition demands; some people and organizations have more resources like power and influence and they use these assets to maintain their dominance in the society. Social structures are evolved as a result of conflict between differing interests. Subsequently, people are impacted by the creation of social structures, and the general result is a differential of power between the ‘elite’ and the ‘others’. Government and large corporation represent elite. Sociologists, who follow conflict perspectives, study the distribution of resources, power and inequality.

2.2.3.2 Structural Functionalist Theory of Gender Inequality

The theory of structural functionalism originated from the need to establish a division of labour for the effective maintenance and running of the family that would concurrently provide valuable contribution to the stability of the society. In this perspective, girls and boys are nurtured with separate approaches to life. Boys are trained instrumentally, that is result oriented, focused on task and to be concerned over the relationship of the family to outside social structure. On the other hand, the girls are taught to be expressive, more specific, to express their emotions and to look for and react to the emotions of others (Wienclaw, 2016). It is found that the structural functionalist perspective on gender equality is a product of its times, narrating the realities of gender roles and the inequalities of 1950s. But, this approach is less useful to analyze the realities of gender roles in post-industrial era where many women work in the industrial units and men stay back in homes looking
after the children and other household affairs. Further research is needed to get a more accurate understanding on the role of sexes in today’s society and how the changing requirements of post-industrial era influence these roles and the stability they enforce on the society.

2.2.3.3 Alice Eagly’s Social Role Theory of Gender Differences

Renowned social psychologist Alice Eagly spent a major part of her career for conducting a detailed analysis about the differences between men and women. In her social role theory of gender differences, Eagly (1987) states that division of labour in the society linked to the inherent physical differences between men and women. According to her, men are normally larger in physic and stronger than his counterparts whereas the females in general are smaller in size and physically weaker than men. She held these inborn differences as contributory factor in the progress of gender role for men and women.

Gender responsibilities are behaviours that are similar to one’s sex. It is further explained as societal and cultural differences between what behaviours we expect to see from men and women. It is found in most part of history that women are entrusted with the primary responsibility of looking after their children whereas men are entrusted with the task of winning bread for the family. As per Eagly’s theory, these expectations are developed out of the natural differences between men and women. Such separate social and cultural expectations for male and female are also called ‘gender stereotypes’.

2.2.3.4 Judith Buber Agassi’s Theory of Gender Equality

The Israeli kibbutz\(^1\) is taken as base for many theories for explaining and justifying gender inequality and gender equality, as it is innovative in collective ownership, production, spending and child care (Agassi, 1989). The kibbutz inaccurately presumed that once there was an egalitarian ideology and social setup regardless of sex. Judith Buber Agassi points out that kibbutz

---

\(^1\) Kibbutz is a collective community in Israel that was traditionally based on agriculture. Its aim is to generate an economically and socially independent society founded on principles of communal ownership of property, social justice and equality.
cannot be taken as test case for theories that blame inequality on the household as such, on the uniqueness of bestowing the responsibility of looking after children to women, on the pre-cultural differences between genders, or on compulsory heterosexuality for females. The experiences of kibbutz disprove theories that blame the lower social status of females on material inequality, on private holding of the means of production, or on the inferior ritual estimation of women’s activities. The Israeli collective farm experience is not only a unique test case for, but a repudiation of theories that base gender impartiality on maximal involvement of women in work in public spheres or on the maximal socialization of house work and child rearing.

2.2.3.5 Social Cognitive Theory of Gender Development and Differentiation

The Social Cognitive theory of Gender Development and Differentiation analyses how sex conceptions are constructed from the diverse mix of experiences and how they operate in tandem with motivational and self-regulatory mechanism to guide sex oriented behaviours all over life span. It assimilates psychological and socio structural determinants within a unified conceptual structure. The theory attributes gender conceptions and roles to a broad chain of social influences operating interdependently in a variety of social subsystems. According to this theory, the evolution of human beings gives physical structure and biological potentialities that permit a range of possibilities rather than dictate a set type of gender differentiation. Human beings contribute to their self-development and become instrumental in bringing about social changes that define and structure gender relationships throughout their actions within the interrelate system of influence (Bussey and Bandura, 1999).

2.2.3.6 The Comparative Resource Contributions Theory

According to the Comparative Resource Contributions Theory, power relations and role structures are determined by the relative resources such as
income, education, employment and tie contributed by the various members of the family (Jenkins, 1980). The husband, being the most earning member of the family, is usually regarded as the dominant member in the household. According to this theory, men have more power and position than women in families in which the income of the husband is greater than that of wife’s. In such a situation, the husband is perceived to be the better person to manage the complicated household decision making.

2.2.4 Psychoanalytic Theory

The Psychoanalytic Theory framed by Sigmund Freud attributes the inferior status of women in the society to psychosomatic aspects of personality. According to Freud, the basic reasons for women’s subordinate position in the society are anatomical differences between male and female and the development of personality (www.zeepedia.com)

2.2.5 Functionalist Perspective of Gender Roles

According to functionalist, all institutions fulfil certain functions and gender roles are beneficial in the sense that, they contribute to stable social relations. As per their view “if it exists and persists, it must have a system maintenance function”. They held that since women’s status is inferior in all known societies, it must be functional for all social systems (www.boundless.com). The inferior status of women derives from the need of the societies to entrust different duties and responsibilities to its members. For functionalists, the status of women was inferior even in primitive societies

2.2.6 Theory of Preference

Catherine Hakim developed the multidisciplinary theory of preference. Hakim, through Preference Theory tries to explain and predict woman’s choices regarding investment in productive or unproductive works. She holds that in those very few nations (according to her only Britain and the Netherlands) which have fully achieved the new scenario for women have the genuine choice for resolving the conflicts between paid job and major
investment in household life. The choices of women are: i) women who give priority to their career and espouse achievement values (a work-centered lifestyle) and generally remain childless by choice ii) women who give priority to family life over career and sharing values (a family focused lifestyle) and often having many children and a little paid work and iii) the majority category who try to balance paid job and family work in some way without giving absolute to either activity or the accompanying values (the adaptive lifestyle) (Hakkim, 1996).

### 2.2.7 The Neo-classical Model of the Family

Neoclassical economists use the new economics model for analyzing marriages, birth of children, division of labour in the household, and divorces (cscs.res.in). In the family, as elsewhere, individuals are presumably rational maximizers. Each spouse specializes in the work she does best in order to attain the largest income and hence the greatest amount of satisfaction. Women acquire less human capital because they spend less time in the labour market, accumulate less labour market experience, and have less energy for work in the labour market because they expend so much effort on housework.

In addition to efficiency, neoclassical economists argue that traditional family specialization minimizes mutual dependence. Consequently, there are more reasons for couples to avoid getting divorced.

### 2.2.8 Object Relations Theory

Object Relations Theory is an account of human development that emphasizes the role of early infantile experience in creating a “core identity” in which gender is a central element (Scott, 1995). Object relation is useful for exploring certain concerns that resonate in the theories of political development and in psychological accounts of human development and the development of a core gender identity.
2.2.9 Male Bread Winner Theory

The Male Bread Winner Theory is an ideal of the household in which men earn income for the family while women do domestic duties like cooking, cleaning and caring of family members (cw.routledge.in). It is part of a much higher gendered division between the public and private folks. It is an ideal that has never been fully satisfactory but it has been significant in most western welfare regimes as a logic underpinning state policies towards gender relations and gender roles in paid employment and family. It has also been used as a conceptual instrument for understanding differences between welfare regimes that put gender at the core of discussion.


Chapter 2

References


Attaining Economic Equality between Genders will take another 170 Years. (2016, October 27), *The Hindu*, p. 12.


85


Chapter 2  
Review of Literature


Chapter 2 Review of Literature


Chapter 2  Review of Literature


Rezapour, Z. & Ansari, H. (2014). Studying the Factors Associated with Women’s Participation in Family Decision Making (Case Study:
Chapter 2  

Review of Literature


Sharma, K. (2011, April 3). If Mothers and Wives were paid. *The Hindu* (Magazine), p. 3.


Chapter 2  

Review of Literature


Trivedi, T. (2013). Women Equality and Development. Arunachal Pradesh: Jananada Prakshan (P&D) in Association with Indira Gandhi Technological and Medical Sciences University.


www.boundless.com

www.zeepeida.com