CHAPTER-II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction:

There have been different studies on women in the manufacturing sector in India and abroad. From the literature review regarding women workers in manufacturing sector, it is found that the existing literature on women’s workers in organised manufacturing sector in India and abroad centres around the following issues-

*Nature of Work and Employment in Manufacturing Sector:

*Occupational Segregation in Manufacturing Sector:

*Wage differentials between male and female workers in Manufacturing Sector:

*Exploitation of Women Workers in Manufacturing Sector:

This chapter has been divided into five sections. The first section of this chapter gives a brief outline of the existing literature related to women in manufacturing sector abroad, in India and in Assam. The second section of the chapter reviews the studies related to women in manufacturing sector conducted abroad. The third section of the chapter reviews the studies related to women workers in manufacturing sector in India, and the fourth section of the chapter reviews the studies related to women workers in manufacturing sector in Assam. The last section of this chapter presents the research gap found out in the existing literature related to women workers in the manufacturing sector.
2.2. Studies in Abroad:

Burnette, Joyce (1997), “An Investigation of Female-Male Wage Gap in the Industrial Revolution in Britain”, has pointed out that factories began to hire women in the early stage of the industrial revolution. It was observed that the textile mills hired women to work in the factories they could work at lower wages than men workers. The findings of the study revealed that on an average, men usually worked for 12 hours per day while women worked for 9 to 10 hours per day which led to increase wage differentials between male and female workers in the manufacturing factories during the Industrial Revolution in England. Another finding of the study was that women workers were employed as subordinate staff of male workers in the factories where gender division of labour prevailed, and found deprivation of women from welfare facilities.

The study also revealed that the advent of new machinery changed the gender division of labour in textile production in England. It was found that before the industrial revolution, women span yarn by using spinning wheel and men didn’t spin. In the case of handloom weaving, though it was done by both men and women, but the number of men workers was higher than that of women workers in this occupation. Men workers engaged in highly skilled works like preparing and finishing process in the case of wool combing and cloth dressing. After the Industrial Revolution, mechanization changed the gender division of labour. It was found that women used the spinning jenny and water frame, but mule spinning was exclusively occupied by male as it required more strength and male mule spinners opposed the entry of female mule spinners. As a result, female mule spinners and their employers were the victims of violent attacks by male spinners and tried to reduce the competition in their occupations in the factories.
Little, I.M.D. (1986), in the study 'Small Manufacturing Enterprises in Developing Countries' has pointed out two very serious problems faced by underdeveloped countries all over the world. One of the major findings is slow pace of improvement in overall employment conditions despite their rapid economic growth. The other is the rapidly widening gender pay gap in the manufacturing sector. Share of women employment in the organised manufacturing sector was found to be less than unorganised manufacturing sector in such countries. In the study it was found that more than 70 percent of women workers were engaged in low paid jobs and employed as marginal workers where they were deprived of social security benefits. Extreme work pressure, longer hours of work, absence of leave facility and gender discrimination in terms of quality of employment, and wages of women workers were the main findings noticed in the study.

“Social Conflict of Industrialisation in Japan”, a study by Sumiya Mikio (1963) found a declining trend of the proportion of agriculture and forestry in the total employment in Japan especially since 1929. On the other hand, the employment in manufacturing industries had increased and the workers in textile factories held over 60 percent of the total employment. At the same time, the employment in metal, machinery and chemical industries also increased considerably. Out of 60 percent of the total employment, 10 percent workers were recognised as temporary, marginal and contractual workers. The workers in temporary employment were paid lower wage than permanent workers even though both were assigned the same type of jobs. In his study, it was found that the majority of the temporary workers were female workers and deprived of social security benefits.
Rahman, M Arifur (2010), in his study ‘Women’s Employment in Garment Factory in Bangladesh: Emancipation or Exploitations?’ used both qualitative and quantitative research approaches and analysed the experiences of women as factory workers, as members of the household and as members of the society involved in day-to-day interactions with other societal members. The findings of this study reveal that the implications of waged employment for Bangladeshi women factory workers are found to be complex and contradictory. Analysis of women’s perceptions as factory workers shows that they are exploited on the factory floor in different ways and experience new forms of patriarchal domination beyond their family. Women constituted the majority of the workforce in the garment factories but remained at the lowest tiers of work hierarchy. Economic exploitation was found as the most significant about the women workers engaged in low paid jobs in Bangladesh Garment Factories and women workers were getting an average 70 percent of male workers wages. He indicated that the majority of women workers worked for 10 to 14 hours a day and 60 to 98 hours a week. Such longer working hours resulted in massive stress on the women workers. Irregularity of wage payment was the pervasive feature for Garment Factories in Bangladesh. Women rarely got salary on their expected date, where the overtime bills regularly remained due. He pointed out that the female factory workers frequently faced sexual harassment inside the factories. Such harassment ranged from demeaning verbal and body language as well as humiliating remarks to unwelcome touching and physical assaults including rape.

The findings of his study also bring to light the gender segregation in various occupations within the export-oriented garment manufacturing factories in Bangladesh. Managerial and supervisory positions were exclusively occupied by men, whereas
women workers were engaged in low paid jobs like knitting, tailoring, house-keeping, etc., As a result, wage differentials between men and women workers were found to be very high. He also pointed out that women’s position on the factory floor was defined by the traditional patriarchal norms where women remained at the bottom of the structure and the bargaining power between management and women was unequal. At the household level women’s labour power was the earning source of the family, and at the same time their lives were controlled by patriarchal family norms. Women workers were in a position of bearing the burden of both the traditional reproductive responsibility in the family and productive tasks inside the factories to earn income for the family.

Artecona, R. & Cunningham, W. (2002), in their paper “Effects of Trade Liberalization on Gender Wage Gap in Mexico” reveals the changing pattern of gender wage gap in the manufacturing units in urban Mexico after trade liberalization during 1987-1993. This paper focuses on whether or not the gender wage gap in the manufacturing sector changed due to trade liberalization and whether or not this could be attributed to a decrease in discrimination due to increased international competition. A difference-in-differences approach was used where the conditional gender wage gaps in factories that were competitive before the trade reforms (and thus their level of competition could not have been affected by trade reforms) is compared to the conditional gender wage gap in firms that were protected from internal (via non-competitive markets) and external (via trade barriers) competition in the pre-reform period, but opened to competition in the post reform periods by lower trade barriers that also lowered the level of internal protection.
It has also been revealed that trade liberalisation in Mexico has increased gender gaps both in terms of work participation and earnings of workers in the organised manufacturing sector in Mexico especially after the post liberalisation period. It is found that higher rate of capital intensity of export oriented industries in Mexico has deprived women workers in getting quality jobs within the organised manufacturing sector.

Miles, L. (2014), in the study “The Social Relations Approach, Empowerment and Women Factory”, focuses on the empowerment of women factory workers in Malaysia with the help of Kabeer’s ‘Social Relation Approach’ which shows an institutional analysis as to how gender inequality is developed and calls for the overall conditions of exchange as well as cooperation to be shifted in favour of women. The application of Kabeer’s Social Relation Approach reveals that Malaysian women factory workers face different forms of exploitation and challenges, due to flexibility in the Labour Market Institutions in Malaysia. The study shows difficulties in adopting and internalising the notion of ‘women Empowerment’ in the case of women factory workers in Malaysia.

Ismail, R. ZM, Noor (2005), in the study on “Gender Wage Differentials in Malaysian Manufacturing Sector”, found that on average male workers engaged in Malaysian manufacturing industries earn significantly higher wages than female workers. The study observed that female workers were paid substantially lower than their male counterparts due to various reasons such as lower level of educational attainment, job characteristics and types of industries within the manufacturing sector in Malaysia. One of the findings of the study was that wage differentials between male and female workers have prevailed due to discriminatory practices performed by the
employers. The study also discussed various determinants of wage differentials between male and female workers in the Malaysian manufacturing sector.

Paul-Majumdar, Protima and Salma Choudhury Zohir (1994), in their work on “Dynamics of Wage Employment: A Case of Employment in the Garment Industry” in Bangladesh observed that the women workers were working in garment factories at very low wage rate below the minimum level fixed by the factory acts and they were basically engaged in lower category of work in the factories. They revealed that gender discrimination in terms of quality of employment and wages was found even in the same category of work in garment factory. Promotion of female workers from low-paid job to the high paid job was found to be almost absent in the garment factories. They observed different forms of economic exploitation that prevailed in the case of Garment Factory workers and found different aspects of gender discrimination in terms of getting wages in time, mode of payment, additional payment for additional working hours, bonus, maternity benefits adequate social security benefits and other welfare facilities related to women workers.

2.3. Studies in India:

Chaudhuri, Bivas & Panigrahi A. K.(2013), in the study “Gender Bias in Indian Industry’, found a higher gender gap in workforce participation in the organised manufacturing sector in India. The study was based on ASI data and estimated the percentage distribution of female workers in Indian Manufacturing industries for the year 2008-09 and 2009-10. They found that 58.78 percent of workers in the manufacturing of tobacco products and 50.36 percent of workers in the manufacturing of apparel were female, while male work participation was 41.2 percent in tobacco products and 49.6 percent in apparel. Again, in the leather products related industry and
manufacturing of food products, the percentage of female workers were 31.58 and 31.35 respectively. Similarly, they have also pointed out that, in industry like computer, electronic and optical products, chemical and chemical products, textiles, the percentage of female workers were found to be 23.26, 22.92 and 19.28 respectively. On the other hand, in industries related with transport equipment, publishing activities, basic metal, manufacturing of furniture, repair and instalment of machinery, coke and refined petroleum products, motor vehicles, trailers as well as semi-trailers etc., the female work participation was significantly low compared to male work participation. They observed that in industries related to tobacco products, apparel, leather, food products, etc., the female work participation was significantly high compared to other industry which provides a conducive nature of work for female workers. There was also a significant variation observed with respect to female work participation across different industry division. Similarly, it was also observed that female participation rates had no uniformity within the organised manufacturing sector because of inequality in wages within the sector.

Jadhav, Kishore & Hussain, Tarref (2015), in the study on “Trade Orientation of Organised and Unorganised Indian Manufacturing Sector: Potential for Employment Generation”, have focussed on trends and pattern of different types of employment in both organised and unorganised manufacturing sectors in India since early 1990s. The study was based on the data collected from Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) reports and NSSO data of various rounds of employment and unemployment. One of the major findings of their study was that trade liberalisation had promoted employment of male and female workers in export oriented and import competing industries in India especially since the initiation of economic reforms in 1991. They found that the pattern
of employment of women was stagnant both in the case of export oriented and import competing industries since 1991. The employment pattern has led to gender gap in employment opportunities among different groups of workers in the Indian labour market and has become major developmental issue especially in the case of the organised manufacturing sector in India. In their study, a very high employment disparity was found and they observed that women workers got just one fourth (1/4) of what their male counterparts got in the organised manufacturing sector in the country during 1991-2014.

Kumari, Namita (2015), in her work on “Employment Pattern in Unorganised Manufacturing Sector in Uttar Pradesh”, reveals that employment situation has not been very encouraging during the post reform periods in India. In her study, efforts were made to capture the growth in factor production and capital intensity in the organised manufacturing sector with a view to understanding the efficiency of the sector in the post-reform periods. On the basis of NSS data collected from 51\textsuperscript{st} and 62\textsuperscript{nd} rounds of Employment and Unemployment, she examines the pattern of employment in the unorganised manufacturing sector in Uttar Pradesh for the period 1994-95 to 2004-05. A striking finding in her study is that female employment has increased and feminisation of the workforce has been found in the case of OAMEs, a segment where a huge task of making women workers casual was noticed in the unorganised manufacturing sector in Uttar Pradesh. She reveals that women employment in part time jobs has increased during 1994-05 to 2004-05 whereas women employment in full time and permanent jobs has been found to be declining to a large extent during the same period. She observes that most of the employment generation in the unorganised
manufacturing sector in Uttar Pradesh has taken place through ‘casualisation’ as well as feminisation of workers during 1994-2005.

Jha, Praveen (2017), in his work on “Labour’s Landscape in India” indicates that poor job quality has been a great concern for all sectors in Indian economy. It was observed that the increasing dispossession and displacement of livelihood had propelled a labour reserve which has been compelled to look for jobs in a non-agricultural sector like the manufacturing sector. But there, too, both landless and casual workers have found few opportunities for decent employment, especially in the Indian manufacturing sector which has led to increased vulnerability and informality along with wage differentials and different forms of gender discrimination within the sector.

Chattapadhyay, Molly and Khan, Maria (2015) in the study on “Women in Indian Manufacturing Sector”, pointed out wage differentials between male and female workers engaged in the Mining and Quarrying sector of India. By using NIC 2008 and collecting unit level data, they describe the method of payment in this sector. It was observed that there was improvement in the case of male workers’ regular monthly salary from 32 percent to 35 percent during 2004-05 to 2011-12, whereas in the case of female workers, the improvement was abysmally marginal at 1 percent. In terms of weekly payment, the share of male workers has increased from 11 percent to 20 percent while the share of female workers has increased from only 3.3 percent to 6 percent respectively during 2004-05 to 2011-12.

In the case of daily payment, the share of male workers was found to remain constant but the share of female workers decreased during the same period. Overall, the female workers engaged in mining and quarrying sector, were found in a marginalised
situation in terms of mode of payment where wage differential ratio of female and male workers had increased from 0.33 percent in 2004-05 to 8 percent in 2011-12.

One of the major findings of the study was that entitlement to social security benefits, share of male workers engaged in the organised sector had increased by one percent point i.e, from 57 percent in 2004-05 to 58 percent in 2011-12. On the other hand, share of female workers engaged in the organised sector had decreased from 15 percent to 12 percent during the same period.

Choudhury Supriya Roy (2005), in her study on “Labour Activism and Women in the Unorganised Sector: Garment Export Industry in Bangalore”, has highlighted the recent events that took place in this industry and she has underlined the situation of women workers in readymade garment factories in Bangalore in the state of Karnataka, India. In her study she found that 900 (nine- hundred) women workers lost their livelihood when the employer closed shop and subsequently disappeared. Findings of her study revealed vulnerability of women workers who were deprived of PF, gratuity, job security and other benefits in the readymade garment factories in Karnataka.

Saha, Swagata (2016), in her work on “Trends and Patterns of Urban Employment in India after Liberalization with Emphasis on Regular Wage Workers”, found that in the manufacturing sector, the increment of employment was positive till the first half of the last decade that is from 1999-2000 to 2004-05 and in the last decade i.e, from 2004-05 to 2009-10, but decline was witnessed where 5.03 million people lost their jobs in the manufacturing sector. She pointed out that the female employment was found to be increasing till 2009-10 but in terms of quality of employment, women were found to be under represented in managerial and supervisory jobs and overrepresented
in manual types of work like packaging, labeling and room cleaning in manufacturing of food, beverages, textile, tobacco, apparel and so on.

Raj, F., Mukherjee, S., Mukherjee, M., Ghose, A. & Nag, R.N. (2011) in their work on “Gender Issues and Development” reveal that with growing urbanization in LDC’s the economic condition of women deteriorates. More than 50% of women who migrate to the industries in search of jobs and opportunities tend to remain more isolated and more vulnerable to economic conditions than men. They usually tend to work in formal sector at low paid jobs which have no social security and in the case of the formal sector, they are deprived of quality employment and wages owing to illiteracy, lack of skills and training and their lower bargaining power.

Kaur, N. & Kaur, S. (2016), in their study on “Women Employment in Organised Sector of India: An Empirical Perspective”, reveal that women hold a secondary place to men in employment during the time period 1991-2012. They conducted the study by using time series data of 22 observations collected from Economic Survey of India (Various issues) with the help of simple percentage and linear trend to find out the growth of gender wise employment in the organised sector. It is observed that the number of women employed in the organised sector (including manufacturing), has increased over the years but their share of employment is still low (20.47 percent) as compared to male employment (79.53 percent). One of the major findings of the study is that women have restricted opportunities in employment owing to their family responsibilities, lack of skills, social as well as cultural norms and practices.
Rustagi, Preet (2010), in the study “Women’s Work and Indian Labour Markets”, points out that Indian manufacturing sector has witnessed drastic changes in the form of production and organization with large industries as well as factories but the female work participation in this sector has been almost stagnant since the initiation of economic reforms in India, 1991. Introduction of high capital intensive methods have led to deprivation of women in getting meaningful employment in Indian manufacturing sector where it requires skilled and trained workers. Owing to lack of education, training and skills, women workers are found to be employed in low paid jobs without social security benefits.

Mandal. Amal (2005), in his study “Women workers in Brick Factories, West Bengal”, indicates that the employment of women workers in brick factories is purely seasonal in nature. In West Bengal, they have been facing different forms of exploitation. The work schedule is not adequately planned in favour of workers; it is done as per exigency of the factory owners. No time table of work is adhered, during the peak season work. Women brick factory workers are to undertake back-breaking hard work in open fields and that, too, without any job security. Moreover, women workers in such factories are paid on piece rate basis, not according to time rate. Lack of separate toilet facility, crèche facility, wage differentials etc are the problems faced by women brick factory workers in West Bengal.

Galbraith, J., Roy Choudhury, D. and Srivastava, S. (2004), “Pay Inequality in the Indian Manufacturing Sector, 1979-98”, estimated wage differentials between male and female workers in the registered manufacturing sector in India between the period 1979 to 1997. In their study, Theil Index was used to find out wage differentials and
they found an increasing trend of wage inequality among male and female workers in the registered manufacturing sector during the post-liberalisation period in India.

Bhalla, S. and Kaur Ravindar (2011), in their working paper “Labour Force Participation of Women in India: Some Facts, Some Queries” have stated that female labour force participation in India as a whole and manufacturing sector in particular has not increased as it has in other south-East Asian nations. In India, women workers receive substantially lower wages than men.

In their study, they have observed that for paid work, the unadjusted wage ratio (average women wages to men wages) has increased from a low 45% in 1983 to 58% in 2007-08. But male wages were nearly double that of female wages during that period. They studied labour force participation from collected data for daily wages based on weekly employment and weekly wages where gender gaps occurred in terms of work participation and payment of wages.

Lahoti, & Swaminathan (2013), the work on “Economic Growth and Female Labour Participation in India” investigated into the relation between economic growth and female participation in different regions of India and different sectors in Indian economy. In this study, he used the data from various rounds of Employment and Unemployment Survey, NSS, where it was found that there had been a substantial change in the sectors where women worked. One of the major findings of the study was that, share of women’s employment in agriculture had declined to 15 percent, but the share of women in other sectors was found to be increasing. On the other hand, proportion of women in manufacturing and service sectors has increased by 23 percent and 60 percent respectively. He has pointed out that economically, politically and
socially constructed gender norms and patriarchal relations along with capitalist modes of production have led to the decline of female work participation in various sectors in Indian economy.

Padma (2004), in her study on “Women Workers in India in the 21st Century- Unemployment and Underemployment”, reveals that the handloom industry which is the largest employer of women after agriculture, suffered serious setbacks in the 1990s and it is being slowly replaced by the beedi industry. The power loom sector’s growth has been at the expense of the mill sector. In her study, she found that women were the main workers both in the handloom and the power loom sectors in Nammakal district in Tamil Nadu where the power loom industry employed lakhs of workers. But such industries are run by powerful rural landlords where hundreds of sweat houses are fitted with ten to one hundred looms each. They work 12 hours a day in two shifts and the workers live in adjacent sheds. The working conditions are dreadful; the workers earn Rs. 500 in a week on piece rate of system. She found that most of the workers were temporary but they received money in advance for which they were bonded with the owner; they had typically low paying jobs where women worked for long hours without any benefits and faced sexual harassment, too. In these industries, women workers faced different challenges from the Government of Tamil Nadu which barred several lakh ration card holders from getting rations.

In her study, she has also indicated that the female work participation (FWPR) has increased overall from 19.7% in 1981 to 25.7% in 2001. In the rural areas, it has increased from 23.1 to 31% and in urban areas it has increased from 8.3 to 11.6%. However, participation has been largely distress induced and has compelled women to
take up jobs which offer very poor wages and no social security. In these low paying jobs women work for long hours without any benefits and face sexual harassment.

Neetha, N. (2009) in her working paper “Feminization of Segregation” reveals that gender discrimination in the labour market has been a pervasive feature, especially in terms of women’s participation in paid employment in organised manufacturing sector in India. The data on women across various manufacturing industries shows a decline in the share of women workers in tobacco, textiles and chemical products. Manufacturing of food products and beverages shows a small increase in terms of share, while the increase in absolute numbers has been quite substantial. The increase in the number and share of manufacturing of apparel and dressing and dyeing of fur has increased from 2.4% to 2.6%. But the declining share of women workers in tobacco, textiles and chemical products is only due to lack of job security in such industries. She has also pointed out the absence of monitoring agencies regarding implementation of different laws, acts as well as policies as a result of which women workers have faced different forms of discrimination and exploitation within the organised sector in the country.

Kaiwar, Apoorva (2014) in his work on “Women Workers in the Factory”, has pointed out that women workers are basically engaged in the manual occupations like packaging, labelling, room cleaning, store keeping, tailoring, knitting, spinning, etc, while the percentage of women in managerial positions is very low. He has mentioned in his work the proposals of the government regarding labour laws for protecting factory workers. He has opined that the government should enact adequate laws to provide basic facilities like separate toilet for women, separate wash room, restroom as well as crèche facility irrespective of the numbers of workers in the factory.
Golder & Sadhukhan (2015), in their work on “Employment and Wages in Indian Manufacturing: Post-reform Performance”, estimates the extent of wage inequality in Indian manufacturing sector in the post-reform periods by using ASI data for organised manufacturing sector and NSS, Employment and Unemployment Survey (EUS) data for aggregate manufacturing in India. They showed that despite a progressive decline in wage disparity between female and male workers in aggregate manufacturing, it had been observed over the last two decades, female workers still earned only half as much as their male counterparts. Another finding of their study was the higher gender wage gap in traditionally high capital-intensive manufacturing group which was supposed to have more equal wages among male and female workers owing to higher skilled activities. Finally, they concluded that the wage inequality declined in the case of traditionally labour-intensive manufacturing group where female employment was the highest i.e. 38 percent among all manufacturing groups. Female wage as percentage of male wage in aggregate manufacturing was 37.8 percent, 44.4 percent and 48.1 percent respectively during 1993-94, 2004-05 and 2001-12.

Javeed, Shyam & Manuhaar, Anupam (2013), in the study on “Women and Wage Discrimination in India: A Critical Analysis, March 19-2013”, has brought to light the increasing gender wage gap between the regular and the casual workers in the organised manufacturing sector in India. Using Annual Survey of Industries (ASI) report for the year 2004-05, it was found that general participation of Indian women in the workforce stood at 36 percent, where gender wage gap for regular workers in organised sector was 57 percent and gender gap for casual workers in the organised sector in India was 37 percent. One of the main findings of their study is that though gender gap and wage discrimination is found across different sectors in the country, the
organised sector in India tends to have more disparity in comparison to the unorganised sector. Being illiterate and unskilled, women workers are not able to get highly paid jobs, and are confined to low paid jobs which have led to increase wage differentials between men and women workers within the organised manufacturing sector.

Khanna, Shantanu (2012) studied on the linkage between different wage level and gender wage gap in different sectors in India. By using the data of Employment and Unemployment survey of NSSO 66th round for the year 2009-10, it found higher gender gap in the organised manufacturing sector than in the unorganised sector in Indian economy. One of the major findings of the study is that high capital intensity which requires skill workers leads to wage differentials between male and female workers on the one hand and on the other hand lack of skills, training and technical knowledge, compel women workers to engage in low paid jobs in comparison to their male counterparts. Another major finding of the study is that higher gender wage gap occurred at the lower end of wage distribution within the organised manufacturing sector.

Behera, Minaketan (2016), in the study “Wage Inequality among Different Categories of Workers in Indian Labour Market: An Overview”, reveals that the Indian Labour Market is characterised by disappointing job growth, increase in formalisation and contractual works, poor quality of job as a result of which, disparities in wage structure and earnings of workers in the labour market are found. It is observed that wage gap continues to be positive where the average male worker’s wages are higher than a female worker’s in non-agricultural sectors including the manufacturing sector in India. Among the regular and salaried employee, a male worker earns 1.3 times of a female worker in urban area and 1.6 times in rural areas. Again, increasing wage
differentials are found between the male and the female workers, more in the organised sector than in the unorganised sector in Indian economy where it was observed that female wage rates were still only 60 percent of those for male workers within the organised sector in Indian economy. One of the major findings of the study is that wage differentials have been increasing due to increase in casual and informal as well as contractual workers in the organised manufacturing sector. It is also observed that the average earnings of male workers is Rs. 322 per day whereas the average earning of female workers is as low as Rs. 202 per day; thus it found 0.67 percent of wage differential ratio between female and male workers.

Narwade, Sunil & Jadhav, Kishore (2016), in their study “Trade Liberalisation and Wage Inequality in India: Implications of Emerging Trends in Organised Manufacturing”, examine the trends of real wage rates for skilled and unskilled workers employed in the export oriented organised manufacturing industries in India. The study focuses on the trends and patterns of real wages based on different types of employment within the organised manufacturing sector in India. The study has covered three areas of wage differentials between: i) Men and women workers, ii) Contractual and regular workers and iii) Skilled and Unskilled workers engaged in export oriented industries. The study has also highlighted the premises of Heckcher-Ohlin-Samuelson Model, trade induced technological change and neoclassical theory of labour market in relevance to the Indian manufacturing sector.

Taking unit level data of ASI 1998 at 3 digit level and covering the period from 1990-91 to 2011-12, the study found the declining real wage growth in export oriented and import competing units within the organised manufacturing sector in India during 1990-2000. One of the findings of the study was that the increase in wage differentials
in the post reform periods in India is occasioned by increasing disparity within male and females rather the disparity between them. It was also found that the industries where female participation is high, wage differential was also found to be high.

A study on the “Socio-economic Conditions of Women Workers in Matchbox Industry in Kerala and Tamil Nadu” (2014-15) done by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Labour Bureau, the Government of India, has revealed the persistence of the gender gaps in wage and earnings and in terms of workforce participation in matchbox industry. It was found that majority of women workers in match industry were manual workers and engaged in manual works like packaging, labelling, room cleaning, etc., and they were getting lower wages than their male counterparts engaged in non manual jobs like supervisor, manager, machine operators, and welfare officers. It also revealed that women workers were exploited so far as wages were concerned; the average daily wage of a female worker engaged in match industry was much lower than that of a male workers wage. The information on wages of male and female workers were collected by using unit level and worker-level questionnaire and it was estimated that the average daily wages of male workers in the occupation like supervisor was Rs. 190.3 whereas average daily female workers wages in the same occupation was Rs. 180.6. The average daily wage of male workers in the occupations such as watchmen, packaging, labelling and room cleaning were found to be Rs. 151.4, Rs.128.5, Rs.151.4 and Rs. 135.3 while the average daily female workers wages were found to be Rs. 148.5, Rs. 115.1, 115.5 and Rs.108.5 respectively. In this study Wage Differential Ratios (WDR) between male and female workers engaged as supervisors, watchmen, or in packaging, labelling and room cleaning were estimated. It was observed that wage differential was the highest (0.76) in occupations like labelling which indicated female
workers were getting only 76 percent of male workers’ wages in matchbox industry in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Sultania, Madhu (1994), in the study “Women Contract Labours: A Deprivation Syndrome”, reveals wage differentials and various aspects of women exploitation in construction and manufacturing industries in Jaipur city. It was observed that the majority of women workers engaged in construction and manufacturing industries in Jaipur city were contract workers and worked for 10 to 12 hours per day though the contract was for normal working hours i.e. 8 hours per day. Thus it violated the provisions of Contract Labour Act, 1970 where the normal working hour for contract labour is restricted to 8 hours per day. Again, it was found that women workers were deprived in terms of getting additional payment for additional working hours and discriminated in terms of getting wages in time where the mode of payment was not in favour of women workers. Women workers were engaged in lower category of jobs without social security and the benefits of welfare facilities relating to women as they were illiterate and unskilled. Besides, women workers were paid lower wages in comparison to their male counterparts where gender division of labour existed and it led to wage differentials between male and female workers.

Saha, Sudeshna (2014), in her study ‘Women Employment in Garment Factories: A case study conducted in selected factories of Peenya Industrial Area, Bangalore, reveals that the life of 5 lakh plus (half-million) factory workers in Bangalore is nothing but hellish existence. The garment factory which predominantly employs women is rampant with different forms of exploitation. Extreme work pressure, lack of secured job, absence of basic facilities, extended working hours without adequate over time allowance, denial of leave, bonus gratuity, PF (Provident Fund)
Fund, ESI (Employee State Insurance), all have added to miserable existence of these women factory workers in Bangalore city. Her study found that out of 80 women workers, 70 percent expressed earned a monthly income of Rs. 1500-2000/-only. 40 percent of the workers complained that in spite of their eligibility to get Gratuity for more than 5 years of service, the managers avoided paying the same and 20 percent of workers complained that bonus was hardly given. Every woman worker complained about lack of job security. Retrenchment rate, too, was reported to be very high.

Her study found that 80 percent of women workers were dissatisfied about the absence of crèche facilities. There were only 4 restrooms for 500 workers in the factory. Gender discriminations prevailed in factories. Men got high skilled training but women workers were restricted to basic training only. Moreover, the men did night shifts and got extra pay; women factory workers, however, could get no such opportunity.

Her study she also revealed that 80 percent of women workers were not happy with the work load, deadlines and work shifts. Women workers in Bangalore are not allotted night shifts, but working for 9 hours at a stretch in the day with only half an hour as lunch break was too hectic for them. Even if their work hours exceeded normal hours, no overtime was paid to them which violated the Indian Factory Act.

Sood, A., Nath, P. and Ghosh, S. (2014), in the study ‘Deregulating Capital, Regulating Labour:-The Dynamics in the Manufacturing Sector in India” pointed out that in the neo-liberal phase, ‘growth’ is the legitimizing principle used by the state to rationalize its actions, in comparison to ‘social welfare’ stance of earlier years. In their study they found that in the ‘protected organized manufacturing sector, workers particularly women, faced vulnerable situation with much lower levels of job security,
reduced coverage of social security, reduced wage shares in output and stagnant real wage growth while greater use of contract labour and ‘fixed-term’ workers made it more and more difficult for workers to unionize. This declining trade union participation even further weakens their bargaining power. They reflected the changing dynamics between labour, capital and the state and the manner in which they had played out in the labour market in recent years. They have pointed out increasing vulnerable conditions of women in the organised manufacturing sector in particular and women in labour market participation in general.

Sen, Ratna (2013), in her work on ‘Organizing the Unorganised Workers” finds that women workers face serious disadvantages compared to the men workers in Indian manufacturing sector in the country. On the one hand, economic liberalization aggravated this problem by creating far more jobs in the informal sector where social security is inadequate; on the other hand, workers who worked in the organised sector remained in low-paid jobs where the status of social security is low compared to men workers within the sector.

Gupta, Ruchika (2012), in her study on “A Comparative Study between Organised and Unorganised Manufacturing Sector in India” views that the share of women in the organised manufacturing sector in India has not increased as much as the share of employment of women in unorganised sector because of different forms of gender discrimination prevailing within the sector. In her study, she reveals how Indian Factory Act failed owing to lack of monitoring agency to look after the implementation part of these laws. In her study, she underlines the vulnerable working conditions of women workers engaged in Indian manufacturing sector.
Prasad, S. Sushama (1988), in her study on ‘Tribal Women Labourers: Aspects of Economic and Physical Exploitation’ in Ranchi district of Jharkhand reveals that the process of establishment of a large number of industries and factories has led to the displacement of a large number of tribal women from their land-based economy. It has opened new vistas of employment for tribal women in various types of occupation in the industries and factories. But this new wave of employment opportunities for tribal women has also paved the way for their economic and physical exploitations. The freedom enjoyed by the tribal women in their own social system has been taken for a license by the non-tribal labour agents, employers and other contractors.

The tribal women workers in the industries as well as factories in Ranchi district are not only subjected to work under adverse living conditions like denying them minimum wages, extracting work beyond normal working hours without extra payment etc., but also have to succumb to satisfy the carnal desires of their ruthless employers.

In her study she states that the tribal women workers in different factories are paid either on weekly or on daily basis but it is found that their employers often adopt corrupt practices in making payments to them. Those who are committed to weekly payments, often fail to stick to weekly payment system and try to make certain excuses for delay in payment. Such excuses are related to non payment of cheques by the banks concerned either on account of holidays or some defects in issuing the cheques etc. As 80 percent of the women workers are illiterate, they hardly understand such practices. But when such practices become frequent then the Rejas (tribal women workers) have to hatch conspiracy among them. Sometimes the factory owners dupe the workers at the time of payment by saying that while making some purchases of the raw-materials they have exhausted the money they had in hand and hence the delay in payments to them.
Illiteracy and ignorance among tribal women workers lead them to fall victims easily to such factory owners. In this way the tribal women workers not only fall victim to exploiters in terms of inadequate and irregular payment, but also they have to work beyond the standard and prescribed working hours by the Factory Act without extra payment.

Ganesamurthy V.S. (2008) in the work on ‘Women in the Indian Economy”, reveals that although various provisions regarding employment have been outlined in the Indian Factory Acts for the betterment and benefits of women it remains merely on paper. The findings of the studies on the socio-economic conditions of women workers in Mines and Plantations present a disturbing picture in this regard. In his study, he pointed out the provisions of a crèche of a prescribed standard for children under the age of 6 years are a statutory obligation in employing women workers irrespective of their number. Most of the mines were not adequately complying with the statutory provisions contained in the Mines Crèche Rules.

Mehta, Y. & Rajan, A. J. (2017), conducted the study on “Manufacturing Sectors in India: Outlook and Challenges”. They carried out the study on the current manufacturing strategies implemented by India including the National Manufacturing Policy(NMP, 2011) for manufacturing growth in the country. ‘Make in India Programme’, building a strong network of roads, rails and transport, programmes like ‘Advantage Assam’ to attract of FDI to foster the growth of the manufacturing sector. In their study, they found that although the government of India has been taking different steps for the growth of the Indian manufacturing sector, more inflexible labour regulations have witnessed slower growth in employment for both men and women which has led to gender gap in workforce participation in this sector.
Kapoor, R. (2017), in her working paper “Waiting for Jobs” in Indian manufacturing sector has also pointed out the feminisation of work in unorganised manufacturing and in formalisation in the organised manufacturing sector. In her work, it is found that the employment of male and female workers especially in the organised manufacturing sector has remained stagnant within 12 percent in the post liberalisation period. The new jobs created in the organised manufacturing sector are informal in nature. She has also pointed out the higher rate of gender segregation in various occupations within the sector where women are mostly concentrated in lower category of jobs within the sector.

2.4. Studies in Assam:

Majumdar, A. (2012), “Urban Informal Manufacturing Sector in Assam: An Analysis of Growth Dynamics, Productivity, Linkage and Social Security”, states that the contribution of the Indian manufacturing sector to the GDP of the country has been increasing since post reforms periods but at the same time, employment growth has not increased; it has rather remained almost stagnant especially in the case of the organised manufacturing sector compared to the unorganised manufacturing. The study reveals that the employment share of the urban informal manufacturing sector of the State of Assam has increased from 0.70 percent in 1994-95 to 0.74 percent in 2005-06. It is also found that male employment is much higher than female employment both at the state level in Assam and in all India national level. It is observed that the percentage share of female employment in the total employment in the Indian manufacturing sector increased but share of male employment decreased during 1994-05 to 2004-05. The study also reveals that female employment in the urban informal manufacturing sector in Assam is comparatively lower than all India level.
Akhtar, Nazneem (2013), the study on ‘Socio-economic and Structural Analysis of Cottage Industry Workers in Assam”, examines the working conditions of cottage industry workers of Suwalkuchi, the famous ‘silk town’ of Assam. The study shows that the wages that weavers get after tailoring hard for the whole day is very low. The weaving workforce in Sualkuchi is predominantly hired and it is migratory in nature. Women workers have to work for more than 9 hours i.e. from 8 AM to 10 PM where it violates the Factory act of India. Women workers have to work longer hours especially during the time of festivals like Bihu, without additional remuneration. Facilities like electricity, drinking water, and separate toilet for women weaver were found to be not adequate. Most of the weavers use kerosene oil for the purpose of lighting their houses. Again, there is no crèche facility in the industry.

Saha, Bishnu Prasad (2004), in his study on “Human Resource Development for Industrial Workers with special reference to Tea Factory Workers in Assam,” states that on an average, tea industry as an organised sector in Assam, engages 531 thousand workers everyday against 970 thousand workers all over India; women constitute the majority of them. The study reveals different aspects of socio-economic and physical exploitation of the tea-workers. It was observed that women as a group tend to be more vulnerable and they are exploited to a greater degree and paid less compared to men for similar kind of work. It has suggested that the Government, organisations and unions have to play greater role for the improvement of the socio economic conditions of women workers so that women engaged in the tea industry may have mandatory, decent and dignified work.

Chetia, Bhattacharjya & Gogoi (2011) in their study on “Labour Exploitation, Absenteeism and Industrial workers of Assam” throws light on the status of social
security and women exploitation in Namrup Thermal Power Station (NTPS) and Assam Petro Chemicals Limited (APC). In these factories, women workers have been exploited by not providing them with social security along with other facilities, incentives, welfare schemes, proper wages, legitimate working hours, etc. This has immense effect on the workers mindset and ultimately leads to increasing absenteeism in the two industries of Namrup viz, Namrup Thermal Power Station (NTPS) and Assam Petro Chemicals Limited (APC). They have also pointed out that women workers in these industries face more vulnerable working conditions especially in the case of getting adequate income security, employment security, and financial security, work security. Women workers engaged in stereotypical female dominated jobs are deprived of benefits of maternity leave and other welfare facilities in NTPS and APC.

2.5. Finding out Research Gap:

Although several studies have been conducted on the issues related to women in the Indian manufacturing sector, it has been noticed that the studies related to different issues and problems of women workers in the registered manufacturing sector are limited. The researcher has not come across any such study that has discussed in details gender issues especially Gender Pay Gap, Gender Segregation in Occupations, and Marginalisation of Women in terms of getting quality Employment, Wages, Social Security and the benefits of other Welfare Facilities within the registered manufacturing sector especially in Kamrup District of Assam.

The present study, therefore, is an attempt to fill up the research gap and focus on such emerging gender issues.
References:


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