CHAPTER -II

Review of Literature
A research is part of a collective venture of researchers in quest of truth. It can not be an isolated effort, as one research paves the way for another endeavour. It is very important if previous viewpoints and findings be taken into consideration so that the issues and problems related with the phenomenon could be clarified and highlighted. Therefore, literature search should reflect relevant information pertaining to the topic being studied. The information provided should put forward empirical evidences and theoretical formulations emerging thereof in such a way that rationale for conducting research work is clearly projected and argued.

Having given a detailed explanation about the theory and practice of divorce in the previous chapter, it is now indispensable to present a description of relevant survey of literature about our problem. Here it is worthwhile to point out that a large number of studies on the institution of divorce, its causes and likely consequences have been done by Sociologists’ point of view. The review of literature has impressed us with the fact that marital instability or phenomenon of divorce is to be judged in terms of psychological factors too. Therefore in the present work an attempt is made to identify psycho-social determinants of divorce and to analyze divorcees’ life-style and their perceived life-satisfaction from the psychological angle. A couple of significant studies in this regards are summarized in the following paragraphs:

To begin with, in an extensive study of happily married and divorced couples done by Lauer and Lauer (1985), it was revealed that couples are agreed with their spouses on aims, goals and even their sex life. They are
committed to the relationship and want it to succeed. They shared positive experiences with their spouses and were proud of his or her achievement. On the other hand Lavinger (1988) found that divorced couples reported basic disagreement about goals, life style, sex and many other matters.

Miller (1991) reported that people who were unhappy with their marriage often adopt a negative pattern of communication, direct criticism towards their spouses and blamed him or her for anything that goes wrong and rarely express positive feelings or approval.

In one study, Brabury & Fincham (1992) revealed that happily married couples direct a high level of positive communication to their spouses. They expressed affection, approval, appreciation and pleasure. On the other hand Cottrell, Eisenberg & Speicher (1992) found that divorced couples reported their spouses no longer fill their needs for affection, esteem and approval.

Kurdek (1993) highlighted that low income, brief courtship and unrealistic expectations are additional factors associated with divorce. Long and Edgar C.J. (1993) examined the relationship between three dimensions of perspective taking and a propensity to divorce. A marriage survey of 159 couples married on an average age of twenty three years was undertaken. Multiple regression analysis indicated that the general inability to understand the view of others was a positive indicator of thought about divorce.

In another study, Honeycutt and James, M. (1993) examined ego-centric and partner-centric attributions as a function of communication behavior. The analysis revealed effects for marital group and partner on the direction of
communication attributions. For example divorced individuals ascribed more responsibility for dominance to their partners than moderate and low quality couples. There were gender differences in which the husband made a partner-centric attribution in reporting that their views were more likely to express feelings, while the wives made an ego-centric attribution for their behavior.

Lawson, Erma & Thompson (1994), on the basis of review of literature, provided a general view of the causes of divorce among African Americans. The correlate of African American divorce includes socio-economic variables, substance abuse, incarceration, age at first marriage and religious affiliation. In one study the impact of wives employment and religion on attitude towards divorce were examined by Krishna and Vijaya in (1994). Result emphasized that the less educated and those who are employed and highly religious are more likely to agree that marriage is a permanent union that should only be broken for very serious reason.

Sayer et al. (2000) in an article reported that there is an initial positive association between a wife’s percentage contribution to family income and divorce, but the relation is reduced to non significance as soon as variables measuring gender ideology are introduced into the model. The analysis indicates that measures of marital commitment and satisfaction are better predictors of marital dissolution than the measures of economic independence.

Knoester, Chris, Booth and Alam (2000) explored the perceived importance of eight barriers to divorce, their correlation with objective circumstances and the effectiveness of both as predictor of subsequent divorce.
The findings indicate that married individuals perceive a variety of barriers to be very important in keeping one's marriage intact. However, perceived barriers do not correlate substantially with objective circumstances, nor are they very effective in deterring subsequent divorce especially after counting for respondents divorce proneness. Objective indicators have slightly stronger association with subsequent divorce, but do not weaken the conclusion that barriers are not very effective deterrents to divorce.

Charton, Laurence, Wanner and Phillippe (2001) conducted a study in Switzerland to identify the important factors associated with divorce. Result revealed that the absence of the practice of religion and a former divorce of parents seem to have a positive effect on the risk of divorce. Other factors include the age of the spouses and having premarital union. The presence of children in the union can also have an impact. Thunne, Frode, Rise and Jostein (2001) assessed whether psycho-social responses to marital disruption were best arranged along a single dimension ranging from maximum-positive to maximum-negative responses or whether positive and negative responses constituted two separate and distinct dimensions. Their findings support the notion that psycho-social responses after marital disruption comprise a bidimensional rather than a unidimensional pattern. Dickmann et al. (2001) investigated the effect of socio-demographic characteristics on the divorce rate by using data from the Swiss Environmental Survey 1994. Statistical analysis shows that level of education as well as educational homogamy have an impact on marriage stability of the spouses. Moreover the effect of cohort, age at marriage, education of parents,
religious beliefs, area of residence were also demonstrated. Takyi and Baffour K. (2001) explored the factors influencing stability of marriage causing divorce in Ghana. The findings provided some empirical support for a structural determinist interpretation of divorce in Ghana. For instance, the incidence of divorce was among women from matrilineal (Akan) society and also among women who were urban residents. The duration of marriage, religion and parity (children ever born) previous marital history were strong predictor of divorce in Ghana.

Amato, Paul, R. (2003) attempted to identify the reasons for divorce. They reported that infidelity was the most common cause of divorce which was followed by incompatibility, drinking or drug use and growing apart. Peoples’ specific reasons for divorcing varied with gender, social class and life course variables. It was also found that people who attribute the cause of the divorce to the relationship itself rather than to internal (self) or external factors, tended to have the best divorce adjustment. Ahmad Imtiaz (2003) on the basis of extensive review of literature mentioned in one of his research paper entitled: ‘Theology, Law and Sociology of Muslim Divorce practices in India’ emphasized that barrenness, incurable illness, dowry demand, bad look and differences in the cultural background are some important reasons of divorce. He further pointed out that these reasons are not specific to Muslim communities but are factors leading to divorce or separation in all social communities in India.

Zakiya (2003) conducted an empirical study on Muslim women’s divorce and remarriage. She found that family quarrel, infertility and economic reasons such as dowry, inability to maintain his wife and indebtedness are the most
prominent reasons for divorce, which are followed by sterility, ugliness of wife, impotency and alcoholism. She further pointed out that adjustment with sister-in-law, economic hardship and children’s marriage were some of the important post-divorce problems faced by majority of women.

In one study Anindita Das Gupta (2003) noticed that bigamy or extra marital love affairs and mental incapability were the primary causes of divorce in Assam. These were closely followed by barrenness, health problems, maladjustment with the husband’s family and significantly demand for dowry. She emphasized that neither the condition of divorced Muslim women nor the causes for divorce were different from those of Hindu women of the city. Abdul Azeez (2003) in a study of divorce, noted that wife’s guilty of adultery, quarrelsome nature, barrenness and lastly disobedience were the causes of divorce given by husband. On the other hand bigamy, adultery, illness and poor economy were the reasons of divorce given by wives. Principal ground for divorce suggested by the analysis were the barrenness of the wife, incurable disease of the spouse, socio-cultural differences between spouses, failure to abide by the wishes of husband and in-laws and bigamy. In another study, Nisar Ahmad Gaur (2003) observed that physical ill-treatment by in-laws and husband, bigamy, wife’s disobedient, negligent, doubtful character and quarrelsome nature were the major causes of divorce among Muslims of Jammu & Kashmir.
Life-Style Related Studies

The phenomenon of life-style has a strong notion of coping style and strategies, which a person in general and divorcees in particular adopt in living a healthy life with utmost adjustment. Hence both life-style and coping strategies are being viewed as synonyms to each other so far as their meaning in the present context is concerned. The literature on the subject is very scarce and some of the relevant studies are being mentioned in the following paragraphs:

Garvin and Vick (1993) examined individual differences in stress and coping for a sample of fifty six divorced white women aged 29 to 46 years. Findings show that high level of stress and dispositional and social support resources were strongly associated with good adjustment outcome.

In one study, Birnbaum et al.(1997) analyzed the association between adult attachment style and the way people react to the crisis of divorce. The participants were classified according to their attachment style (secure, avoidant, anxious and ambivalent) and completed Mental Health Inventory. Result shows that divorced participants reported more distress than married ones. This effect was found among avoidant and anxious-ambivalent participants but not among secure participants. Significant differences were also found among attachment groups in appraisal and coping variables. Structural analysis supported the hypothesis that appraisal and coping mediate the associate between attachment style and mental health during the crisis of divorce.

Cohen, Orna and Dekel, Rachel, Savaya and others (2000) studied sense of coherence, ways of coping and well-being of married and divorced mothers as
personality resources capable of helping divorced mothers dealing with the divorce crisis. Forty seven mothers (mean age 35 years) with custody of one or more children up to six years old were subjects, with twenty seven control mothers who remained married. The findings show that although mothers from two parent families enjoy a higher sense of well-being than divorced mothers. The well-being of both groups was predicted by sense of coherence. They also show that mothers with higher sense of coherence used more effective coping strategies and derived more benefit from the strategies they used. The married and divorced mothers have a similar sense of coherence level.

**Life-Satisfaction Related Studies**

Having described the relevant literature related to psycho-social determinants of divorce and life-style, there is one more variable yet to be taken into consideration, i.e. life-satisfaction. It refers to the degree to which people are happy with their current life situations and have positive well-being. Studies show that life-satisfaction is related to neurotism and extraversion as well as host of other variables such as health, social classes, gender and immediate life situation. Relevant studies available about divorcees’ life-satisfaction are described below:

Lynch (1977) reported that widowed, divorced or single individuals have higher mortality rates from heart disease than married couples and suggested that heart diseases and mortality are related to lower level of social support.
Waggener, Natalie M. & Galassi, John (1993) investigated the relation of social support to adjustment in marital separation. Results show that social support satisfaction and frequency significantly accounted for variance in total symptoms, self-esteem and attachment above and beyond the demographic variables, and dissatisfaction with social support was positively correlated with total symptoms and negatively correlated with self-esteem. In most cases social support satisfaction was a better predictor of self-esteem.

Dixon et al. (1994) examined factors that predicted income adequacy and adaptation to economic stress among 209 single women two years after divorce. Results of multiple regression analysis indicated that income adequacy for subjects after divorce was positively associated with total number of weekly work hours, personal resources of age, education and perception of financial solvency. A survey analysis of women's long term divorce adjustment was done by Thabes & Virginia (1994). Adjustment was measured by standardized scales assessing depression, self-esteem and sustained impact of trauma. Analysis revealed that 26% of the women had a clinically significant problem with depression. Factors contributing to this depression were the abuse (physical, verbal, emotional, infidelity) during the marriage, poor legal representation at divorce, persistent strong negative feelings about the former spouse, lack of friend and family support at time of divorce, low level of social activity and lower income. The majority of those women who had psychotherapy at the time of or following divorce felt it was helpful. Bharat (1994) found divorced women to be emotionally disturbed after the break-up, but divorce may bring relief too.
Holman (1997) studied that women usually experience anger, rejection and anxiety about their future lives and often depression during separation and divorce. Dreman, Spielburger and Darzi (1997) reported the similar conclusions. They found high level of anger amongst divorced women even several years after divorce.

Aghajanian and Moghadas (1998) reported that divorced women experienced more psychological problems when compared to married women and scored higher on measures of dissatisfaction, irritability, insecurity and general maladjustment.

Smorglia et al. (1999) studied the impact of social support on women's adjustment to divorce. Perceived (available) and received (enacted) social support and adjustment measures are quantified by them. Cross tabulation and chi-square are used to analyse social support measures and related outcome measures of adjustment among divorced women. Findings reveal that most social measures of support (upto 76 %) were ineffective in facilitating adjustment. Results show no difference in impact on adjustment if social support is perceived verses received, if the study is cross sectional or longitudinal. However, socio-emotional support is significantly more likely to have a positive impact on adjustment than instrumental support. Stockholm et al. (1999) surveyed Swedish level of living to assess the impact of divorce on the psychological well-being of men and women comparing intact, remarried and divorced couples. Analysis indicates that divorced respondents of both sexes report lower psychological well-being than do their coupled counterparts. Pre-existing psychological and socio-economic factors
fail to account for this discrepancy. Sastry and Jaya (1999) compared the effect of household composition on psychological distress and satisfaction in the USA and India. Results indicate that marriage is not the strongest predictor of household satisfaction for Indian women and men. However, marriage is significant for both sexes in India. On the other hand for US men and women, marriage demonstrates strongest association with distress compared to all the other variables. Also sociodemographic variables demonstrated a stronger effect on marriage in India than in US.

Amato, Paul (2000) examined the consequences of divorce for adults and children. The research suggests that marital dissolution has the potential to create considerable turmoil in peoples’ lives. People vary greatly in their reactions. Divorce benefits some individuals, leads others to experience temporary decrement in well-being and forces others downward trajectory from which they might never recover fully.

A study conducted by Ash et al. (2001) explored demographic, environmental and personality correlates of adolescents’ positive life-satisfaction. First, demographic variables did not relate to life-satisfaction except socio-economic status. Second, the findings indicated that acute events and chronic life experiences both positive and negative were related significantly to life-satisfaction. The findings demonstrated the importance of integrative models of adolescents’ life-satisfaction that reflects the interplay of both interpersonal and environmental variables.
Baum & Nehami (2003), in their paper, explored the ways in which men mourn the losses inherent in the break-up of a marriage. It says that men’s way of mourning divorce differs from that of women. They start the mourning process later than women, mourn the loss of their home and children more than the loss of their wives and tend to express their mourning through actions rather than in words or emotional manifestation of grief. In one study, Kang et al. (2003) mentioned the culture specific roles of emotions, relationship quality and self esteem in determining life-satisfaction. Results indicate that emotion differentiation contributes to maintaining good interpersonal relationships in collectivistic cultures, which contribute to self-esteem and satisfaction with life. Patric et al. (2003) investigated the psycho-social well-being of Black and White mothers following marital dissolution. Results indicated that White mothers differed from Black mothers in terms of higher levels of mastery, in formal support and economic well-being. Also White mothers evidenced significant improvement in five of the six psycho-social domain; informal support, self-esteem, happiness, economic well-being and depression, whereas Black mothers indicated improvement in formal support and happiness evidenced a marginal decline in personal mastery.

The study done by Jokisaari and Markku (2003) shows that those who appraise their regret related goals or events as having impact on their present lives, reported a lower level of life-satisfaction and more physical symptoms than those who appraise their regret as having less consequences.
Oygard and Lisbet (2004) examined the role of the participants’ personal capital regarding adjustment to divorce. Findings revealed that subjects who were highly educated and least attached to network groups, benefited more from participation than those who were lower educated and less attached. Females who had income and those counseled with social network groups to a high extent, benefited more than their counterparts. Males who had new partner, were better group participation than single ones.

**Hypothesis**

Hypothesis refers to the tentative solution of the problem which is generally framed when experimental or correlation type of studies are planned to be carried out. Since the present endeavour has been designed as exploratory or survey type of research, there was no need to formulate hypothesis in this regard.