CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

The studies on women particularly in India have gone up with the declaration of international women's year 1975. This declaration has given an inspiration to governments, academic bodies and individual researchers to take up research work on the issues pertaining to women and their problems. As a result several scholars have undertaken studies with regard to the status of women in the family as well as in the society, level of education, health, employment, political participation, socio-economic conditions and other aspects of women's life with an aim to understand the position and place of women in society. In this section, these studies are revived thematically starting with the studies related to status of women, education and women, occupation, employment and Women, Empowerment of Women and the Political life of Women, etc.

Studies related to Status of Women

Sinha (1988) pointed out that the efforts of development programmes undertaken so far in Bihar have very little impact on rural women and the women are far away from mainstream of development process. As a matter of fact, most of the rural women remain as domestic creatures and stand uneducated, unskilled and neglected.
Gupta (1982) identifies the family structure as the cause for the inferior position of women and which restricts the freedom of women. According to him the younger women are affected by the system of joint family. However his study brought out the difference between urban and rural areas where the rural women are restricted in several spheres as compared to their urban counterparts.

Singh and Gupta (1978) also identified the male dominant family structure as the root cause for the inferior position of women and which restricts the freedom of women, especially younger women of the joint family.

Mehartaj (2000) analysed the role of women in the changing society. In the contemporary modern world women have a space of her own in the spheres of social, economic, political, linguistic background, etc. Further, the study demands an equal participation by women in the nation building process and other activities as only few educated rural women utilized all the available opportunities for development, neglecting a large majority of rural women.

Agarwal’s (1976) study reveals that the prevailing social values are not favourable for a female child and she is looked upon as a transitory member of the family. The condition of rural women is so deplorable where she has to work for longer hours in the household doing all sorts of work like fetching (carrying) water for domestic consumption from long distance, cooking food for the family, collecting fuel, etc, apart from various kinds of farm work.

Agarwal’s (1973) study highlighted the continued significance of land as the most important form of property in rural South Asia which is a crucial indicator of economic
well being, social status and political power. However the study pointed out that there is substantial evidence that economic resources are in the hands of male household members which often do not benefit female members in an equal degree. Further the study emphasizes independent ownership of such resources particularly land which can be of crucial importance to women for their empowerment.

Borah and Goswami (1987) have analysed the national programme of improved chulha which was introduced by the Government of India in the North-eastern States of India in 1984. The study pointed out that, in spite of the fact that the new cooking chulha is considered to be the best alternative approach as it not only saves the cooking time of women but also promotes women’s health, it was not accepted by women. Main factor responsible for the failure of the programme was that there was not much awareness created among women about the utility of the improved chulha. Further the study found out that the programme was not a success because of the strong belief that the old chulhas are culturally and are acceptable to them as against the new chulhas which had not been manufactured to suit their culture. The study emphasised upon a proper medium to disseminate information on new technology so as to understand its significance prior to its introduction so as to assimilate the technology into indigenous culture.

Chaudhari (1994) in his study brought out the variations in status between the women backward caste and forward caste landlord households and noted differences in their problems. Majority of the backward caste women work as wage labourers and domestic servants in their own houses or on others’ farms. Due to their poverty, the backward caste persons especially women suffer from malnutrition and related problems.
Dandekar (1980) states that low rate of women’s participation in economic activity is due to the responsibility of women to shoulder household duties including child care, while less than one per cent men share this burden.

D’ Souza (1986) pointed out in his study that the women in the world, in both the industrially advanced and less developed countries are burdened with cumulative inequalities.

Agarwal (2001) has stated that the development of women in India has been the centre stage of its development planning, since independence, although the concept has been evolving from plan to plan in most South Asian countries. The status of women is low and their socio-economic conditions are much more depressed than those of men in India in spite of the fact that the constitutional and legal status of women is equal to that of men in all aspects. The author described the causes for their deprived conditions which include low earning, lower wages, low level skills, limited access to the factors of production, low literacy, malnutrition, poor standard of health, greater exposure to domestic violence etc.

Establishing the relationship between religion and status of women D’ Souza (1980) states that Buddhism, Sikhism and Jainism support greater freedom of women than Hinduism. Of course the Bhakthi movement in Hinduism also offered women a large role in Hindu worship and greater freedom and equality.

Gayathri Devi (1994) pointed out that the role of women is commonly recognised as an important and substantial activity in all traditional Sericultural villages. Their contribution is vital to the sectors of silkworm rearing, reeling of cocoons and even in
twisting, weaving, printing and other activities. In addition their involvement in domestic work and child care, for which they alone are responsible, their participation and contribution is neither adequately recognised nor rewarded. The limitations placed by the norms of the society on women gaining access to resources like credit, technology, income decision making in expenditure etc., have further lowered their status.

Raghuvanshi (1982) reveals that education and training of a woman in a household have been correctly accepted as the training of a family and not of an individual.

Manekar (1975) finds that the sex discrimination in wages is in prevalence in states like Mysore, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh.

Benett (1992) expressed the opinion that women are central to the success of poverty alleviation efforts in short and long run, and that market forces have great potential to influence gender ideology and increase the perceived value of women. Further she said that women are more vulnerable than men. Women should be treated as economic agents and hence more and more women specific beneficiary oriented programmes should be thought of, as nearly 30 to 40 per cent of the rural families are headed by women.

Meenakshi, Singh Punta, Kaur and Tuteja (2000) argue that in the case of female workers in agriculture their participation in decision making is fairly good indicator of their status. They pointed out that ownership of land, freedom to spend their earnings, maintaining a post office or bank account, women's participation in political activities,
employment in white collar jobs, etc are other good indicators of women's improved status which these women lack.

Pais (1980) observes that the traditional family structure and social outlook in India has kept women away from obtaining good education. As a result, women have been kept out of employment and have been unable to earn an independent income and hence their status remained low.

Gayathri Devi (1994) explains the main reason for low status of women in India is due to lack of rural women's participation in cottage and rural industries. Reasons for low participation are low literacy, inadequate training, lack of infrastructure in the rural areas and age old social and cultural limitations. Ramachandra and Basu (1980) also expressed that the above inequalities are more serious in third world countries. This indicates that the women in the third world countries are heavily burdened. This view has substantiated by Verma and Saroj Gulati (1985) who emphasised in their study which was taken up in Haryana that the rural women possess a subordinate position.

Gupta (1987) in her study on rural development programme pointed out the fallacies in the implementation of the programme. She says that the Government has implemented many rural development programmes but less attention has been given to welfare oriented programmes for female or to solve the problems of female workers. But she did not try to find out the reasons for such fallacies either in the evolution of the programme or in its implementation.

Sarkar's (1999) study suggested for an integration of all services and training for women in rural areas which are offered by the government as well as the NGOs. For
improving the status of women the focus of all services should aim at improving
nutrition, family planning, vocational training, etc. Further, all the programmes must be
directed towards improving women’s earning capacity, increasing their productivity,
reducing their burden of work at home and outside.

Sherwani (1984) observes that most of the working women have to surrender
their pay packets to their parents or to their husbands. This is an indication that women
live more or less as slaves to men.

The position of women, however, varies from religion to religion and from caste
to caste. In this regard Agarwal (1976) observe that the inequalities inherit in our
traditional social structure based on caste, community and class have a significant
influence on the status of women.

According to Mazumdar and Kumud Sharma, (1979) states that oppression of
women was perceived as a traditional instrument of maintaining social inequality by the
high castes in India.

Srinivas (1978) observes that among the poor and low caste, the relationship
between men and women is more egalitarian than among the higher castes.

Desai (1986) says that the low status of women is the result of the low levels of
education and employment.

Moitra (2001) states the major obstacles to women’s full participation in politics
because of a universal social attitude that has valued women principally as mothers and
wives. The basic problems among women are illiteracy and ignorance about their rights and duties.

Studies related to Education

Agarwal (1973) states that education is not a sufficient condition for raising the status of women. It may help to improve their position in society but it cannot guarantee equality with the male within the home. Similarly, D’ Souza (1989) feels that though the education increased the role of women in decision-making has not been increased.

Mandelbum (1974) finds that in Indian cities excluding the urban slums that the high school education for girls is significantly associated with smaller family size.

Govindappa (1999) says women’s domain prior to independence was restricted to the four walls of her home. But such a situation has changed after Independence where education reaches rural areas and urban areas equally. So, education is largely responsible for the change among women’s status in recent years. The author feels that in spite of several programmes were initiated to promote women development, majority of women folk did not participate or utilise the benefits mainly because of their illiteracy and not having proper awareness among rural women as compared to urban women.

Trivedi (1977) finds that literacy among Scheduled Caste women is lower than that of others in rural areas. There has been a close relationship between women’s status, education and work participation. The work participation and self earnings improve the self-confidence in life styles of women.
Nath and Andrea Menefee Singh (1970) states that women's participation in the labour force tends to decline with increase in literacy. S. Douza (1980) observes that there is a curvilinear relationship between female work participation and the education of women. Gandhi (1980) states that education being an important factor for acquiring any kind of job, the economic development of a country demands the women have to be educated so that they can actively participate in the labour force.

Verma (1978) observes few obstacles of social upliftment of women in rural economy are education, social evils and the discrimination against females since their childhood. The author identified the factors such as level of self esteem, education, employment, technological change and participation of women in it will uplift the status of women in the society.

Mchna (1979) emphasised the importance of education to women as against men for it will enable the women to transform the household. Further, the author stressed for a special type of education to women for her upliftment as well as for the development of the whole community. The author concluded that the majority of the respondents still feel that education is most important for boys than girls.

Studies Related to Occupation and Employment

Regarding the working women, Saikia (1984) observes that the agricultural labour households were economically depressed at the present level of income in Assam. The prospects of employment and income were too limited in case of female agricultural labour. Thus, the main factor that is responsible for the low status of women especially of rural women who belong to poor family is low income. The author further states that
the income has been identified as a significant factor in improving the linking status of any person, women have been given priority in the implementation of income generating programmes. Among these programmes integrated rural development programme (IRDP) is a larger and important programme, which give special emphasis on rural women in poorer sections of the society. Therefore, an overview of studies on IRDP programmes and identification of factors of success or failure of the programme is required.

Gosh and Mukhopadyay (1984) states that the low level work participation of female may be explained mainly in terms of the dominant position of the male in the work force. Low level of overall employment and the adverse sex ratio of females are responsible for their low status in the society.

Bhanshyambioza (1975) states that lack of technical knowledge and skill would limit women’s participation in tertiary sector. Further, the rural industries have the potential to absorb more and more women in their various processes. Therefore, it will be possible for these industries to provide better jobs and better wages leading to upward mobility of women.

Gupta (1977) observes that female work participation is inversely related to the farm size. Hence, female may be forced to work outside the family farm in cases where the family owns little or no land in order to supplement the meagre income of the adult male member.

Gupta, Ghodake, Ryan and Singh (1977) states that the female participation is greater in irrigated areas than dry areas because of intensity of cropping and land use
practices with the possibility of double and multiple cropping which can increase the demand for female labour.

Britabradzaeg and Vandhini (1979) opined that during the modernization and technological changes, particularly in agricultural sector, women suffer a loss of economic authority, because the new technologies are developed and managed by men and also the training and new jobs are also reserved for the male workers.

Chakrapani and Vijayakumar (1994) explain social change gradually makes the women to realize their status and role in all spheres of social activities. The Industrialisation has brought about a new phenomenon and except the difference in biological roles equality of sexes has been established by entering into economic force. Working women now can have better medical care and the possibility of extending the children's education. They increase not only the family's welfare but can also attain their personal status.

Chaudhari (1994) says that any strategy aimed at rural development would be incomplete without involving the women folk. The programmes for women must aimed at raising their socio economic status, upgrading skills particularly towards mitigating the drudgery, accessibility to new and improved techniques. All these technologies should facilitate to increase the income and employment for women in the rural areas.

Joan (1980) studied the work participation rate of women in agriculture. In her study she concluded that work participation rate is continuously increasing in Indian agriculture. The housewives of the landlords or female agriculture labourers are actively
participate in farm works and contribute much to the development process in agriculture without a corresponding improvement in their status.

Boserup (1970) opined that a vicious circle is developed in India where the ordinary girls need no special training to take up jobs meant for women. In many cases, young women attempt to escape from this vicious circle by keeping away from the labour market and doing only domestic work in their own homes.

Erappa (1996) survey found that dairy schemes are more popular with women beneficiaries in IRDP followed by trading activities. Major proportion of the schemes sanctioned for women beneficiaries, concentrated in developed blocks and neglecting the backward blocks. Further he pointed out that men and women play equal roles in all agricultural activities but women are generally restricted to domestic work while men perform productive work. However, women from lower socio-economic categories have a major share in the household work as well as work in farm fields.

Gayathri Devi (1994) study show that sericulture is suitable for participation of women because of routine and risk free nature. It has in fact facilitated greater and independent involvement of women in rearing activity. It is women who carry almost all activities in rearing brushing to harvesting of cocoons. Women from nuclear, small and marginal farmer households contribute most of their total time required for rearing a batch of silk worms. She highlighted the important role played by women in development process.
Ghodake and Ryan (1981) express that the women from large farm household have lot of work at home in annual food processing, grain drying and supervision of additional labourers employed on the farm.

Kelkar (1985) observes that in India generally women are paid less and give more labour intensive tasks. Similar observation has also been found in a study which states that the female labour contribution in terms of money rates are lower than men. This low level of contribution of women can be, explained by the difference in wage rates.

Goyal (1999) surveyed rural women in apiculture, a cottage industry and found that there is a wide gap between India’s actual production of honey and the potential available. As per the estimate of the National Commission on Agriculture, the existing 150 million bee colonies with a prospective production of honey to the tune of 5 lakh tonnes per annum. The major contribution for production and processing honey comes from the self-employed rural women.

In rural areas, majority of women workers depend upon agriculture. Reddy (1975) expresses that in the areas where dry crops are grown, low irrigated, lower rainfall and lower agricultural labour productivity incomes are likely to be lower. The women find it difficult to earn supporting income to the family in spite of their higher participation in agricultural activities.

Lalitha and Seethalakshmi (2001) in their study reveal that the women dairy farmers participate in almost all activities related to dairying, farming, such as chaffing of fodder, washing of cattle, protecting against external parasites, taking the animal for insemination for veterinary hospital are shared with the men. But the contribution of
women in dairy activities decreases with increasing land holdings in respect of the decision-making and their personal involvement. Women’s participation in decision-making process is very low because of higher percentage of illiteracy among women and low knowledge and skill in dairy sector. The authors suggested that the officials of the Department of Animal Husbandry and Krishivigyan Kendras must provide effective training to farm women to play an active role in several of decision making process.

Gandhi (1980) observes that due to the rigid social customs prevalent even today women are generally engaged in ‘women’s’ occupations and perhaps do not allow most of the women to hold a job in government or private sector prior to their marriage.

Mala (1989) reported that nearly 79 per cent of the total employment generated in sericulture is shared by women and the employment potential is higher in silkworm rearing activities than that of mulberry cultivation. The employment potential for women has increased during 1980-84 in all the sectors of sericulture.

Reddy (1987) says in essence men and women are actors in a complex rural society which functions more or less smoothly and benefits both sexes. Both men and women perform complementary and more often multiple roles to improve the welfare of their families. He further says that although men and women play equal roles in an agricultural society, women are generally restricted to domestic work while men perform directly productive work such as agricultural labour intensive activities and other skilled jobs. However women from lower socio economic categories have a major share in the household income. They are doubly burdened with household work as well as in farm
fieldwork. Women of higher socio economic strata were however found to be less contributive to directly productive tasks.

Neelam Kunwar Sadhana and Vanish Alok (1999) pointed out that women are major actors in forestry sector has been widely recognised. Women are the primary collectors of fuel and fodder for domestic consumption and for sale in urban markets which is a major source of income for the rural poor women simply because they have no other options for employment.

Bardhan (1984) explains that in rural West Bengal average earnings of female agricultural labourers is lower than that of male. But the difference has been narrowed down in districts which are relatively better developed.

Sundar (1981) opined that the factors influencing the female work participation rates are structural changes, cultural biases, income of the family and her husband and other economic considerations. Further, he reveals that changes in agricultural sector due to irrigation, cropping pattern, introduction of new technology or the opening up of the alternative labour market as well as landlessness affects more in the utilisation of female labour rather than male labour.

Ramanjanyalu (1999) stated that the female work participation rates of main and marginal workers together constitutes 29.4 per cent in primary sector, 14.8 per cent in secondary and 10.4 per cent in tertiary sector. Female labour participation in Karnataka is over and above the national level. Employment of women has been increasing significantly in central and state government, quasi government and local bodies. Private employment with improved wages and working conditions has enhanced their skills.
Opening of better employment opportunities for women enable them to participate in growth and share its benefits principally through remunerative employment.

Rao and Reddy (1987) observed that even if women workers in agricultural sector possessed more skills and were competent as the male workers they received lower wages than those of male workers. Women agricultural labourers apart from their household duties contributed significantly to the income of their families which normally goes without due recognition. Among many families it would have impossible for the families to survive without women's earnings. Jhabwala (1984) also finds that in low income groups, where both husband and wife are workers, their relationship is like the master worker and his assistant. Thus, even the women who belong to lower class are also subjected to the values of patriarchal system.

Saikia (1984) in the study in Subsagar and Jorhat districts in Assam found that work participation rate depends upon cropping pattern, crop intensity and the female economic compulsions. The female work participation rate and volume of employment were higher in the paddy dominant villages than in those villages where growing wheat and sugarcane as transplanting and harvesting of paddy were totally done by women.

Shoba's (2001) study in Andhra Pradesh found low literacy among women, and women workers are largely concentrate in the organised agricultural operations. This study confirms the major participants in agricultural activity belonging to SC, ST and BC categories. Basically backward caste women were poor and more illiterate as compared to forward caste women. Labour intensive activities such as sowing, transplanting, weeding were performed by the lower castes of women. Singh (1980) observes that the
higher the rate of economic development of a state, the lower the percentage of women in the labour force.

Srinivas (1978) has classified the women into four classes namely (1) women belonging to landowners families who engage to cultivate their lands and assume supervisory jobs, (2) Women belonging to small land holdings, who personally cultivate their land with or without the services of labourers, (3) Women belonging to tenant sharecropper artisan households and (4) Agricultural labourers who subsist entirely on hiring themselves of labour work. The first category women are not engage themselves in labour work outside their own house, while second and third categories are generally confined to domestic work, but last category people are always in labour work in addition to the burden of domestic work.

Verma (1978) stated that employment avenues to poor rural women becomes extremely limited due to lack of literacy, inadequate scope for gaining skills, restricted mobility and lack of individual status. Women are participating more in the unorganised sector than the organised sector.

Studies Related to Empowerment

Dhillon and Hansara (1991) studied the working of the DWCRA scheme. The income generating activities undertaken under this scheme are less remunerative which include tailoring, embroidery, readymade garments, pickle making, papad making, matchbox making, knitting, weaving, basket making, agarbathi making, poultry, dairy, piggery, goat rearing, bee keeping, mushroom growing, fruit and vegetable processing. They questioned that how women could be empowered with such programmes?
Chakrapani and Vijaya Kumar (1994) says that the while the government bodies (central and state) and local voluntary organisations at the grassroot level and media educational institutions should address the problems of women and geared up to raise their status in India.

Similarly, Gautam and Singh (1990) reported the impact of DWCRA in 4 districts of Himachal Pradesh. A total of 23 types of different economic activities were being pursued under this scheme with maximum number of groups (126) taken up milk production activity. In spite of 91 per cent achievement of the target in organising units or group under DWCRA, only 67.17 units were functioning. The reasons for dismayed picture were improper selection of group activities, lack of cooperation among group members, non-availability and high cost of raw materials and lack of local demand and marketing facilities for the finished product. Thus the programme has not facilitated to empower women as conceived by the planners.

Narasimhan (1999) in his study on the evaluation of DWCRA programme for women empowerment which was introduced in the second half of the sixth plan, targeting rural women. In the beginning, the programme was implemented in 50 districts and later they were extended to 291 districts by the end of eighth plan. She pointed out that the lacuna in implementation of the programme by the government or non-government organisations which are responsible for the formation of groups, they work honestly and without corruption. Only these organisations or its functionaries made money for their development and thus the programme was failed.
Kumar and Mehta (1992) in their research found the reasons for the success or failure of development projects and also how the families are benefited by the DWCRA programme. They found that all the beneficiaries had crossed the poverty line with an additional income ranging from Rs. 280 to 395. Further, they say that all the respondents were satisfied with the working of the scheme however, there were few problems faced by the beneficiaries like marketing readymade garments, scarcity of raw materials, and lack of remunerative price for dairy products. Thangamuthu and Masnimekali (1992) also found in their survey on generation of employment for women through DWCRA. The beneficiaries had crossed the poverty line with additional income of Rs. 285 to 460. The problems faced by beneficiaries in their business were scarcity of raw material and difficulty in marketing. They suggest for suitable encouragement by the Government for good marketing facility, so, that the poor could improve their position in the society.

According to Savithri and Sujathamma (2001), sericulture offers a wide scope for economic empowerment of women especially in the rural sector. This industry offers employment to women in almost every component starting from mulberry cultivation to the making of fabric through which women can attain sound economic status which empowers them to a respectable niche in the society.

Studies Related to Political Field

According to Mahipal (1999) the 73rd constitutional amendment Act 1992 has provided one-third reservation of women including those belonging to SC/ST. Women have become members and chairpersons of panchayats. But most of these women are not
aware of the basic concept of decentralized governance, planning and development, awareness and psychological empowerment for building confidence among them. Government has to give more importance to female education and training such that the women can become good administrators.

Singh (2001) in a study conducted in Haryana has pointed out that a large majority of women surpanches confess that they do not go to police stations even if required. They generally do not attend Panchayat meetings, instead the male members of their families authorized such responsibilities. Similarly, the women representatives do not attend public meetings and hardly contact higher authorities to take up problems related to villagers. Many a times, husbands of women surpanches introduce themselves as surpanches while dealing with government officials. Despite dynamic constitutional and legal provisions and various other measures adopted by the government to transform Indian society and to empower women, the facts and figures however present an altogether different scenario.

In another study Singh (2001) has clearly highlighted that the women members of Gram Panchayats of Mysore taluk are yet to be politically empowered. They have to be prepared to work with the help of men as these women are poor. However, they are conscious of their duties as representatives of women folk. In order to prove that the women representatives to be capable they need time, resources, support, training and freedom from men. If all these are provided they will definitely make the 73 & 74 Amendment our Constitution a meaningful one.
Punihavathy Pandian and Eswaran (2002) studied the micro credit which has enabled access to finance to the rural poor women through self help groups without the burden of providing collateral security. Though the credit provided is micro in nature it has produced macro changes in the lives of the women who resaved it and these women improved both economically and socially.

Siva (2002) analysed the implications of improvements in the literacy among women and weaker section which hold the key to their effective participation in decision making process and involvement in developmental activities. In rural areas political empowerment would be meaningful only if it is preceded or accompanied by capacity building among the women and the weaker sections. Therefore, special attention for the improvement of literacy among the dis advantaged sections and for the women has to be undertaken without further delay.

Mehartaj (2000) says several efforts have been made to improve the economic status of the rural women by providing them employment opportunities. But all such efforts have not reaped the desired results. The reason is better employment opportunities for women depend on the effective planning and policies of the government. The government has to empower women by encouraging their participation in rural development activities through the vigilant administrative machinery.

Tarujyoti (1988) observed that the major gain in the tertiary sector is in terms of output but not employment for women in India. The primary sector in general and agriculture in particular has the largest proportion of women work force. Landlessness, large number of disadvantage groups in rural areas and high illiteracy rates among
women have direct impact on women’s work participation rate. It also implies that inadequate household income and lack of opportunities for women in non-farm activities in rural area are major reasons for poverty.

Giri (1998) states that throughout the world women are strongly aim at gender equality through women’s empowerment. Various gender sensitization and awareness generation programmes are being conducted to bring changes in societal attitudes towards women. Empowerment of women is widely popular and unquestionably accepted concept among the feminists belonging to the developing societies. Both the government and non-governmental organizations have been struggling hard to bring gender equality and have directed their efforts towards the goal of women’s empowerment.

Jain (2003) says the rural women need vocational training in the villages itself and they also like to work at home as and when they get free time. The scheme of community polytechnics has got huge infrastructure of training facilities, network of village extension centers which has to be utilised for the benefit of creating skills among rural women.

Rao’s (2003) study on successful women dairy project in Rajasthan where the women dairy co-operative societies provided several benefits which include regular health care for animals, medicines and vaccination for animals, subsidized cattle feed, fodder seeds, etc. In addition, it facilitates for training programmes for income generating activities to improve the employment and thereby empowerment in all spheres including political participation by women.
Women are happy with these benefits which is reflected in higher in take of quality food, improved health conditions, better clothing, enhanced savings and finally leading to increased status. There is a positive correlation between awareness among women and successful women who are belonging to Women Dairy Cooperative Societies.

Hemalatha (2003) studied the Gram Panchayat women members of Mysore taluk and pointed out that the women members are yet to be politically empowered. They need training to work for the development of women and poor. However, they have to be conscious of their duties as representatives of women folk. Women proved to be capable of showing their representation but they need time, support, resources, training and freedom from men.

Boraian and Juliana (2001) studied women in the area of kanchipurm district in Tamil Nadu state. They feel women in the study area are neglected and face discrimination and witness hardship in their family life. They have been living a subservient life in all spheres of life including social, cultural, educational, economic and political. They virtually battle to sustain their role and up hold their status at home and in the community or society. Even in the midst of these the women struggle against the social oppression and performing their role in discharging their responsibility and contributing to decision-making process on the domestic front.