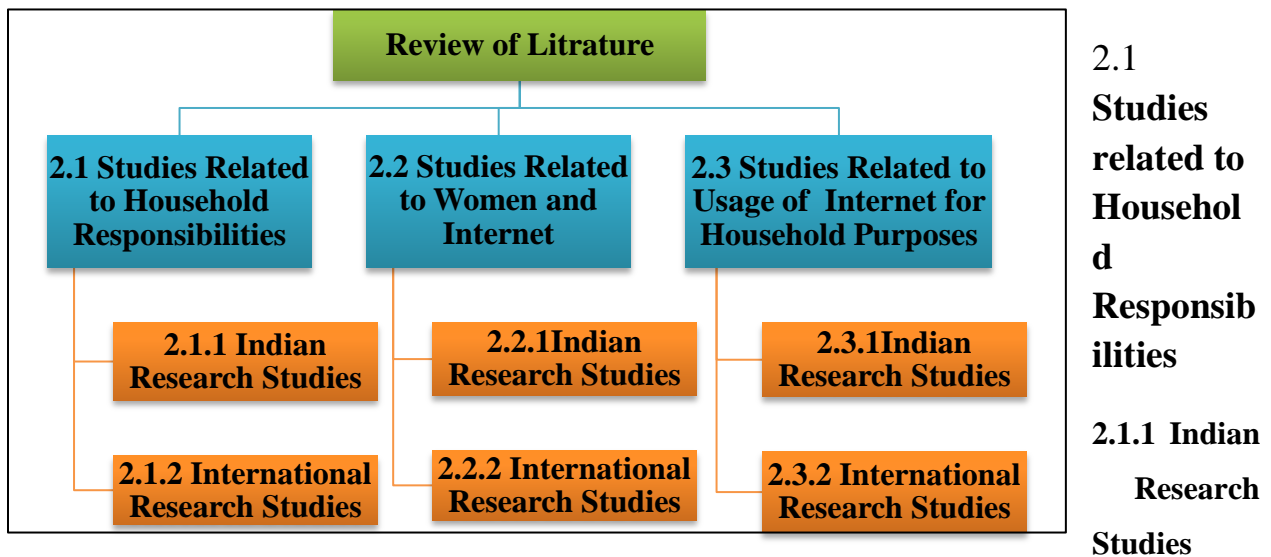


## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The present study aims to find out the internet usage of married women with children and residing in Vadodara city, for performing their household responsibilities. The household responsibilities performed by married women were also studied. The present chapter deals with the review of related literature. The research studies were collected from various libraries like Smt. Hansa Mehta Library of the Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Library of Mudra Institute of Communication, Ahmedabad, Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, Inflight Center, Gandhinagar, British Library, Ahmedabad. Various e-resources were also referred like Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia.edu, Shodhganga, Smt. Hansamehta digital library, Springer, Proquest, Pew Research Center, India Stat and so on. Since the study was focused on married women's household responsibilities and their internet usage for the same, the reviews were searched by using different keywords like gender and technology, gender roles, household responsibilities, household chores, mothers and internet, women and internet and so on. The collected reviews were categorized according to the dependent variables of the study. The categorization is as follows-

**Figure 4 Plan of Review of Literature**



**Luke, Xu, and Thampi (2014)** studied the housework distribution of tea plantation workers in India. The main objective was to study the role of male and female in the selected families. The data was collected from 3181 female workers who were the breadwinners of their families using the survey method and for qualitative data collection, 25 female workers and 24 male workers were interviewed. The findings of the study revealed that although women were mainly responsible for domestic labour, more than half of husbands usually or sometimes helped their wives with cooking, fuelwood collection, and child care.

The qualitative findings of the study revealed that most housework and child care tasks continued to be women's responsibilities and were undertaken mostly by women. Furthermore, it revealed that several husbands considered housework in general "should only be done by women". However, most of the respondents agreed that husbands should help their wives to some extent with household chores because of women's engagement in strenuous work for long hours. The result related to men's participation in childcare related household chores revealed that they helped their wives quite regularly with child care, including escorting children to and from the crèche or school and supervising homework sessions. Moreover, the findings regarding other household chores revealed that numerous men often collected and cut fuelwood and also collected water but rarely washed clothes. Washing the clothes was considered as women's work by men and women both.

Overall, the assistance of individual husbands varied upon their willingness and circumstances. Several husbands wanted to help their wives as much as possible. It was noted that men assisted with housework reluctantly and only when necessary like they helped when their wives were ill or were expected to arrive home late from work.

The quantitative findings revealed that the majority of the men usually or sometimes helped their wives with each housework task except washing clothes. The analyses revealed a curvilinear relationship between husbands' earnings share and their participation in each task, supporting theories of bargaining and gender display. It suggested that women were able to bargain for husbands' assistance with cooking, fuelwood collection, and child care regardless of their contributions to household income. The probability of male participation decreased to its lowest level when men earned less than their wives.

For cooking, fuelwood collection, and child care, the expected inverted *U*-shaped pattern was emerged which showed that the probability of male participation in these chores increased if husbands' share of earnings decreased from its highest level. It also revealed that men's likelihood of participation decreased at the lowest level of husbands' earnings share, which signalled male gender display in all three tasks. These findings suggested that employed men who earned less than their wives also refrained from housework as an assertion of their masculinity.

**Neilson India and Ariel (2014)** conducted a survey on Indian households. One of the objectives of this study was to understand the male and female participation in household chores in Indian families. The study was conducted with 1000 respondents from five selected cities namely Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Bangalore. The findings of the study showed that more than two third of the women respondents agreed that there was inequality existed at their home between men and women and men do not help with household chores. Majority of the women (70%) were spending more time on housework than their husbands. A very high majority of the working women felt that they performed more household chores than husband regardless of being the equal breadwinner for the family. Most of the married women considered inequality in performing household chores as the main reason for dissatisfaction in married life. The women respondents who were working and non-working wanted men to help out with the household chores including laundry. A majority of the men considered laundry as women's task (76%) and preferred to watch TV than to do laundry (68%). **(as cited in Singh, 2015, January 09)**

**Vijaypriya (2013)** carried out a research study on "resource contribution of homemakers for family well-being and economic value of homemaking". The objectives of her study included a) the factors influencing resource contributions of the homemakers, b) identifying the household production of homemakers and estimate approximate money value for household work and c) to study homemakers' satisfaction on the performance of household work. The sample of the study was 1012 homemakers (employed and unemployed both) of Chennai city of Tamil Nadu. The sample was selected using purposive sampling technique from three zones of the city.

The quantitative data was collected through the household survey. The selected women were of below thirty years (62%), unemployed (50%) had below five years of homemaking experience (46.6%), education up to higher secondary level (29.2%), children below the age of 6 years, belonged to the nuclear family (50%) and middle income group (58%). The data regarding the energy saving resources used by homemakers showed that a very high majority of them were using LPG (97%), pressure cooker (98.70%), mixer and grinder (100%) for cooking.

The findings regarding the household tasks output revealed that the full-time homemakers on an average prepared 18 meals and 9 drinks both hot and cold for a day. Whereas the employed homemakers on an average prepared 16 meals and 8 drinks a day including hot and cold. Moreover, it also revealed that full-time homemakers had more responsibilities related to pre-preparation of a meal than employed homemakers. The full-time homemakers did more number of household tasks related to food service, dishwashing, taking care of the clothes, household cleaning, child care, sick care, elderly care compared to the employed homemakers. Moreover, it revealed that majority of the full-time (78%) and employed homemakers (62%) did not engage any paid help for the household activities whereas one-fourth of the employed homemakers had paid help for their household activities. The results showed that family was paying on an average of 350.01/- per day and 10500/- per month to the part-time servant maids engaged separately for different household activities like elderly care, child care, cleaning, and washing, cooking. Thus, the result of the study threw light upon unpaid and unrecognized household work performed by homemakers without any help. Majority of homemakers pointed out that their household performance was not properly recognized at their home. They reported family members including the husband never recognized the task of unpaid household work performed. Only 30% of them were recognized for the household activities by their family members. The lack of proper recognition to the household activities leads to having low self-esteem and unfavourable attitude in their work and the homemakers lacked in cognitive, temporal and managerial skills which ultimately ended up with drudgery and affected their physical and psychological health.

The study also reported the satisfaction of homemakers regarding their household task performance. It revealed that nearly half of full-time and employed homemakers (43%) were not at all satisfied with their work performance and household production. It was noted that the lack of proper knowledge on efficient performance of household activities was the reason for their

dissatisfaction. The household survey revealed that homemakers in the age group of below 30 years, who had the lower level of education, in the expanding stage of family life cycle and with young children below 6 years found to have heavy workload irrespective of the employment status. Furthermore, the result of the survey showed that homemakers were in urgent need to be educated about the work environment, daily work schedule, musculoskeletal disorders, stress hazards and preventive measures, correct use of equipment and proper work methods to save them from the drudgery they experience in the performance of household tasks.

**Saraff and Srivastava (2010)** studied the paternal involvement in childcare among Indian fathers. The aim of this study was to understand the pattern of the father's involvement in terms of the activities participated in, and their frequency of participation. The overall level of involvement of fathers in childcare has been determined. The data was collected using the interview method from 350 Indian couples residing in Mumbai and having at least one child aged 10 years or younger.

Higher percentages of the parents belonged to 30-34 years age group. Very high majority of mothers (80%) were married at the age of 25 years whereas fathers (75%) were married by the age of 29 years. Majority of the respondents (60%) were married for 4– 10 years. A majority of them were educated up to high school or above (fathers 76% and mothers 64%). All the fathers and half of the mothers were working. Most of the respondents belonged to the nuclear family (58%) and had a medium standard of living (61%). Regarding the characteristics of the focal child, it was found that a higher proportion of children was males and was mainly second-born children.

The findings of the study showed that fathers were less likely to participate in all the activities related to the childcare. Although, the percentage of fathers' frequent participation in taking sole responsibility for the child was high (13%) as compared to other activities (ranging from 5% to 11%). Surprisingly the men whose wives were not working were more likely to take sole responsibility for the child as employed women might have some alternative childcare arrangement and so the need for leaving the child to the sole responsibility of the husband decreases. Smallest proportion (4.9%) of fathers reported their frequent involvement in activities related to cleaning the child or changing nappies whereas mothers reported fathers' frequent

involvement almost three times higher for the same. The findings also showed that a relatively higher proportion of fathers, as well as mothers, reported that fathers frequently administer medicine to the child as well as help the child with his/her personal problems. Father's frequent participation in educational and functional activities with the child was higher as compared to their involvement in the activities related to traditionally female childcare tasks and nurturance. Nearly 70% of the fathers reported playing with the child either sometimes or frequently.

Further, the findings revealed the percentage of fathers saying 'frequently' to each of the activities was lower as compared to mothers reporting frequently in the corresponding category. The reason as highlighted by the researcher for this was, mothers do not expect much from their husbands and so even if the husband does these tasks few times, she has contended enough to report that her husband does that particular activity 'frequently'.

Results of the study indicated that paternal involvement in childcare was mainly determined by the perception of individuals towards fatherhood like gender role expectations, the perception of the peer group and fathering received by the individual fathers. It was seen that the level of paternal involvement was more or less the same for working as well as non-working mothers. The maternal employment status and the gap in income of spouses had no significant relationship with paternal involvement in childcare. It was also seen that fathers who perceived their peer group to have a positive attitude towards paternal involvement were more involved fathers.

The results of the above-cited studies showcased that in India women are performing most of the household work. Despite doing the majority of the unpaid household work irrespective of their age, income group and occupation, it still remained unrecognized by their family. Though household work is considered as a women's domain it was noticed that husbands are helping their wives to some extent in some of the areas like child care and cooking.

### **2.1.2 International Research Studies**

**Akanle, Adensina, and Ogbimi (2016)** carried out research on "Male Roles and household Chores in Nigeria". The aim of this research was to explore Nigerian men's views for their roles in household chores. The data was collected from 20 households with cohabiting couples

residing in Ibadan city. Interview method along with participant observation for at least six months across the households was used to collect the data.

The result of this qualitative research showed that most of the interviewees mentioned that their culture and tradition generally do not support men engaging in domestic roles like cooking, fetching water, doing the dishes and doing the laundry. It was also found that majority of the interviewees agreed that men that engage in chores were the “best” and that men should do all/any house chores including doing the dishes, doing the laundry and fetching water. This finding highlights the shift in the efficacy of culture and tradition in shaping respondents orientation and actual engagement in household chores. Further, the findings revealed that some men perform those household chores which they find interesting. Like sweeping, washing dishes, lining the clothes after wash. It was observed in many of the households as the husbands complement their wives especially in those areas of wives’ domestic works disinterest. The factors like affection, love, understanding, romance and the age of children play moderating roles in nature and degree of male roles in domestic chores. Therefore it was concluded that if there were substantial affection, love, understanding, romance and very young children, men tend to be more involved in domestic chores.

The most common chores men engage in were bathing children, doing the dishes and cooking. Contrary to this interviewee belonged to the low-class area had the view that women are supposed to be responsible for household chores, therefore, they refused to get engaged in the same. To them, only jobless men involve in household chores to compensate for their laziness, joblessness, and failure.

The findings related to enjoyment while doing household chores showed that some men enjoy and endure engaging in household chores. Men claim they enjoy household chores but this depends on the extent to which their wives appreciate them for their involvement. Men’s views about housework and their role in its performance suggested the momentum of change in “gender revolution”.

**Banerjee (2014)** carried out a study on Indian immigrant families in the United States. The sample included two different types of families. Type one included those families where the men were the main migrant and the only breadwinners with wives on dependent visas and the second

type of families included those families where women were the main migrants and breadwinners with husbands on dependent visas. Forty-five families were selected through convenient sampling method for this study. The findings of the study showed that women from both types of families were doing most of the housework as compare to men. The women with children were spending more hours i.e. more than 100 hours a week on housework whereas women who did not have children were spending at least 40 hours a week. Women with dependent visa were performing more housework than women with the work visa. The men with dependent wives were contributing occasionally in housework by cooking. They even shared their guilt and regret that their educated wives spent their time doing "daily dirty work".

Families where women were working and husbands were dependent, the stereotypical role of women at home remained the same except for child care. Despite being working these women voluntarily chose to work in the second shift so that they can finish with their household work in the morning. The reason behind this was their guilt caused by being absentee mothers and nontraditional wives. The men of these families refused to take the role of "househusband" but they have adopted the role of primary caregiver for their children.

The results of this study showed that men from both the families showed their willingness to childcare but did not show it for other household work. They considered other household work for wives and women domestic workers.

**OECD (2014)** reported that Indian men spend less time on routine housework in the world. A research study was carried out by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and data was gathered on how much housework men do on an average daily basis in 30 countries. The findings of this survey showed that men from Slovenia ranked one with spending an average of 114 minutes on housework daily whereas men from India claimed the lowest position performing on average only 19 minutes of housework every day. The findings also showed that on average Indian men spends 14 minutes on household shopping, 10 minutes on travel related to household activities and 8 minutes on care for household members per day. Whereas Indian women spend 298 minutes on routine household work, 9 minutes on household shopping, 37 minutes on care for household members and 6 minutes on travel related to household activities per day. The findings of the study showed that Indian women stood third in spending time on unpaid work and revealed that they spend overall 352 minutes on unpaid work



daily. Turkish women and Mexican women secured the first (377 minutes) and second place (373 minutes) in the similar race. Although, the findings suggested that men have been doing more housework and child care as compared to earlier years.

**Sweeting et.al (2013)** carried out a longitudinal research study on “Changing gender roles and attitudes (GRA) and their implications for well-being around the new millennium” at the United Kingdom. The purpose of the research was to study the associations between GRAs, and psychological distress in working-age men and women. The research also highlighted the household chore division of respondents. The data was collected from three different working-age groups (20–34, 35–49 and 50–64) at two different dates 16 years apart (1991 and 2007) in order to explore whether relationships differ by age and over time. The sample comprises of 10,163 respondents, in which 3,542 (35 %) of whom participated only in 1991, 4,861 (48 %) only in 2007 and 1,760 respondents (17 %) participated at both dates. The psychological distress was measured via the 12-item General Health Questionnaire.

The findings related with household chores division showed that the older women were more likely to do (almost) all the chores, however, both the 20- to 34-year-old and 35- to 49-year-old groups reported that chores were shared or done by the man were significantly more likely to be made by men than women. While levels of chore sharing were somewhat higher among the youngest age groups and at the later date, even among 20- to 34-year-old respondents in 2007, around 70 % of men and women reported that chores were done more by the woman, 18% of men and 14 % women that they were equally shared, and only 12% men and 8% women that they were done more by the man.

Further, the findings showed that gender traditionalism was positively associated with psychological distress in both men and women. Gender traditionalism was lower among women, younger people, those participating in 2007 and in ‘less traditional’ relationships and households. Psychological distress was higher among those with more traditional GRAs and, particularly among men, for those not employed, and there was some evidence of different patterns of association according to age-group. There was limited evidence, among women only, of increased psychological distress when GRAs and actual roles conflicted and reductions when GRAs and roles agreed, particularly in respect of household chores and paid employment.

Although some aspects of gender roles and attitudes (traditionalism and paid employment) are associated with well-being, marital status and household chores, and attitude-role consistency had little impact on the well-being of contemporary UK adults.

**Wong and Almeida (2012)** carried out a study on “The Effects of Employment Status and Daily Stressors on Time Spent on Daily Household Chores in Middle-Aged and Older Adults” in the United States. The sample of this research was 268 adults aged between 55-74 years. For data, collection telephone interviews were taken regarding their daily experiences for eight consecutive evenings. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference in time spent on household chore in relation with gender. Women were spending 52 min more on daily household chores than men. Another related finding was working women spent more than double the amount of time on daily household chores than working men. There was a significant association between home stressors from the previous day and time spent on daily household chores as a function of employment and marital status.

**Bianchi and Milkie (2010)** discussed the changing gender roles on performing household work in their article on “Work and family research in the first decade of the 21st century” that overall the gender gap related to household work and childcare was decreasing. The reason reported for the same was women decreased their hours of housework while men increased their hours of housework and in the case of childcare, it is due to men’s increased involvement with their children.

## **2.2 Studies related to Women and Internet**

### **2.2.1 Indian Research Studies**

**Devatia and Patel (2017)** studied the social media application usage by homemakers of Ahmedabad. The objectives of this study were to examine the extent and reasons for social media usage by homemakers. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 80 women as the sample for this study. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. Three-point Likert scales were used to measure the usage. The variables of the study were social media usage practices of homemakers (dependent variable) and education, age, family income per month, time spent on internet, type of family, type of device used for social media, reasons for

using social media, no. of children and age of the children (independent variables). The social media users were from the age group of 35-48 (48.75%), graduate (57%), had two children and children below fifteen years (50%), spent six hours or less with their children (64%) and belonged to joint family (51%). The findings showed that 37.5% of the respondents had the accessibility of the internet from Wi-Fi and 33.75% from the Mobile data package whereas nearly 30% of the respondents had the accessibility of both (From the WiFi and Mobile data package). The findings regarding their expenditure on the internet revealed that more than 60% of the respondent spent between 60 - 272 Rs. personally on the internet per month. It was found that 75% of the respondents spent between 0.25 - 2 hours per day on the internet.

The respondents were using different social media applications viz. WhatsApp (75%), Facebook (66%), Youtube (18%). Very few of them were using Instagram, Snapchat, Hike, Skype and Twitter. WhatsApp was much known to the majority of the respondents. Further, it revealed that majority of the respondents (67.5%) had poor awareness of Privacy functions of social media applications. The findings of the study showed that respondents were using social media for staying in touch with family and friends, sharing photos and videos and for filling up the spare time.

There was no significant relationship found between social media usage practices of homemakers and their age, number of children, monthly family income, time spent on the internet, Information, and entertainment related reasons for using social media. Although, there was a significant relationship between social media usage practices of homemakers and other reasons for using social media. The results of this study highlighted that homemakers in Gujarat belonging to different age group and income groups were using the internet for different reasons.

**Google India (2015)** carried out a study on “women and technology”. The data was collected from 828 women aged from 8-55 years. The finding revealed that a higher number of internet users were younger, single, students and belonged to the higher income group. Housewives were less likely to spare time for accessing the internet than working women. Majority of the internet users preferred privacy while using the internet, therefore, they were using smartphones and cyber cafés to access it. The study also showed a shocking finding that overall women did not felt the need to use the internet. However, younger women were more willing to use the internet

as compared to older ones. Nearly forty percent of the non-internet users showed their interest in using the internet soon. The results of the study also highlighted the main problems faced by women while accessing the internet were-

- Lack of time due to their household chores
- Fear of upsetting their in-laws by spending more time on the internet
- Affordability
- Connectivity
- Lack of knowledge regarding internet usage

The study suggested that women should be encouraged for using smartphones with better mobile internet accessibility because it is the most feasible mode to access the internet.

**(as cited in Nair, 2015, May 25)**

**Dahiya (2012)** carried out a study on “impact of demographic factors of consumers on online shopping behaviour” in India. The main objective of this research was to study the impact of demographic factors on the online shopping behaviour of consumers in India. A Cross-sectional survey of respondents was done using a structured questionnaire. The data was collected from 580 respondents (female 249 and male 331) from Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, Hyderabad, and Bangalore using judgmental and snowball techniques.

Online shopping was measured as responses of consumers towards the purchase of different types of products on the Internet in the past. These six product categories viz. Airline/train reservations, Banking & other financial services, Books / Magazines / membership of library, news dailies, Software / Hardware / DVD / CD, Dresses / Apparels / Footwear / Jewellery, Electronics/ Mobile phones were identified by reviewing secondary sources were journals, newspapers, national and international publications, internet, personal books, and libraries. The results showed that people tend to shop online for essential services like travel ticket reservations (81%) and banking (63%). However, very few of them were shopping online for lifestyle goods like dresses, apparels, footwear, and jewellery etc. Results showed that females (2.25) bought more frequently than males (1.43). Rising working woman concept had given a boost to it. Females also believe in status quo and imitate others in shopping. Further, it revealed that marital status does not influence any of online shopping parameters.

Further, it revealed that family size significantly affected overall expenditure on internet shopping. Families with two children spent more on online shopping as compared to nuclear and extended families. The researcher highlighted that the evolution of online shopping in the future would see the different patterns between single and married people in the future. The overall results showed that the respondents have perceived online shopping in a positive manner.

**Trivedi (2011)** carried out a study on “Information gathering habits of internet users” in Ahmedabad city. The objectives of the study included the purposes of using the internet and also examined the impact on knowledge gathering by the usage of the internet. The sample selected for the study was five hundred internet users (students, service class professionals, housewives, and businessmen). The stratified random sampling method was used. The results of the study showed that male internet users (56.3%) were higher as compared to female internet users (53.7%). It also revealed that students used maximum internet for information gathering followed by the service class professionals whereas housewives and businessmen were found to be poor internet users.

It also reflected that a high majority 82% of the sample had a computer at home. The results of this study reflected that 56% of the respondents were using the internet for information gathering followed by downloading music or video or any software. Interestingly, it revealed that chat rooms were popular among housewives. It also showed that 78% of the respondents were using it for fun and pleasure. The study further revealed that a very high majority 94% of the respondents agreed that internet saves time, easy to use and informative. As per the findings related to problems faced during internet usage, respondents agreed that there were connectivity and slow network issues. The study revealed the use of the internet for information seeking by people of Ahmedabad and also highlighted the similar usage by women also.

### **2.2.2 International Research Studies**

**Al-Saggaf, Shariati, Morrison (2017)** carried out a survey on women in Iran to study the effect of marital status and the presence of family dependents at home on their use of the internet. The data was collected from 311 women (above 18 years) using a web-based survey.

The findings of the study revealed that marital status and presence of family dependent had a significant and negative impact on weekly internet usage of women. This indicated that respondents who were married and had family dependants at home were likely to access the internet less. Whereas other variables like high income, mid-income, internet at home, being a student and having a degree were found to be positively related with the amount of time available to women to access the internet during the week. These results indicated that having high or mid-income, having the internet at home, being a student or having a degree increases the likelihood that women will use the internet on more days during the week. This study had empirically demonstrated that the traditional role of women and family structure can play a major role in minimizing the time available to women to use the internet frequently.

**Pew Research Center (2014)** carried out an online survey in America among a sample of 1,066 adult internet users aged between 18 years or older. The main objective of the survey was to know the overall positive views online Americans had about the role of the internet in their lives and in the broader society. The survey was conducted in English by the 'GfK' (Group using Knowledge) Panel, its American representative online research panel. The panel comprises households with landlines and cellular phones, including those only with cell phones, and those without a phone. Respondents were selected randomly from eligible adult household members of the panel. All sampled members received an initial email to notify them of the survey and included a link to the survey questionnaire. One follow-up reminder was sent three days later to those who had not yet responded.

The findings of the study revealed that eighty-seven percent of online adults reported that the internet and cell phones have improved their ability to learn new things. Seventy-two percent of internet users reported that they like having so much information, while just 26% say they feel overloaded. The same number of respondents (72%) said digital technologies have improved their ability to share their ideas and creations with others. Most Americans agreed that the internet and cell phones have brought benefits in learning, sharing and diversifying the flow of information into their lives. Use of the web helps them learn new things, stay better informed about products and services available for sale, national and international news, and popular culture. Majority of them believed that average Americans and U.S. students were better informed than in the past.

Moreover, the findings for American's views regarding "being better informed" on selected issues in comparison to the past five years revealed that-

- ✓ Products and services: High Majority (81% ) of online respondents reported their internet and cell phone use had made them better informed about products and services today than they were five years ago.
- ✓ News: Substantial majorities also felt better informed about national news (75%), international news (74%), and pop culture (72%) because of these tools.
- ✓ Friends: 67% of online adults were better informed about friends than they were five years ago, and 60% feel they know more about family.
- ✓ Civic and community life: Nearly half of the respondents (49%) felt thankful for digital technologies for being better informed regarding civic and government activities in their community. Whereas thirty-nine percent of them agreed they were well informed regarding their neighbours and neighbourhood because of their use of the internet.

This survey highlighted the power of new media and suggested the qualitative internet usage among Americans.

**Bowen et al (2013)** carried out a survey on "predictors of women's internet access and internet health-seeking" with random, population-based sample of 431 women aged between 18–74 years in King County, Washington, USA. The main aim of this research was to study the internet access by women for health-related information.

Participants in the present study were primarily White (88%), married or partnered (45%), of lower to middle income (42% with household incomes of 50k \$ or over), and moderately educated (56% had at least a college degree). When home internet access is combined with work internet access, the overall internet access rate in this sample is almost 80%. This value indicates the pervasive nature of the Internet in current households and means that the availability of the Internet could allow for interventions to be transmitted to large segments of the public.

Multivariate analyses were done for predicting access to the Internet using the demographic variables, mental health, and general health perceptions as predictor variables. Age was a significant predictor. Older participants were more likely to use the Internet to access health

information. The other significant demographic predictor was income in that higher income individuals were more likely to use the Internet for health information. Level of mental health and level of general health perceptions were also found significant predictors for internet use. In the case of mental health, lower levels of mental health predicted use of the Internet for health-related reasons. Women with higher levels of perception of their general health used the Internet more for health-related purposes than did women with lower levels of health perceptions.

This study also revealed that health seekers were proportionally more middle-aged than young or old, with the highest proportions of usage showing up in those between the ages of 30 and 64. General health perceptions were positively related to health use, meaning that women who described themselves as generally healthy used the Internet for health more frequently, compared with women who described themselves as unhealthy. Women with lower mental health scores used the Internet for health more frequently. This indicates that feeling or being sick may not be a large motivator for Internet health searches. Indeed, one of the largest health uses may be for friends and family members who are ill and in need of health advice. Mental health scores may be reflective of general distress, and this means that in times of distress, women may turn to the Internet for health information. More longitudinal research is necessary to determine if distress cues searching for help with health issues via the Internet. Participants without access reported various barriers to obtaining internet access such as lack of usefulness of the Internet as an information source, unfamiliarity with using this technology and financial cost.

**Aldhaheri (2012)** administered a survey on “Arab Women Using Internet” in U.A.E and Oman. The research study aimed at monitoring and analyzing the use of the Internet by Arab women through studying the situation of women in the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman. It attempted to know the websites, which were frequently used by women and the nature of the information they are searching on the Internet and the differences between the two countries. 400 women internet users were selected (200 from each country) for the study. Quota sampling method was adopted. Women who were using the Internet in both the United Arab Emirates and Oman were young, educated and working. Most women internet users were married and had social responsibilities. The findings of the study revealed that women in both countries had the same pattern in using the Internet in terms of frequency and methods of using it. The difference was found in the time of using the internet. It was found that 55% of UAE women preferred to



use the internet in the evening, while 70% of their Omani counterparts use it in the morning. The main reason for this was the place of accessing it like home or workplace. Those women who were using it in the morning were working women. These women were using the internet during their office hours. Another reason for the same was Income group of women from UAE. Women from UAE have double income than Omani women. Therefore, they were capable of paying for internet services at home and hence using it during free time at home.

The findings further revealed that the Internet plays an important role in women's lives in both countries. Women deal with this web in a daily manner and for 3-4 hours at different times by day and night. They use the Internet in workplaces and at homes. This may be attributed to the fact that traditions do not allow women to use the internet in cafes or public places. The study showed that the websites, which were mostly visited by women in the United Arab Emirates and the Sultanate of Oman, were cultural, social, women related and scientific websites.

**Intel Corporation (2012)** carried out a study on Women and Web. The data were gathered by interviews and surveys of 2,200 women and girls living in the urban and peri-urban areas of four developing countries: Egypt, India, Mexico, and Uganda. Survey findings were substantiated and supplemented by extensive research of existing literature, analysis of global databases, and interviews with more than 40 experts in the fields of gender, the Internet, and ICT (Information and Communications Technology) for development.

The findings of this study demonstrated the Internet access and usage as follows:

- The Internet helped in increasing women's income and income potential. Across the surveyed countries, nearly half of the respondents used the web to search for and apply for a job, and 30 percent had used the internet to earn additional income.
- It increased women's sense of empowerment. More than 70 percent of internet users considered the internet "liberating" and 85 percent said it "provides more freedom".
- It also increased women's sense of equity. Nearly 90 percent of surveyed women internet users said access to use the internet should be considered as a human right.
- One in five women in India and Egypt believe the Internet is not "appropriate" for them. These women believe engaging online would not be useful for them, and if they did, their families would disapprove. Gender-based barriers like this range from internalized

gender norms to outright prohibition and their effects vary across regions and households. In some communities, gender norms restrict women from walking on the street and certainly from visiting cybercafés that may be the only means of accessing a computer. Stereotypes about women's lack of skill or interest in technology are also a factor.

- Family support is a critical enabler of women's Internet use. Internet user respondents of the survey reported that their families were "very supportive" of their using the internet, while non-users were six times more likely to report family opposition.
- Reasons for not using the internet as reported in the survey were-
  - Affordability
  - Illiteracy
  - Lack of awareness of using the internet
  - Lack of familiarity with the internet
  - Lack of family support
- One-third of non-users had a desktop in their home, and more than 90 percent had a mobile phone in their home. Similarly, more than 20 percent of women with some college education were not accessing the internet, and nearly 20 percent of higher-income women were not yet online. These characteristics define users who had already progressed and overcome some of the most challenging barriers to access, such as access and affordability, and may need only one last encouragement to join the online world.
- Women who were accessing the internet through more than one platform reported greater benefits than those who use only computers or only mobiles. The benefits reported were additional income, job, and networking opportunities, and help with their studies. Using multiple platforms can combine the distinct advantages of computers (more functionality, ease of use) with the appeal of the mobile Internet to women in particular (flexibility, privacy).
- The findings also revealed that the longer a woman had been engaged online, the more likely she was to engage in activities that yield tangible benefits. Women with more than five years of online experience were more likely to seek out information on financial services and banking or related to their source of income, than women who have joined the internet within the last year. By comparison, recent users were more likely to use the internet to play games, listen to music, or download films.

- The report also added that internet-based economic activity accounts for more than 5% of GDP growth. Without access to the internet, women lack access to its tools, resources, and opportunities and because women are critical collaborators in the effort to achieve development goals such as reduced child malnutrition and mortality or increased economic growth, this gap disadvantages not just women, but their families, communities and countries

**Lu et. al. (2011)** conducted a study on “internet and Mobile phone and text messaging dependency: factor structure and correlation with dysphoric mood among Japanese adults”. The main objectives of this research were to study the problematic use of the internet and text messaging and also to study the association between depression and anxiety and the internet and text messaging. One hundred and forty- six participants (92 men and 54 women) were selected for the study. They all were working in the city office of Uto, Kumamoto, Japan. Data were collected using the Internet Addiction questionnaire (IAQ: Wang, 2001) which consist of statements related to symptoms of internet dependency, maladjustment, and uncontrollability prepared on 5 points Likert scale. Along with IAQ, another tool was administered i.e. Self-perception of Text message dependency Scale (STDS: Igarashi et.al., 2005). It is a self-report scale that measures the way in which people perceive their usage of text messages along with their attitudes towards compulsive text messaging in the context of interpersonal relationships. Another research tool used for data collection was the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS: Zigamond and Snaith, 1983). It is a self-report screening instrument for negative moods. It identifies people with physical illness who present with anxiety and depressive disorders. Mean, SD, and skewness of each scale were calculated. Exploratory Factor Analysis was done with each item of all scale used. Regression and correlation were measured to analyze the data.

The results revealed that Internet dependency and text message dependency were correlated with each other. The study reflected the psychological dependency on the internet and mobile phone text message usage affects adults in Japan. This study showed that 34% of men and 25% women showed mild internet addiction. The findings revealed no gender difference in internet use and mobile phone text messaging. The correlation analysis revealed that depression was significantly associated to both internet dependency and text message dependency whereas anxiety was associated with only internet usage. The study showed that internet dependence and

at risk internet use and text messaging were not confined to adolescent but also prevalent in adults.

**Laize, Armarego, and Sudweeks, (2010)** carried out a study on ‘the role of ICT in women’s empowerment in rural Bangladesh’. The main objective of this study was to investigate the issue of women empowerment in terms of change of perception through ICT tools. The data was collected through the integration of qualitative and quantitative methods. Total 87 women were selected through convenient sampling method from two villages Boitpur and Srifoltala from Bagerhat District. 40 of them were involved in 2 different ICT projects Development Research Network (D.net) and Our Village Online (Amader gram online) implemented in Boitpur and Srifoltala village respectively. Remaining 47 from both the villages were not involved in any ICT project and considered as non-ICT participants. These non-ICT participants were using the mobile phone for communication.

Both of these ICT projects included programmes that disseminate information among villagers, especially to rural women, through computers, internet, and movies. Specialist advice for health is passed on through mobile communication. The project provides information to villagers depending on the livelihood problems and the needs of rural people. The information on livelihood includes problems which people in the village face in their everyday lives such as communication, agriculture, health, education, employment, sustainability, human rights, natural disaster management, government forms and provision of services.

The analysis of the demographic profile of the respondents reflected that the sixty-one percent of women respondents were from the age group 21–30 years. Most of the women were married (77%) and had no employment (67%) outside the home. On the other hand, although a high percentage of women have some form of education and can read (80.46%) whereas one-fourth of them studied up to higher secondary. The majority of women could use a mobile phone as an ICT tool (83%), but only a few women could use the Internet (14%) and computers (17%). The findings of the study revealed that the purpose of involvement in ICT projects was training purpose (85%) and Job (15%) in Boitpur village whereas in Srifoltala village sixty percent of the ICT respondents were involved because of computer for all programme and remaining were taking benefit of it for job, training, healthcare, and village information center.

The findings further revealed that the women with ICT skills had a higher confidence level, more self-esteem, self-awareness, and dignity, and they felt more independent than non-ICT participants in Boitpur village under the D.net project whereas, in the Amader Gram project of Srifoltala village, there was less change noticed in women with ICT. These women were showing less confidence, self-awareness, dignity, and independence than non-ICT participants. Only self-esteem was slightly more than non-ICT participants.

The results showed that, after gaining knowledge and ICT skills, women's perceptual change was higher in the D.net project than the Amader Gram project. The reasons reported for this differential result were purpose and length of involvement in the project by the participants. The change in women's perception after using ICT was compared with changes in women who did not use ICT. The results indicated that ICT intervention changed women's perception in a positive direction in one village but it did not change in the other village. The study concluded that if women's in-depth and active engagement in ICT for learning and education leads to empowerment.

**Chatzoglou and Varaimaki (2010)** undertook a research study on "Investigating internet usage as innovation adoption: a quantitative study" in Xanthi, Greece. The main focus of this study was the use of new technology, primarily the internet, and the potential for it becoming the preferred information source. Furthermore, the research attempted to classify the population in adopter categories, based on Rogers' (2003) Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) theory. The objective of the study was to find out potential linkages between socio-economic characteristics, personality, and communication behaviour variables and internet usage level and adopter categories. The data was collected from 450 households using the cluster sampling approach. Out of these 150 questionnaires were selected randomly as data procuring samples.

The findings of the study showed that most respondents were female (60%), belonged 40-63years age group (32%), reported having graduated lyceum (it is three years over the mandatory educational years) (37%), employed in private sector (24%), working in the "other services sector" (e.g. doctors, lawyers, etc.) (37%).

Furthermore, the study revealed that all respondents between 26- 39 age group had a minimum three-year experience with computer usage. The most experienced users belonged to the age

groups over 26 years old, while none of the respondents over 64 years has ever used a computer. Female respondents were less experienced computer users. 23.3 percent of female respondents reported using a computer less than once a week. It was found that 66 % of the respondents had accessed the internet from home and 32% of them from work. It was found that equipment and Internet access cost were the two most popular reasons (33.3% each) for not having an internet connection at home. Most respondents (62.7%) were recent users of the internet. Male respondents were frequent users (70 %) while only female respondents (11.1%) reported casual usage. All public sector employees were frequent users, while none of the retired respondents has ever used the internet. Moreover, most internet users access it on a regular basis (55.2 % daily and 30.6 % at least once a week), with men being more regular users (71.4 % male, 42.9 % female). The results also revealed that 93% of the respondents were using the internet between one to five years. Male research participants were more experienced internet users than females.

The findings for their internet related activities revealed that usage of it for communication was more popular among male respondents. In contrast, female respondents used the internet for searching information about traveling and accommodation, whereas playing and downloading games, images, music or software and reading newspapers online were more popular activities among men. However, more women were using the internet to look for a job, and they seemed to be more at ease with using internet banking services and either purchasing or selling goods over the internet. Post-educational and other educational activities were performed using the internet only by female respondents while seeking health-related information was also more popular with women.

There was a positive significant relationship was found in educational level with internet access at home, frequent internet access, internet usage experience. As the formal years of education increases, the percentage of internet access at home, frequent internet users, internet usage experience also increases. The findings showed that there were no gender differences found in internet access from home. Risk tolerance was positively correlated with average internet usage, meaning that risk-prone persons were more likely to adopt an innovation (internet usage). Results indicated a positive relationship between active seeking of information and internet experience. The results of this study seemed to partially coincide with the Diffusion of Innovation theory.

## **2.3 Studies related to Usage of the Internet for Household Purposes**

### **2.3.1 Indian Research Studies**

**Venkatraman (2017)** in the book *Social Media in South India* presented case studies of young couples of Punchgrami, Tamil Nadu. The aim of conducting the case studies was to study the re-integration of work and home cultures in selected married and working couples. The researcher emphasized the roles of the complimentary personal communication technologies such as smartphones, WhatsApp and Facebook and concluded how WhatsApp helps its users to mediate and catch up with domestic life while also expressing the numerous emotions of love, guilt, and frustration that occur during a long working day.

The findings of the case studies related to working young mothers revealed that they were using WhatsApp voice messages to feel more connected and present in their child's life. It helped to manage interruption of personal life at the workplace. The husbands of these young mothers seem to appreciate issues with childcare moralities as well as their practical needs. They help their wives in various ways like by dropping young children off at school and sometimes by cooking. Most middle- class families also had a maid who undertakes other domestic chores such as cleaning. The results of the study further revealed that the respondents manage to stay in touch with friends and family through WhatsApp and Facebook groups.

It concluded that the communication platforms helped women to manage both home and work spheres more effectively. At the same time, it argued that social media had in no way decreased their domestic responsibilities but in a way it had simply added more. The need to check constantly on children while striving to manage expectations at work was noticed in their cases. Young mothers were using social media strategically to place themselves in a competitive corporate workplace while at the same time fulfilling their expected roles within the family.

**Khuraniya and Maniar (2016)** carried out a research on “usage of internet by working women of Vadodara city for performing their household responsibilities. The objective of the study was to know the household responsibilities of working women and usage of the internet for the same. The quantitative data was collected from one hundred and ten working women of Vadodara city through survey method.

The higher percentage of the selected working women were 41-50 years old (37.27%), graduate (53.64%), married since 14- 25 years (43%), working in the service sector (82%), had Rs.40000-60000 monthly family income (27%), had a single child (61%), belonged to nuclear family (75%), had not undertaken formal training for using computer and internet (50%), learnt computer from their spouse (33%).

The findings related with internet usage pattern revealed that they were using the internet through smartphones (65%) and using wifi (58%) for accessing it. Working women were spending Rs. 501-1000 for monthly internet recharge (46%) and spending 1-2 hours daily on the internet (34%). All of them were using the Google search engine for searching any information online. They were using the internet most of the time for emailing, social networking, chatting, getting news, file sharing, watching videos, listening to music, checking the latest fashion and learning new recipes.

The study reported that a very high majority of women were performing responsibilities related to cooking, child care for their overall development and grooming, cleaning and maintaining the house, socializing with friends and family solely. Whereas they shared some of the responsibilities such as purchasing of grocery, household goods and gifts for friends and relatives; supervising homework of their children; cleaning of house and kitchen and finance management with their husband, in-laws, and maids.

The results related to internet usage for performing household responsibilities revealed that working women were using the internet for performing their household responsibilities. The other key findings of the study showed that a very high majority of the respondents were using internet for learning recipes, home décor, providing moral education to their children, helping in children's education projects, and for communicating with their social groups. They were also using it for managing their finances at homes such as for paying utility bills, online shopping, and e-banking.

The study also reported the problems faced by respondents while using the internet. Overall they were facing issues related to internet speed, virus attacks, and trustworthiness while making payment online. The selected working women suggested organizing motivational programmes for women to use the internet for updating their knowledge and skills.



**Maniar and Pandit (2016)** carried out a similar research to study on "usage of the internet by homemakers of Vadodara city for performing their household responsibilities". The objectives of the study were to study the internet usage pattern, household responsibilities, the usage of internet for performing household tasks of homemakers of Vadodara city. A hundred and ten homemakers were selected as the sample of the study through purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The data was collected through a survey method using structured questionnaires. Percentage, frequency and intensity indices were calculated to analyze the data.

The surveyed homemakers were 31-40 years old (42%), graduate (43%), married since 1-10 years (35%), belonged to joint family (50%), had Rupees 31000-50000 monthly family income (40%), had single child (49%), had not undergone formal computer training (71%), learnt using computer and internet from their spouse (47%). The results related with their internet usage pattern revealed that homemakers were using a smartphone (85%) and wifi (55%) to access the internet. They were spending Rs. 100-500 (51%) on monthly internet recharge. One-third of them were spending 2-3 hours on the internet. Homemakers were using the internet most of the time for chatting, social networking, downloading music, file sharing, downloading mobile applications and games, listening to music and playing games.

Very high majority of the women had responsibilities related to kitchen management (99%), child care (87%), household management (97%), Socializing and Entertainment (98%). Nearly 70% of them had responsibilities related with monthly family budgeting. The findings of the study further revealed that household responsibilities were not performed solely by women but it was also shared with other family members. The trend showed that somewhere although very few but father-in-law and mother-in-law were helping homemakers in household tasks, which is in contradiction to our traditional beliefs that mother in laws never help daughter-in-law of their family but mother-in-law were helping homemakers in household tasks. Husbands were playing a very important role in sharing household responsibilities with homemakers rather than their stereotypical roles like buying an appliance, going out and shopping for things, taking care of the children.

The findings of the study showed that apart from socializing through internet homemakers were also using the internet for financial management, home decoration and for kitchen management

related household responsibilities. The study suggested the scope for using the internet for other better household purposes through introducing various workshops and training programs for women related to computer and internet education. It also suggested that internet usage should be provided for women at a concessional rate.

**Darji (2014)** carried out a research on “factors influencing working women to buy from “online grocery store” in Mumbai. The objective of this study was to identify the factors influencing working women to buy from “Online Grocery Store”. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire from a hundred women of Mumbai. The sample was selected through convenient sampling method. The respondents were married (73%), 21-35 years old (47%), postgraduate (53%), had a monthly income of Rs. 20000-50000.

The findings of this study revealed that 88% of respondents agreed that online shopping of grocery saves a lot of time. More than half of the respondents (57%) found online shopping of grocery, very convenient but others don't because they don't find it very user-friendly. All of them agreed that home delivery is the main factor which impulses them for online shopping. A very high majority (91%) felt that 24x7 accessibility was also a strong factor influencing them for online purchase whereas, another key factor found was, the online comparison of the products based on prices and features makes shopping convenient. There are many online big sale offers, combo offers, big discounts which attract 97 percent of respondents to these online stores. Only 36 percent of respondents agreed that not being techno-savvy influences them to buy from online stores. Furthermore, the results of the study added Women who handle household work and work at the office at the same time leads them to online grocery shopping. Technology had supported women to complete their household duties whenever they get time. It concluded that growing complexity of life in Mumbai especially for working women leads to greater use of purchase from E-Grocery stores.h

**Jain (2014)** conducted a research on “Online spending dynamics of working women professionals in Bangalore City”. The main objective of the study was to identify the online shopping trend among working women professionals in the city of Bangalore. For the sampling 250, working women professionals in the city of Bangalore were selected through convenient sampling method. The structured self-administered questionnaires were used to collect the data. A higher percentage of the respondents belonged to 36-45 years (43%) and were postgraduate

(41.6%). It was found that women who had a master's degree were the heaviest shoppers online followed by graduates and undergraduates. This suggested that education was likely to have an impact on consumer attitudes toward online shopping. All the respondents agreed to the fact that they shopped online. The most preferred website for shopping was flipkart.com (33%). Less than fifty percent (45%) of them bought products online once a fortnight. The findings revealed that respondents usually bought clothing and accessories (81%) and Home décor item, financial services and toys for their kids (63% each) online. Most of the time the respondents (78%) were influenced and referred by their immediate families and friend to visit and buy from a website. The finding also revealed that 87.3% of internet users in the liked using their laptops for online shopping. Furthermore, it was revealed that the critical factors that affect online shopping were convenience. A majority (70%) of the users perceive online shopping services to be 'not complex' and feel that they can easily acquire information on products and services through online shopping. Slightly more than 60% of the respondents agree that online shopping is safe and secured. More than half (62%) strongly believe that online shopping sites have good provisions for safe transactions. More than half of the respondents believe that online sites keep their client's information confidential. The study highlights that convenience, accessibility, scope, attraction, reliability, experience and clarity are the important factors considered by the online shopper. The study suggested that the Government should play a pivotal role in encouraging online shopping

**Varma and Agarwal (2014)** carried out an empirical study on “online buying behaviour of homemakers in the western suburbs of Mumbai and social media influence”. The main aim of this research was to analyze the buying attitudes of homemakers, the influence of social media on their buying behaviour and other factors that affect their online purchase decision. For this study, fifty-six homemakers living in the western suburbs of Mumbai who were from the age group of 25-45 years were selected using Non- Probability Judgment Sampling and snowball sampling. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected using e-survey and focus group discussions. The questionnaire was used which contained open as well as close-ended questions. The questionnaire was designed in order to know the perception and behaviour of customers towards online buying, the factors/attributes which influence them to buy online. Certain Questions were made on the 5-point Likert scale in order to know the opinion of the respondents. Under the Qualitative method, one-hour long focus group interviews were conducted with 3

groups. Each group consisted of three homemakers aged between 30 and 45 years. A total of 6 open-ended questions were formulated to identify what influences homemakers to buy online.

The respondents of the study belonged to 36-40 years (39%), had an annual household income of above Rs. 1200000 (66.67%) and had children (78.57%). The findings of the study revealed that 65% of homemakers bought products online once in 3 months. This shows a low propensity of homemakers towards online shopping. The study depicts that 71.15% bought books online followed by electronics and clothes at 34.62 % Jewellery was least preferred to be bought online at 9.62 %. This shows that homemakers were more confident to indulge in low-value merchandise. Flipkart was the most preferred e-tailer for homemakers at 84.31% followed by Amazon at 35.2%. Grocery online retailer Local Baniya is the least preferred at 7.84% only. Factors to prefer online shopping were convenience (80.77% ) followed by Price (73.08 %) and the least important factors were impulse and ads on mass media at 7.69%. This result showed that homemakers do not indulge in impulsive buying online. The biggest concern for homemakers regarding online buying was the Return Policy at 63.46%. Least concern is privacy at 34.62%. For homemaker cash on delivery seemed to be the most preferred mode of payment (50%). Only 5.56% prefer credit card on delivery. Homemakers were not comfortable in making online payments. Homemakers agreed that either social networking site trigger purchase online once in a while or never(40%). Only 5.36 % feel social networking site triggers them to purchase online about half of the times. Homemakers felt that social media helped in getting customer review before buying (36%) and also helped in problem recognition (40%). The findings related to time spent on the internet revealed that 67.31% of them spend 1-3 hours per week on Social media and /or online sites.

The qualitative findings of the study revealed that-

- Discounts were the motivating factors to purchase products online.
- Lack of confidence among them prevents them to purchase online.
- Books and clothing were the two most preferred categories for online shopping.
- Homemakers shared their reviews online regarding any product or service used, only if her experience was too good or too bad.

- They opted for buying grocery and vegetables from their local vendor rather than buying them online. They were happy with their local grocer and vegetable vendor who also delivered home free of cost. The prices were comparatively cheaper than the online grocer and quality better, they said.
- Online reviews, blog posts influenced their purchase decision for products and services. Especially in the case of buying electronics and planning tours.
- All respondents said they prefer to shop offline rather than online because they have time. Shopping was a leisure activity for them; they were used to this mode and mentally oriented towards offline. Shopping was also an experience, a family outing. Online shopping was limited in these terms. Lack of confidence and trust on e-tailers dissuade them from e-shopping.

### **2.3.2 International Research Studies**

**Slomian et. al. (2017)** conducted a web-based survey on "the internet as a source of information used by women after childbirth to meet their need for information" in Belgium. The objectives of the survey were to evaluate the need of information after childbirth and to assess why and how women use the internet to meet their need of information. By using convenient sampling method, 349 women who had a child under 2 years old were selected as the sample of the study.

The respondents of the study were married (43%), graduate (42%), actively working (63%), had single child (54%), monthly household income €3000 (55%), internet access at home (99%), intermediate user (64%) and expert user (30%) (based on internet using skill).

The finding showed that 90% of the respondents were using the internet to seek information about themselves or about their baby regardless of socio-economic status and age. There were various reasons for seeking information on the Internet, but the most frequent reason the women expressed was to find information 'on their own' (88.1%) followed by "to check the information about specific baby's symptoms" (80.3%). The most searched for the topic related to maternal health after childbirth were breastfeeding (79.4%) followed by bottle feeding (33.3%) and sexuality (27.6%). The most searched topics for infants health were "food to introduce into the child's diet (60.4%), breastfeeding (55.6%), teething (47%), peaks of growth (44%). The women

believed that the information was quite useful (82.7%) but they assigned an average score of 5.3 out of 10 for the quality of the information they found on the internet.

Nearly 80% of the women felt that the internet helped them control a decision that they made regarding their and baby's health. Furthermore, the results of the study added that professionals were not always willing to talk about information found on the internet with mothers. Therefore, many women believed that health professionals should suggest reliable internet websites for new mothers. The study suggested that the integration of the Internet and new technologies could be a useful tool during postpartum management.

**Duggan et.al (2015)** conducted a survey on parents and social media in the United States. The main aim of this survey was to identify the usage of social media by parents. The data was obtained through telephone interviews with a nationally representative sample of 2,003 adults living in the continental United States. Among these 366 adults were identified as social media user parents.

The results of this survey revealed that the most popular social media platform among online parents was Facebook (74%). Mothers were more likely to be users of specific platforms like Facebook (81%), Pinterest (40%), and Instagram (30%). It also revealed that young parents were more likely to use Facebook. The results revealed that 81% of parents who use social media try to respond to good news shared by others in their networks. Mothers (45%) who were using social media strongly agreed that they got support from friends on social media. A majority of the parents (71%) on social media tried to respond to a question posed by someone in their online network if they knew the answer. A very high majority of parents who uses social media 79% of parents who use social media agreed that they get useful information via their networks. Moreover, 59% of social-media-using parents indicated that they have come across useful information specifically about parenting. Mothers were particularly likely to encounter helpful parenting information as compared to the fathers. It also revealed that 42% of these parents have received social or emotional support from their online networks about a parenting issue. One-third of the parents using social media had posed parenting questions to their online networks. A very high majority (94%) of Facebook using parents share, post or comment on it. However, mothers interact with their networks more frequently than fathers.

The **Economist Intelligence Unit (2014)** conducted a survey “on the rise and online: Female consumers in Asia”. This survey was aimed at providing insights into how women's purchasing power is increasing, and in particular how women were driving e-commerce in Asia. It was based on an extensive survey of 5,500 women across major cities in Greater China, India, Japan, Singapore, and South Korea. The data was also collected from consumer analysts and major retailers and brand owners through the interview method.

The findings of the study showed that region-wide, 43% of the respondents were in managerial, executive or professional services jobs. Most were contributing to their household income, wherein 8% described themselves as sole breadwinners and 41% said they were the joint breadwinner. Women showed an increase in independence for handling their finances. Most were in charge of budgeting decisions on groceries, clothing, and accessories, and children's products, and are at least co-decision makers in most other product categories like electronics and travel services.

Among survey respondents, 63% browsed the internet at least once a day for products and services. In India, 77% of the respondents browsed the internet at least once per day for the same. Over 20% buy the majority of their groceries online, 29% of women make up the majority of their cosmetics purchases online and 39% for clothing and accessories. In India, 76% of them were buying at least some groceries online. Nearly half of the respondents strongly agreed that they preferred the experience of shopping online to doing so in stores (Mainland China 69% and India 55%). Notable outliers included Hong Kong, Singapore and especially Japan, where only 18% of women said they preferred online shopping over shopping in stores the lowest rate in the region. It also revealed that 54% of women with children in India and China agreed shopping online enables them to buy safe products for their children. Over 62% of women were buying for themselves most of the time when shopping online. However, women were also engaged in guilt shopping as 41% said they would buy something for their partner, children or family when they feel they have bought too much for themselves.

In Macau, Singapore, and India, women reported having a comparatively smaller role in household budgeting decisions than their counterparts in other countries but were still the clear authorities in areas like clothes and cosmetics. Role of women is as vital as that of a male in the

family in the decision-making process. The results of the study revealed that only 36% of women said they had control of the budget, but another 54% said they were involved in decision-making in this category. Moreover, 90% of women had influence over purchases of electronics by the household.

The reasons reported for shopping online were cost, time-saving, availability of stocks, the range of choice and relaxing and less stressful environment traffic than traditional marketing tools such as advertisements and newsletters (45%). Across the region, nearly half (48%) of women said they feel pressured and stressed in traditional shops, and 27% felt store staff talk down to them because they are women. Regionally 36% of women strongly agreed that they shop online specifically to get products from overseas, and 41% said they bought products from abroad because they were better than those produced domestically. The findings showed that 28% of women shop online via PCs at work whereas 30% shop online in bed at night. The home was the preferred place to shop, with 78% using a PC at home, 45% using smartphones and 25% using tablets.

According to the survey, women were attracted to retailers that build accurate customer profiles and target communications accordingly. The results showed that 64% of women found this appealing as well as reward them for loyalty (61%).

**Ahrens (2013)** carried out a study "between 'me-time' and household duty: Male and female home internet use". This research was designed with principles of the domestication to study the ways in which the couples use internet technology in their homes in Australia and Germany. The main objective of this study was to examine the integration of the internet into the household.

The data was collected with a qualitative ethnographic research design consisting of questionnaires, in-depth interviews, observations. In-depth interview was the main research tool for this study supported by a questionnaire and a walk through observation at home. Approximately three to four hours were spent in each household. The observation of houses of the interviewees was aimed to gather additional information about the placement of media as well as social interactions. Forty-eight people (twenty-four couples) were selected as respondents of this study through a snowball sampling technique. All were heterosexual couples between the ages of 19 and 80 and had different educational backgrounds. Heterosexual couples were



selected because the research focus was on gender-cultural patterns of men and women. Interviews were conducted in Berlin, Frankfurt, and Cologne in Germany, and in Canberra, Sydney and Melbourne in Australia.

The results focused on the time and content integration of the internet. The findings of the study related with 'time dimension' revealed that women had very practical and focused approach while using the internet. It also revealed that women decided in advance whether going online is appropriate and useful. The findings revealed that in Australia, not only mothers but also women with children not living with them anymore also decide beforehand to go online. Gender differences were found for internet usage. Mothers were using the internet more for work, household and children's activity organization while men were using it to obtain isolation. Moreover, it also revealed that the Australian females regarded the internet as a time saver. Frustration was reported as an outcome if women spent more time on the internet than originally planned. Overall the majority of the women were using the internet between five and 30 minutes per day. Most of them were using it at home during the evening.

Results related to another category "content dimension" showed that in Australia, men were using internet for their personal needs like a hobby, their work or duties whereas women especially mothers were using the internet not just for their own benefit, but also to organize family activities as well as household duties. Only younger women without children regarded the internet as a tool for entertainment. Majority of the women said they did internet banking, organized activities for the children, stayed in touch with relatives or did grocery shopping as well as clothes shopping for the children online. The female in the relationship is most likely the one who organizes household- related duties via the internet. Both partners accepted that the female does more household duties than the male. Furthermore, most of the women especially mothers felt an emotional indifference toward the internet, but at the same time acknowledged its practical value. The practical recognition can be related to the new, easier methods of doing some household duties and organization. The interviewed Australian women had a mixed reaction concerning the evaluation of the internet in terms of their media menu. The younger interviewees tended to rank it more highly because they used it more for their own needs. Whereas, middle-aged and older interviewees varied between practical evaluation and the fact that the internet was not something they used for their own pleasure.

However, in the German region in the findings revealed that most men and woman were engaged in parallel activities when going online. However, gender differences were found in the reasons for using the internet in a multi-tasking mode. Men were using it entertainment whereas women were using it to save time. Moreover, German women were, more interested in trying out new online activities. They were using the internet more for their personal and job reasons, but to a lesser degree for household organization. It has to be noted that they used the internet less for household duties than the Australians. The main reason for German women to use the internet was keeping in touch with relatives, friends or colleagues. Searching for information and internet banking also motivated women to use the internet. Overall, German women used the internet less to relax. Very few females did online shopping or participated in auctions, download or chats. Men seemed happy to be helping out their partners and demonstrating their knowledge of using the internet.

The Overall findings of the study revealed that most of the Australian participants had domesticated and integrated the internet further into their daily lives than German couples. Many daily tasks were handled via the internet, such as those related to work issues, entertainment and household duties. Furthermore, in Australia, the internet was being used more frequently and for longer periods and was routinely embedded in other daily tasks. Yet even in a country where both genders have equal access to the internet, inequalities exist in the sense that the males and females (especially parents) are split along traditional roles.

The results showed that Australian women tend to use the internet more for the domestic organization, while men are using it to have time on their own and to play. Women with children often see the internet as a household appliance, while men think of it as a media and communications technology whereas, in Germany, women respondents were cautious about trying out new online activities. It suggested that women may use the internet more for their household duties if it is considered as a household appliance rather than a technology as the trend observed in Australian females.

**Ndung'u and Waema (2011)** conducted a study on "Development outcomes of the internet and mobile phone use in Kenya: the household perspectives". The main objective of this research was to study the development outcomes of the usage of internet and mobile phones in Kenyan

households. The sample of the study was 1461 households of Kenya, targeting the household head or a responsible adult. Cluster samplings were used for the study.

The results of the study revealed that sending and receiving e-mails was the main reason to use of the internet (89.2 %). Respondents were using internet for finding information of their interest (47.3%), accessing news (40.5%), education (28.8%), getting information for friends and family (26.1%) research for a training course and also for downloading music (21.2% each). The survey established that households used new technologies for information access with valid preferences ranging from entertainment, access to job opportunities, search for market information and agricultural advisory services.

The qualitative findings of the study highlighted the change in the life of the respondents. A respondent in the survey said “without a mobile phone I spend more money on travel which is expensive and inconvenient”. Another respondent indicated that she had become closer with her grandmother because they could talk anytime with the use of mobile and internet. A respondent who had an accident in 2006 said that she had been using a mobile phone to communicate with family and a lawyer since she could not move easily. Another respondent added that “I have been able to shape my life because I used to drink a lot but now I use Facebook instead of going to drink”.

The findings related with development outcome with the use of mobile phones and internet suggested that internet and mobile phones had improved quality of life through enhancing social development. The technologies have become major sources of information and means of communication enabling households to communicate with family members, friends, business associates, employees as well as employers with speed and ease. The new technologies have promoted economic development through enabling new ways of earning and spending an income, creating job opportunities, enhancing work-life balance through the provision of teleworking options and enabling money transfers and payment of bills. The ability of individuals to make use of the technologies to achieve the relevant functioning is a function of their education, skills, and exposure to the technologies.

**Rock, Hira, and Loibl (2010)** conducted a study on “Use of the Internet as a source of financial Information by Households in the United States”. The main objective of the study was to

investigate the usage of the internet as a tool in personal finance decision-making with a focus on investment decisions. The sample of the study was randomly selected national representative sample of 911 U.S. Households with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or higher. The data were collected through telephone interviews and for the statistical analysis of the data regression analysis and frequencies and percentage were computed.

The findings of the study revealed that a significant but negative relationship existed between age and the use of the Internet as a source of financial information. Older respondents were less likely to use the Internet as a source of financial information than younger respondents. Younger respondents felt more comfortable around technology including the internet than older respondents and not because its usage decreases as individual ages. Gender of the respondents was significantly and positively related to internet use. This indicates that men were more likely to use the Internet than women as a source of financial information. The results of the study showed that females were more likely than males to indicate that “Investment websites were difficult or confusing”.

A significant and positive relationship was found between education level and the use of the internet as a source of financial information. More educated individuals were more likely to use the internet as a source of financial information. A significant and positive relationship also existed between income and the use of the internet as a source of financial information, indicating that the higher income of an individual was more likely to use the internet as a source of financial information. The study suggested that the online financial education programs should be implemented in a variety of settings including the academic realm, corporate world, and at home.

## **2.4 Research Trends**

The research trend was observed from the in-depth review of the literature. The empirical studies referred and reviewed were related to household responsibilities, internet usage and the use of the internet for their household purposes. The timeline for reviewed studies ranged from 2009-2017. Thirty-four studies were reviewed in the aforementioned categories. It was noted in all the reviewed studies that survey method was used for quantitative data collection whereas interview, observation and case study methods used for qualitative data collection. The maximum sample

size observed was 5500 and the minimum size was 80. The study having the largest sample size was a survey of different countries carried out by a market research company. The sampling techniques observed in most of the reviewed researches were purposive and snowball sampling whereas in few of the researches cluster sampling technique was also used. The variables studied in most of the reviewed researches were gender, age, education, income, marital status, family type, occupation and experience of using the internet.

All the researches related to household responsibilities reflected the gender roles in the family. They were more focused on time spent on household chores by men and women. It was observed that husbands were helping their wives in performing their household responsibilities specifically for childcare and cooking. The perception for the stereotypical role of women at home varied in relation with the income group. The males from the low-income group belonging to developing countries still consider household chores as women's task whereas males from higher income group were more likely to share the household duties.

Twelve researches were found related to women and the internet. The studies conducted in India focused on the internet accessibility of women and their usage was limited to shopping and information seeking. However, the studies from other countries highlighted the internet accessibility and showcased its usage for shopping, social networking, information seeking. These studies also connected the internet usage with women empowerment, innovation adoption and also with health issues like depression and stress.

Twelve studies were found related to use of the internet for household purposes. These studies were not directly related to it but they have connected the internet usage with some aspects of household responsibilities. The findings of these studies showed that internet was commonly used for socializing or connecting with family and friends as well as for child care. The usage was also observed for shopping of grocery, appliances, and clothes for the family. The reviewed literature suggested that the main reason for using the internet for performing household responsibilities was time-saving. It was also noted that age, gender, and education of internet user affect its usage. Younger ones, male users and those having the high level of education were more likely to use the internet more effectively. Working women were using it more than housewives, especially for childcare and shopping.

## **2.5 Conclusion**

From the above-cited reviews and research trend, it can be concluded that women are performing most of the responsibilities at their home, irrespective of their age, occupation, income group and country of living. However, a trend was observed that men were helping their wives in performing some of these responsibilities.

Though the use of the internet was higher among men whereas it was common among men and women both. Women internet users are growing rapidly worldwide and also in India. The trend of using the internet for various purposes was noted. The internet usage was also observed for household responsibilities in this chapter. The Internet provides a wide variety of information, content, and support related to each aspect of household responsibilities whether it is kitchen management, child care, household management, finance management or socializing. The review of the literature highlighted the research gaps existed in reviewed studies. In India, none of the studies threw light on internet usage for all the aspects of household responsibilities in relation with different variables like age, type of family, type of internet user, number of children and years of marriage.

The present study is an attempt to understand the usage of the internet among married women of Vadodara city for performing their household responsibilities. It will also showcase the household responsibilities which women are performing and document the help available to them for performing those responsibilities.