

CHAPTER II  
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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International Women's Year and the declaration of the years 1975-85 as Decade of Women have made the issue 'Women and Development' an important concern all over the world. Many people are attracted to think and study about women. This interest is reflected in the form of research, studies, seminar, etc. on the subject in which women have become the focus of many topics.

'Towards Equality' : a Report of the Committee on the status of women in India, 1974, was the first attempt to make a detailed investigation on the demographic, social, economic, cultural and political aspects of women's situation. The investigation identified an interrelationship between the trends revealed by the declining sex ratio, low life expectancy, higher mortality, declining work participation rate and increasing migration of women and concluded that these demographic trends represented the process of devaluation of women. Taking into account the existing diversities and inequalities prevailing in India, the Committee considered changes in the status of women as a long term aspect of social process which requires special and continuous examination and assessment by persons interested in social change.

'The World Plan of Action' adopted by the UN (1975) suggested high priority to data base on women and research on socio-economic indicators to measure changes in the women's status and involvement in development. It also pointed out that "~~inadequacies~~ and ambiguities are caused by bias in the collection of national statistics which tend to automatically exclude many women from economically active population... and their status is, therefore, not carefully investigated " (ICSSR, 1975, p.3).

A seminar on the "Role of Rural Women in Development" was organized by the Institute of Development-Studies, University of Sussex, U.K., during January-February, 1977. The seminar has cited that the benefits of rural development programme are not evenly distributed "because of the failure on the part of development planners and administrators to recognize the diversity of economic and other roles played by rural women" (ICSSR 1977, p.13).

A two-day seminar on the "Role of Women in the Socio-economic Development in Bangladesh" was organized by the Bangladesh Economic Association, Dhaka in March, 1977. The dominant theme underlying the discussions was related to the wide disparity between men and women in all levels of Bangladesh society. Discussions occasioned by the seminar had also been focussed on historical, religious and economic factors responsible for this discrimination.

Mazumdar Vina (1978) in a report on the "Role of Rural Women in Development" suggested that the quick action-oriented socio-economic surveys of actual and potential skills of the rural women should be conducted by local social workers. She also gave priority to micro-level studies at village level "including studies of time-allocation, nutrition, division of labour within the household, women's participation in social and political life outside the home, women's role in decision making within both the home and the community, attitudes to different types of work" (Mazumdar, V., 1978, p.85).

However, in view of the lack of proper understanding of women's lives and roles, many people have become induced to undertake the investigations on the subject and thus several studies are beginning to appear in India, Bangladesh and other Third World Countries.

#### Studies Done Abroad :

Ho, Teresa Tayme (1980) studied the labour force behaviour of women in rural Philippines. Its specific objectives were, (1) to document the extent and nature of women's participation, (2) to pinpoint the determinants of married women's labour market participation, and (3) to test the applicability of standard economic models of female labour supply to an agrarian market such as that in rural Philippines.

Two major hypotheses were put forward for testing. The first was that different factors of supply and demand necessitate the analysis of a female labour market distinct from that for males. The second hypothesis was that standard models of female labour supply behaviour are inapplicable because of institutional factors peculiar to the agrarian setting. These factors are the compatibility of child care activities with the informal market structure, the easy availability of substitutes for mother's child care time and the lack of employment opportunities in the market. A model of female labour supply that has been applied successfully to developed countries is modified to include factors relevant to an agrarian setting such as the ownership of land, the presence of adult relatives in the home and demand and supply conditions in the local labour market.

The findings of the study revealed that women in the province of Laguna played a highly visible role in the market economy, with their market activities going far beyond the confines of the family farm. Women in the sample were particularly active in hired farm labour, small scale poultry and livestock raising, petty trade and home industry. Sharp occupational segregation between the sexes, supported the hypothesis of a distinct market for female labour.

Delancy, Virginia Helen (1980) attempted to study the relationship between female wage employment and fertility in Africa. Cross tabular analysis was used to examine the simple relationship between female wage employment and fertility and to test the following two hypotheses:

- (1) There is significant, negative relationship between female wage employment and fertility;
- (2) Children discourage wage employment if work is incompatible in terms of job characteristics and if the cost of child care is high.

The cross tabular analysis was followed by multiple regression analysis of the determinants of both current wage employment status as well as lifetime wage employment experience using culturally relevant variables, including controls for role compatibility in terms of the age of the youngest child living at home and also in terms of the use or potential use of substitute child care alternatives.

The analysis found no significant relationship between fertility and current wage employment, but it found a significant positive relationship between fertility and lifetime wage employment experience. In this study, because of the social structure and availability of substitute child care alternatives, it was found that the roles of wage earner and mother were relatively compatible. However, for women with young children, there was a significant positive relationship

between wage employment and the use or potential use of unpaid, substitute child care. Thus, the availability of such child care alternatives reduced the cost of children in terms of the value of the mother's time at home and eliminated the tendency for children to discourage the wage employment of mothers. The women were able to be both wage earners as well as mothers.

The study by Moustafa (1980) was concerned with examination of the social and psychological factors affecting fertility decision making in Kuwait. Fertility factors were concerned with the number of children alive, the desire for additional children and the number of children considered ideal by husband and wife. Data were collected through personal interview. The husbands and wives were interviewed separately. The data were analyzed through application of the Pearson correlation co-efficient and percentage distribution. Findings were as follows:

- (1) The level of religious orientation at home was positively associated with the number of children.
- (2) The association between economic variables and number of children was positive for the husbands and partly negative for the wives.
- (3) Education was negatively associated for both wives and husbands with fertility factors.

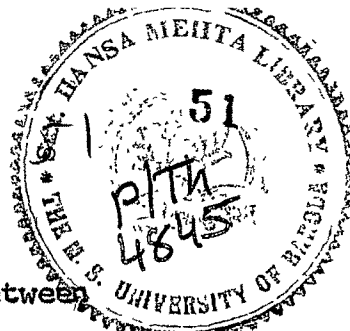
- (4) Higher aspiration for social mobility was found to be associated negatively with fertility.
- (5) The rigidity of family roles was associated positively with fertility factors. Employed wives tended to give more attention to the spacing of children to pursue their dual roles of mother and career woman.

However, the research indicated that variables other than economic ones affected decision making with regard to fertility such as college education, social status, mobility.

Nur Osman's (1980) study was concerned with the analysis of fertility levels, trends, and differentials in Jordan's 1976 Fertility Survey. In addition, her study examined the association between infant mortality and fertility behaviour. Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) revealed significant fertility differential by age at marriage, educational level, place of residence, and contraceptive use; at longer duration of marriage the rate were lower for women marrying late, women not using contraception, women with more education, and with urban residence. The study also found a strong positive association between infant mortality and fertility behaviour; women with experience of infant deaths tended to make up for the loss of children.

The main purpose of the study of Heltsley M.E. et al (1981) was to examine the determinants of family size in a sample of low income married couples in United States. The





model used in the study viewed the relationship between demographic variables, sex role orientation, value of children, and family size as a developmental sequence. The data for the study were gathered by interviewing 120 Midwestern low income married couples. Path regression analysis was used to test the model for husbands and wives separately.

Findings of the study revealed that in the model for both husbands and wives, the years that the couple had been married and their age at marriage significantly affected their family size in positive direction. Both variables had about the same explaining power for husbands and wives in explaining family size. When various combinations of the non-significant variables (education, sex role orientation and value of children) were used to determine if they would enter the equation, none emerged as significant.

In the study, education did not show any significant effect on either the husbands' or wives' sex role orientation while it had a significant negative effect on their value of children. There was some influence of education on family size.

The wives with most traditional sex role orientation tended to have a large number of children.

Kanther (1982) investigated the role of socio-economic structure on fertility and use of contraceptives use in rural areas of Indonesia. Data utilized were taken from the 1971

population Census, the 1973 Agriculture Census and Service Statistics from Indonesia's family planning programme. Analysis of child-women ratio in all regions of Indonesia suggested that fertility was higher in rural areas with greater literacy and that agrarian communities employing greater mechanization were more likely to have lower fertility. The findings indicated that fertility might be lower in rural areas with diminished land availability. Higher use of irrigation and lower utilization of power driven machinery were also related to greater contraceptive use in 1978. The findings have encouraged the view that socio-cultural factors specific to region and differential family planning programme effort according to province may be crucial in explaining reproductive behaviour in Indonesia.

A study undertaken by Acasio, Luz-C, in Philippines (1982) investigated the factors related to rural women's participation in development programmes. The questions that guided the study were : (1) Are the formal education of rural women, the exposure of rural women to mass media, the rural women's perceptions of the benefit of a development programme related to their participation in it? (2) What incentives are most likely to promote participation of rural women? (3) What factors, as perceived by rural women inhibit or prevent participation? (4) Are certain personal and household characteristics such as age of women, age of children, number of years of married life, household size, women's

position in the family related to participation of rural women? By using an open-ended interview schedule, 90 rural women who were randomly selected, were personally interviewed.

Statistical procedures used to analyze the data are:

- (1) Frequency counts with percentage distribution and
- (2) Stepwise multiple regression.

Excepting the factors, the age of respondents and number of dependent children, all the factors were found to be consistently and significantly related to rural women's participation in a development programme.

A study on the influence of the world economic system on the status of women and their fertility behaviour was conducted by Ward K.B., in 1982, at the University of Iowa. The study proposed that the declining status of women during economic development and the failure of fertility to decline in developing countries are most appropriately understood within the context of the world economic system. First, the intrusion of the world-system through foreign investment and trade dependency is predicted to lower the proportion of women in educational institutions, the labour force, and economic sectors. Second, women's lower status has impeded the decline of fertility. Under the conditions of investment and dependency, the value of children remains high.

These hypotheses were tested using a cross-national sample of 105 nations and data gathered from a number of statistical year books. The findings from multiple regression analyses indicated that investment and dependency had direct negative effect on women's share of labour force participation in 1975.

The status of women and economic development had negative effect on fertility; however, the association between women's education, employment and fertility were lowered or become non-significant. Hence, development, family planning and infant mortality constituted the strongest determinants of fertility; the effect was less in the case of income inequality, the status of women, investment and dependency.

Hunt, Sally North (1982) studied women's labour force participation and family financial resources. The study was designed to investigate the relationship between selected socio-economic characteristics, labour force and family's financial resources.

Data for this investigation were derived from the national longitudinal surveys administered by the Centre for Human Resource Research at Ohio State University. Responses from 3942 mature women (age 30-44) from 1967-1977 were used.

Chi-square analysis was used to determine the relationships between the family's financial resources and labour force, race, family income, respondents' income, health, age, number of dependents, marital status and residence. At the .05 level of significance, female labour force did not have any significant relationship with family's financial resources.

Multiple regression procedures revealed that race, total family income, age, number of dependents, residence of respondents were significant predictor variables for net worth at 0.05 level of significance. Labour force participation was not found to contribute significantly to the explanation of variance in the family financial resource variables.

Several studies have been done on the basis of secondary data. A few of these are cited below.

An empirical study based on U.N. Statistics by Youssef Nadia (1974) showed that in Muslim Countries the female labour force in the agricultural sector was very low, presumably because strict seclusion prevented women from engaging in such activity. There was evidence, however, that the girls did farm work, although they were not paid for it. The investigator argued that the reason for this might be that men were reluctant to report that women in their families

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were working, because to a certain extent status is based on keeping women in seclusion. Pakistan had a higher incidence of female agricultural workers than other Muslim countries.

The author recommended that specially female rural industries be developed to absorb the women for work as well as to improve women's status and sense of self and to further their independence.

Shah and Shah (1980) carried out an investigation on the trends and structure of female labour force participation in Pakistan. The objectives were; (i) to examine the trends in female labour force participation rates from 1951 to the latest available survey in 1975; (ii) to analyze the trends in the occupational structure and; (iii) to examine the correlates of female work participation in rural and urban Pakistan. Several sources of labour force data, including Censuses and Sample Surveys, were used for the analysis.

The participation rates both in urban and rural areas increased over the years significantly. There was a demand for jobs related to the cottage industry in both rural and urban areas. One other area in which it was possible to expand job opportunities for women was that of primary school teachers. Analysis of the 1975 Pakistan Fertility Survey (PFS) showed that the single factor which exerted a strong

negative influence on work participation of urban women was the family's socio-economic level, as measured by husband's education. Observance of purdah, which was positively associated with socio-economic status, was found to have a strong negative effect on work participation.

Joan Abbott (1974) reviewed numerous studies and concluded that the key to the fertility/employment dynamic is the degree to which the separation of work and home is made worthwhile by real economic gain; i.e., that a clear negative relationship existed between fertility and well-paid work outside traditional family roles.

Case studies by Germain and Smock (1974) of the roles, status and fertility levels of Ghanaian (Smock) and Kenyan (Germain) women were conducted in order to test the theory that "as long as women are defined primarily as wives and mothers, they have good reason to continue having children". However, it was hypothesized that both education and employment for women would correlate with fertility rates and that increasing the productivity of women's labour and increasing their education might be critical first steps towards lowering fertility.

#### Indian Studies :

Since historically Bangladesh has been part of the Indian continent and conditions of life are similar, Indian studies are of great relevance for Bangladesh.

At the request of the Committee on the Status of Women, the ICSSR (Indian Council of Social Science Research) commissioned a large number of studies on various aspects of women's status.

Two such studies were sponsored by ICSSR on specific identifiable groups of women workers, particularly in the unorganized sector. One was conducted by Ranade, S.N., (1975) on 150 women construction workers, selected from nine major construction sites in various parts of Delhi. Only those respondents who were married and were 20 years or above in age were selected. Another was done by Sinha, G.P., (1974) through a survey of women workers employed by two major construction projects in and around Patna; 150 women workers covering roughly 20 per cent workers from each sites were selected randomly. Information schedule was used to interview the respondents.

The purpose was to ascertain the demographic characteristics of women in this industry, the systems of recruitment, general service conditions, type of work and wage structure, health, living and welfare facilities and other economic conditions in order to identify and assess the specific nature of their problems. The survey also sought to obtain the women's opinions on marriage, divorce, dowry, sex preferences in regard to children, number of children considered desirable, family planning, and the relative status of husband and wife.



The findings indicated a high degree of indebtedness and insecurity among these women, coupled with extremely arduous and unremitting labour which resulted, in a higher rate of infant mortality. The study also pointed out that although almost all workers were covered by protective labour laws, the Government made no attempt to enforce these laws and non-implementation was common. On the other hand both the studies indicated that attempts to protect these workers - whether by law or by official regulation - generally ended in futility because of the unorganised nature of this labour, their helpless dependence on unscrupulous intermediaries and the unskilled nature of their work which made them easily dispensable.

Jain, Devaki (1975) made a survey on an experiment to promote self-employment in an urban Area. This is a survey of the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Ahmedabad to highlight the condition of women in the unorganized sector, and how the process of organization through their association has helped various groups of illiterate, extremely poor, self-employed women consisting of vegetable vendors, cart pullers, junksmiths, used and readymade garment sellers etc. to adjust to the process of development and modernization.

The income groups that have become members of SEWA earned between Rs.150 per month to more than Rs.750 per month, and Rs.3 to Rs.15 a day. About 97 per cent of the women were

slum dwellers and 93 per cent illiterate. The average number of children was four. The survey indicated that the women have gained financial strength, a better position in the family, and confidence.

Bhatt Ela (1975) examined the economic status of self-employed women in Ahmedabad. She found that between 18 and 23 per cent of the self-employed women in the sample were sole supporters of their families, an estimate that not only included widows, but also women with unemployed, chronically ill, handicapped, or irresponsible husbands. Her profiles of self-employed women also clearly showed that a large proportion of them made a much larger contribution to household income than other earning members; women vegetable vendors were responsible on the average for 74 per cent of total household income.

A case study of Jhok Sayal, a predominantly Muslim village in the Punjab conducted by Khan, Seemin Anwar in 1976. It described the environment, and living conditions of women in this rural village, attitudes of the women towards education, marriage, family planning. Sixty three married women from 63 separate households were interviewed, none was a household head. The findings showed that 87 per cent lived in Katcha\* houses while Pucca\* houses belonged to

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\*Katcha = Katcha house is made of mud, wood.

\*Pacca = Pacca house is made of bricks, cement.

tenants; most lived in close proximity to livestock and without separate latrine and cooking facilities; the women's days were spent in hard, physical labour, interspersed with childcare, housework; physical chores become even more burdensome during planting, harvesting and processing; greater importance was attached to the education of males than of females; 62 per cent wished their daughters to be married between the ages of 12 and 17; reasons given for nonacceptance of family planning included: preference for sons, economic security in old age. Most women disapproved of selling their skills for cash.

An exploratory study of the relationship between education and variations in the observance of the purdah among middle class married Muslim women in Aligarh City was conducted by Ahmed Shadbano in 1977. The criteria used to measure the nuances in the practice of purdah were 'strict', 'partial', 'intermittent' and 'absent'. A random sample was drawn from 11 mohallas which had a predominately (90%) Muslim population. The voting lists for 1971 were used. The interviews indicated that there was a linear relationship between education and the degree of observance of purdah which was statistically significant in negative direction. There was a difference in the practice of purdah by illiterate women and those who had at least a secondary school education which tended to bring about certain change in personal orientations.

There was no significant difference in the observance of purdah among illiterate women and those who received only religious education.

Singh, A.M.'s (1977) study was done on women in four unauthorised squatter settlement (bastis) in New Delhi. The bastis of Pallanpur, Devendrapur, Kaharpur and Hassanpur were selected for the investigation.

Interviews with 161 adult women indicated certain dimensions of family life. Adverse agricultural conditions in the villages influenced their decision to migrate, but ties of kinship, custom, spatial and economic factors determined the family structure. About 90 per cent of the families were nuclear in structure. There was a considerable sharing between husband and wife in decision making with husbands having a dominant say in financial matters. Economic necessity had forced basti women to work but they earned half as much as men per unit of time worked. Yet they made an important contribution to family income.

The author concluded by stating that the basic needs of women in basties - in the areas of education, employment, health, public facilities and services should be taken into consideration by policy makers in order to achieve the full potential for human growth and development in the cities.

Jhabvala Rehman (1979) too made a survey on Muslim Women from Dariapur, a predominantly Muslim area, in Ahmedabad where the men worked in textile mills, as auto rickshaw drivers or petty traders. This class of Muslim women in Ahmedabad was involved in making garments, quilts, pillow covers, toys, kites, bangles, sweets, bidi and buttons. Some were also involved in dyeing and block printing works, construction work and petty trading.

These jobs were physically hard and took a lot of time, approximately 10-12 hours a day, often hazardous to the health. Women were frustrated with their work and under such emotional and physical strain of work and home responsibility they did not get support from any one. Often this tension broke into violence expressed as self-abuse.

With the major objective of identifying the employment characteristics of the women and determinants of their participation in labour market, Hirway Indira conducted an investigation in 1978 in Gujarat. The area of the study was Jambusar taluka of Gujarat. The data were collected through stratified random sampling for studying the employment characteristics of the population. In all 304 families were selected. The methodology used was a combination of the questionnaire-interview and participation-observation approaches.

The study showed that women were working mainly in unskilled activities while semiskilled and skilled jobs were dominated by men. It also showed that farmers were not willing to employ women for operating insecticide sprayers or for application of fertilizers, but they were preferred for low paid operations like weeding, cotton picking, etc. (Daily wages were Rs.2.00 to Rs.4.00).

Analysis of several factors such as family size, number of young children, sex ratio, age of women, literacy, caste and household percapita income showed that per capita income of the family was the single most important factor influencing the occupation-wise variation in the female participation rates. There was a negative and significant relationship between the female participation and the per capita income of the household. The analysis showed that even before they reached the poverty line income level, women withdrew from the labour market when their income increased.

The same investigator (1979), using the 1971 census data for the purpose, had also undertaken an investigation to examine the characteristics of rural women's economic participation in different districts of Gujarat and explained the inter-district variations in terms of economic and non-economic factors. The analysis of the data showed that except for the sex ratio, the non-economic factors

such as number of children below 14, percentage of women between ages 15-59 years and average family size and literary level did not have significant role in explaining the district-wise variations in the female participation rates. Caste and percentage of irrigated area were found to be an important factor influencing the female participation.

Multiple regression analysis using four important factors namely, scheduled caste/tribes, population, percentage of irrigated area, per capita income and the extent of non-agricultural employment in the district as independent factors revealed that these factors together explained 72 per cent of the districtwise variation. Of the four factors, percentage of scheduled caste/tribe population and percentage of irrigated area were significant at 5 per cent and 10 per cent levels respectively.

Patel B.B. (1979) carried out an investigation to examine the trend and variation in the female labour force participation in urban areas in Gujarat in general and in Ahmedabad city in particular and factors influencing the extent of participation and variations in labour force. Demographic, socio-cultural and economic characteristics of these women were also examined to understand the poverty problem which would help to suggest certain policy direction. The subjects of the study were urban blue-collar working

women engaged in various non-agricultural activities in Ahmedabad city. The study covered 615 blue-collar working women. Census data were used as sampling frame to determine the proportions of workers. Sample selection was done randomly. Within each activity the procedure to select sample depended upon the availability of data. The detailed interviews were however, conducted at their residence in most cases. Analysis based on household data was done to throw light on household unemployment and poverty. The usual model of women's participation in economic activities, that is, an increase in family income with unchanged wage rate for women is likely to result either in reduction in work at home or withdrawal from market work was adopted in this study. The relative strength of each of these effect would determine whether net effect would lead to increase or decrease in labour force participation by women.

However, the present study showed that despite low earnings almost all of them replied 'NO' to the suggestion as to whether they would like to withdraw from work at some stage of family income. The percapita household income for majority of these working women revealed that they lived on the margin of poverty. Had these women been out of the labourforce, the poverty would have been move pervasive and severe in these households. Hence, work alone did not ensure



eradication of one's poverty. In this context, the author has argued that the phenomenon of employment, and income and poverty must not be looked at in aggregative Keynesian terms of simply providing more jobs. Providing appropriate jobs at reasonable wage rates is an equally pertinent issue.

Brahme, Sulabha (1979) carried out a study of unorganized women workers in an urban area - the Hamal women in Pune (Maharashtra) who were engaged in the manual work. For this, 75 Hamal women were interviewed, the contacts being made through their union, the Hamal Panchayat. Five areas of Pune city were selected for the survey. These included the wholesale market in foodgrains, the central vegetable and fruit market, a timber market, a goods yard at the railway station and a Government grain godown. The demographic characteristics of the 75 women and the families indicated high incidence of widowhood, early marriage, high death rate among children, lack of education - all of which reflected the low level of living conditions of Hamal women. Their earnings were inadequate to meet the basic minimum needs. In 50 per cent of the families covered, women were principal earners, in 33 per cent they were sole earners.

In the study on "Labour Supply and Wage determination in rural Uttar Pradesh" Papola, T.S. and Misra, V.N., (1979) have attempted to find out the rural market situation in Uttar Pradesh on a cross section, inter-district basis using

census data for 1971. The data were collected on a time series basis. The investigation attempted to identify determinants of labour supply and wage rates. The finding showed a significant negative relationship between income levels and female participation rate. At lower levels of income, participation rate among female workers was high, while it declined with the increase in income levels.

Bardhana's study (1979) has dealt with the analysis of various kinds of work participation and occupational differentiation of rural women in West Bengal and the labour market conditions of the single largest group of working women - the casual agricultural labourers. Work participation, withdrawal, and division of labour were seen with regard to caste, income landholding structures and production environment. This was done on the basis of an analysis of microdata from the 27th Round of NSS. The findings indicated that there was higher participation and concentration in farm work for lowest caste women, and concentration in nonfarm work for the upper ones indicating a differentiation within the rural labour market according to the social hierarchy or by associated skill differences. The female share of farm employment and relative wage were found to rise more in agriculturally developed areas and during busy seasons. In areas with little agricultural growth and spare cropping patterns, the female unemployment

was likely to be severe and female wage rate relatively depressed.

Jetley Surinder (1979) conducted a study to analyze the impact of planned social change and modernization on rural women and to identify the section of women most affected in order to formulate strategies for plans for women's development. The indicators used to analyze the impact of development were sex ratio, births and deaths, age at marriage, health and medical facilities, literacy and education, contact with urbanization and work participation. The analysis was done on the basis of village census data undertaken for the project. The village selected had a mixed population belonging to the Hindu and Muslim religions.

It was found that the landowning castes had larger families while the landless had single units. There were more deaths among females than males. There was an increase in the age at marriage among upper castes but among Muslims and lower castes child marriage existed. The findings also indicated that development had benefited those who own the land as they have received state assistance such as credit, technical knowhow, supply of inputs etc. Modernization of agriculture removed women from their

traditional activities (weeding, hoeing) as the new skilled operations were done by males. With the reduction in the cultivation of cotton, women's work in handicrafts declined also.

Mazumdar Vina et al (1979) made a comprehensive study on the situation of women in rural India through analysing the data drawn from Census, NSS, Ministries of Education/Health/Social Welfare/Agriculture/Rural Development. Included was a demographic profile; sex ratio, mortality and fertility, age at marriage, literacy and education, employment.

The highlights of the findings are briefly outlined below:

- I) The sex ratio was not in favour of women in several states. The reasons for this were:
  - (1) differentials in mortality rates of males and females;
  - (2) Poor environmental conditions;
  - (3) Poor and scarce health services;
  - (4) Repeated pregnancies and malnutrition.
- II) There was a decline in real earnings and days of wage employment. Two major trends in women's employment were identified. These were:
  - (1) a decline in the absolute numbers in their participation;

- (2) a gradual shrinking in their employment in traditional occupation due to modernization.

III) There was a change in the role of household and small sector industries. 92% of women workers in rural areas were found to be illiterate - particularly high among agricultural and construction workers, mining and quarry workers. The 1971 census data indicates a higher proportion of female migrant workers in primary sector in the economically backward regions. Scheduled tribe women were largely cultivators and their households had large number of wage earners. Households with women as head of family were found among the poorest households.

From a somewhat similar point of view Mitra, Asok (1979) analysed the census data of 1971. The main argument of this study was that female literacy and education, employment of women outside home and improvement in public health leading to reduction in infant and child mortality lead to small family norms and to a reduction in fertility rates. In 1971, there were in absolute numbers 56 million more illiterate women than in 1951 and the gap between the number of illiterate men and women was twice as much. The decline in women's employment had serious consequences on mortality, fertility and malnutrition. The striking feature

was the erosion of female workforce in the vital income and wealth producing sectors of national economy and their higher concentration in low paid, less, skilled, physically taxing work which directly affected their health. Moreover, higher mortality and morbidity in women in the first two thirds of their reproductive life removed them from the workforce in large numbers.

In the same year, Mitra Asok, Srimary, A.K. and Pathak, L.P., (1979) made a study on participation of females as compared to that of males in household and non-household economic activity in rural and urban areas based on census of 1961.

Household industry was strictly confined to manufacturing on the household level, whereas non-household industry covered all the activity outside of household. The major finding was that the average sex ratio of workers in non-household industry was less than that in household industry. This confirmed the common notion that economic activities at household level engage females in higher proportions than in non-household economic activity. The authors have argued that this is a testimony to the low social and economic position of women, to their low literacy and technological levels, to the impediments in the way of their development of skills, and to the social taboos against unescorted women going out to work.

There was an indepth study of the progressive breakdown of landlordism and how it affected women in the different strata of the agricultural society in Kerala by Saradamon, K. (1979). The study was confined to three selected areas in Palghat district in Kerala.

The matrilineal system of inheritance prevailed among the Nairs and the joint family system called Taravad. Within this system, a family property passed from one generation to another through the women of the family. Women who belonged to the Taravad had a special status as preservers. Female children were welcomed more. Women had an essential security. Some changes took place with coming of British rule. It led to break up of joint families accompanying changes in landownership, education and employment.

The author also reviewed the impact of recent legislation the Kerala land Reforms Act of 1971. Labour households depended on income of women. Work was the primary occupation of the women of labour households but they performed all household work too. Women who were helpless came from upper caste aristocratic households - those who had lost the security of the Taravad increasingly moved towards dependence on males.

Sharma Ursula, (1980) studied on the conventions which control the use of social space by women in North India within the context of Purdah. The study was based on

fieldwork carried out in Punjab during the winter of 1977-78 in Harbassi, a large village in District Hoshiarpur.

In Harbassi, women of the upper class families - capitalist farmers, professionals, shopkeepers, traders rarely moved outside their homes, while women of lower classes had to move out to cultivate their fields, or sell their services in the village. But they could not eat out on their own or talk loudly. For Muslim women, they used burqa (veil covering head) while they were moving about outside. Women avoided the bazar, the main road, the bus stand. They were allowed to move about in their own fields with confidence.

Age rather than marital status governed the strictness with which a woman observed norms controlling her movement in public space. A married woman in Harbassi would be constrained by what her parents-in-law regarded as proper behaviour and suitable friends. Restrictions of movement outside their homes limited women's capacity to form relationships even with women outside her own family. But some social visits were allowed, particularly during weddings, births or even deaths.

Singh, K.P. (1980) made an investigation to find out regional variations in female labour force participation by focusing on the employment patterns of women in Punjab-rural/urban areas and the types of occupation in which women



predominated. The analysis was confined to the data of 1971 Census. Female labour force participation rates were explained in terms of per capita income which was the highest in Punjab.

The findings showed that agricultural development, in the 'green revolution' areas had led to a sharp fall in the number of women working on the farms. With rise in technology of land use, Punjab farmers had become more status conscious and they were not willing to use female labour. With the decline of traditional handicrafts and cottage industries in rural areas, alternative traditional employment for women was declining. Female participation rate was related to land-ownership. About 3.01 per cent of women were working in urban areas as against 1.26 per cent in the rural areas. With the exception of Patiala and Amritsar districts, the rate of female employment was closely related to female literacy in each district and the percentage of female workers showed a consistent decline with a decline in the female literacy.

Khanna and Varghese (1981) have studied some issues related to women's roles and status in Indian society. Attempts were made to get a representative sample of Indian women from different areas of the country and belonging to different socio-economic strata through two stage probability sampling. Areas of the country formed the first stage unit. The sample households, belonging to three socio-economic status

(Kuppuswami Scale), formed the second stage unit. Altogether 1000 women were interviewed, 200 from each of the five areas. For each area, 50 women each from the upper and lower socio-economic group and 100 from the middle socio-economic group were included in making up a complete sample on random basis.

The study revealed that there was a significant change in women in attitudes towards inter-caste marriage, family planning, co-education, sex education and girls' education because of increased education and economic development. Simultaneously a negative relationship was found between education and the attitude towards dowry and joint family system. Women with low education especially in the lower strata of society, were reluctant to accept family planning for the fear that their children might not live. The findings also showed some differences between working wives and housewives. These were as follows:

- (1) The role in decision-making was found to be almost the same for working and non-working women, the percentage being slightly more for the working women.
- (2) Marital adjustment became more difficult for working wives.
- (3) Working women generally preferred small families with one or two children, while housewives preferred families of medium size, i.e., three to four children.

The decision-making again varied with the educational level of the wife. If the wife was educated regardless of the fact whether she was a housewife or working, important decisions were made after consultation with her. The finding also indicated a sequence of cause and effect:

Educated women ----> had greater opportunities ----> motivation to exploit opportunities ----> changes in attitude----> conflict with existing institutions ----> acceptance of new challenges ----> improvement in women's status.

With the sponsorship of Gujarat Government, the Faculty of Home Science, M.S. University of Baroda (1981) conducted a field study in order to obtain firsthand information about the extent of the backwardness of the 2 selected areas through Social Input Project (SIP), in Baroda district, Gujarat.

Of particular interest in this respect was provision of information about socio-economic indices of the women, their interest, their felt needs, their beliefs and their aspiration for their children etc.

The sample consisted of 109 households purposively chosen to represent the small, marginal and landless labourers. The major findings are as follows:

- (1) Nearly 55 per cent of the 109 households surveyed had a joint family structure. The average family size was 6.24 members. 80 per cent of the families were engaged in farming.
- (2) The daily life of women was characterized by work from dawn to dusk.
- (3) Most of the women expressed a highly fatalistic attitude saying "What is there in life except hard work".
- (4) Despite their fatalism they showed willingness towards learning skills and employment on the ground that it would bring income to the family.

Dandekar, V.M. (1982) has illustrated the dimensions and the nature of the problem regarding women's participation in economic activity in India using the 1971 Census of population.

The data showed that the ratio of women workers to men workers is highest in agricultural labour being 49.83 women per 100 men. The ratio is 26.51 in household industry, 13.49 in cultivation, and only 11.29 in other economic activities. These three activities together constituting 73.20 percent of all workers are essentially unorganized activities based on pre-capitalist modes of production. Findings showed that the principal difference between men and women affecting participation of women in economic activity was the fact that fully 44.52 per cent of women were tied down to household duties while less than one per cent (.082%) men shared that

burden. This prevented women from participating in economic activity equally with men. The burden of household duties also kept women behind in schooling. He has argued that the position of women in the households was an integral part of the resulting social structure. The exclusion of women's activities in the households from 'economic' activities is a matter of subjective judgement. Hence, some of the women reported 'not working' might indeed be working and participating in economic activities of the households. He also suggested that for a given demand for labour in agriculture and household industry, increase of women's participation in these activities will need men's sharing the burden of household duties with their womenfolk, and a fundamental change in men's attitude towards women.

#### Studies in Bangladesh :

As far as Bangladesh is concerned, a few studies relevant to the present subject matter have been done. Some of those studies are reported here.

Ahmed Tahurennessa carried out a study on rural women in 1966. This was just a factual descriptive study regarding the life of women in the rural areas as could be seen in a few villages in the district of Comilla.

The purpose of the survey was to learn about the life cycle, customs and culture that are associated with day to day activities of rural women. This study was based on discussion and interviews with women in the villages, the women visiting the villages and thana education centres and people closely associated with rural extension work. It was observed that the system of Purdah was varying according to social status, economic condition, age, kinship, etc. Pardah was connected not only with religion, but also with status. Although every women knew that she could get a share of her father's property, few of them expressed that they would claim it. Under the present social system, the arrangement of 'nuyor' (visiting parent's house after marriage) was expressed as good, because it could improve a woman's health and nutrition. In her in-law's house it was difficult for her to eat except at meal time.

Satter Ellen's (1974) study was about the married women of a small village in rural Bangladesh. This was also a simple descriptive type of study to gain detailed information about the village women's life style. By interviewing the women and gathering details of their life style, a composite picture was built up of the general pattern.

A striking feature reported in the study was that 71 per cent of the village women wanted their daughters to

complete at least primary education so that they could avail themselves of employment opportunity.

An indepth investigation was done by Chaudhury, R.H. (1975) on some issues and problems of married women in non-agricultural occupations in a metropolitan urban area of Bangladesh. Analysis of the study was primarily based on 582 working women drawn from different strata of occupation groups and 548 non-working women of Dhaka City. The data were collected by the socio-economic survey of working Vs. non-working women of Dhaka city in 1974. In the selecting of sample women, both stratified sampling and propotionate (50 per cent) sampling procedures were adopted. The survey was limited to those women who were married, living with their husbands and reported to be fecund. This was also confined to middle class working women belonging to organized sectors of the labour force.

Findings of the study revealed that most of the working women came from disadvantageous families; economic need was the prime reason for joining the labour force. Working women's contribution to family income was significant, with many women acting as principal breadwinners for their parent's families. It was also found that sex discrimination in terms of salary and promotion was most prominent among the lower occupation groups.

Job satisfaction varied positively with age, but inversely with education. Among the variables hindering female participation in labour force, the study noted the following:

- (1) dearth of adequate job opportunities;
- (2) unwillingness on the part of some educated women to work outside home due to fear of an adverse effect on children;
- (3) strong feeling of sex discrimination in recruitment of job; and
- (4) low education achievement of females due to lack of educational facilities and/or unfavourable social attitude towards female education.

Farouk, A. et al (1975) conducted a survey in seven unions of different categories - modern, traditional, urban and rural. Respondents were selected from heads of the households and their spouses.

When these men and women were compared, the data showed that literacy was much lower among the women and that wives were about 8 years younger than their husbands. The survey found that women spent longer time in productive work than their counterparts and the larger the size of the family the heavier was the burden of work on housewives, but it went generally unnoticed because most of it related



to the kitchen and to other household work. There was a positive correlation between family size and the number of hours spent on productive work by housewives in all the surveyed areas while this correlation did not exist for husbands. Even where there was a positive correlation for both women and men, however, the magnitude of the co-efficients was larger for the women than for men.

Marty Chen and Ruby Ghuznavi (1976) undertook a research into the socio-economic implications of food-for-work for female labourers. It was a case study of a number of female participants in rural wage economy. The objectives of the research were : (1) to identify, socially and economically, the women who participate in food-for-work activities; (2) to examine the socio-economic implications of food-for-work participation for those women and their families; (3) to quantify a work norm for female labourers in food-for-work; (4) to derive policy and project recommendations that would ensure women's interest and rights in food-for-work and other developmental activities in Bangladesh.

In all cases studied, the economic need outweighed negative official attitudes or social barriers. Economic need was more compelling than social stigma for these women. The women were either divorced, widowed or deserted, if they were married, their husbands were disabled or could not find

employment. Some of them had to support the whole burden of the families, for them, however, the choice was either work or starvation. But the number of food-for-work opportunities offered to women was related directly to whether officials favoured recruitment of women. For paying wage in terms of kind, the officials considered their performance by male standards. Number of dependents, health and other nutritional needs and other socio-economic factors affecting well-being were not taken into account. The findings indicated that the policy of concession for extraordinary working conditions, officially called 'payment for allied work', enabled male labourers to earn their nutritional requirements. Likewise an adjusted work norm for women should be consistent with this practice of concessions. The central fact was that the food-for-work programmes were positive because the aid was earned, reached the poorest and helped women assume new roles and through these programmes, the women who entered the paid labour force, became 'visible'. These women were completely or very significantly dependent on wage earnings, but food-for-work was seasonal and there was a need for year-round employment.

Based on limited data drawn from female workers at four productive enterprises in and around Dhaka, Chaudhury, N. and Afroz, G. (1976) attempted to identify the role that

women could play in production activities in the socio-economic development of Bangladesh. The sample size was 96-women workers engaged in productive activities; jute production, cotton textiles, bamboo works and doll making and sampling procedure was nonrandom. Based on the socio-economic and demographic data collected, the study indicated that women in productive activities could play a role that would go beyond mere production and would include activities in population control in that work of women outside home would lower the number of birth and widen the spacing of children born.

Two studies were carried out by Chaudhury, R.H. (1977) on fertility behaviour of women in Bangladesh.

The analysis was based on the data collected in the course of a socio-economic survey of women in Dhaka city (1974) and by the Bangladesh Fertility Survey which was done in 1975. In all 4613 women were interviewed. All were married and living with their husbands. There were both working and non-working women in the sample.

He has examined the relationship between female education, labour force participation, age at marriage and conjugal role relationship and fertility and use of contraception. The major findings based on these studies were as follows:

- (1) There existed an inverse relationship between education of wife and her fertility as measured by the number of children ever born.
- (2) Female education had a relatively more depressing effect on fertility and use of contraceptives than male education.
- (3) Female education is also found to be associated with long spacing and use of contraception.
- (4) Gainful employment induces illiterate women to practise contraception and control over fertility.
- (5) The use of contraceptives was higher among couples who decide the number and spacing of their children jointly, compared to those in which decision was made by one spouse only.
- (6) There was an inverse relationship between female age at marriage and fertility.

Zaman, S.S. et al (1980) conducted a pilot study to find out the attitude towards work among women in Bangladesh. The purpose was to investigate whether any socio-economic variables were influencing the attitude of women towards work or not.

It was hypothesized that women who have had more education, reside in a rural area, are involved in income earning activity, are poor and are younger in age would have favourable attitude towards work.

The survey interviewed 148 women (87 rural and 61 urban) and 79 men (43 rural and 36 urban). A stratified random sample was drawn according to region (urban/rural), employment (working/non-working), education (high/low), economic condition (rich/poor) and age (old/young).

The results (using Chi-square test) indicated that of all the socio-economic variables investigated, "occupational status" was found to be most significant among rural women in determining attitude towards work. That is rural working women had more favourable attitude towards work than rural non-working women which was significant at .02 level of significance. Location was also found to be significant in determining attitude towards work (at .05 level). An indepth interview with 32 women (16 rural and 16 urban) revealed that the other pertinent factors such as, non availability of jobs, nepotism, bribery, harassment etc. were the main determining factors for the non-participation of women in different developmental activities of the country.

To investigate the relevant issues of female employment, Islam, Rizwanul (1980) carried out a study with special reference to rural areas in Bangladesh. Data analyzed in this study were collected from a benchmark survey of three villages undertaken by the National Foundation for Research on Human Research Development (NFRHRD) during 1977-78.

The findings of the study formed the basis of argument that the census definition of labour force is too narrow in the context of the peasant economy of rural Bangladesh because of the fact that female participation in productive work within the household can also be taken as a good indicator of female labour in the rural economy. In the sampled villages, more than 30 per cent of total active females were reported to be engaged in productive work within the household.

Degree of female participation in the labour market was found to vary inversely with the level of household income. Households with female heads and/or only female workers were also concentrated at the lower end of the income scale. Most important finding was the male-female differentials in employment opportunities and wage rates.

McCarthy, F.E. (1981) studied the differential family characteristics of a sample of rural households in Bogra, district of Bangladesh. The main purpose was to find out the particular aspect of women's productive roles in agriculture, that is, their involvement in post-harvest rice processing operations.

The faculty of the Bogra Academy for Rural Development had survey data on many villages which was used to purposively select the village as well as a proportional sample of village

households based on para\*, family type, and whether or not they used domestic grinder of paddy in their homes. In all a total of 94 households were surveyed. Of the 94 families, only 17 families were solely dependent on land as their primary source of income. The remaining 77 families were engaged in a combination of farming and off-farming activities. In order to set the stage for an analysis of post harvest processing activities among sample families, data were analyzed to delineate variations in patterns of land ownership and tenancy relations, income earning activities, occupation, number of working family members, amount of non-farm income earned and family size.

Zaman M.Q.'s (1982) study dealt with marriage pattern and family types as prevalent in a village in Bangladesh. The selected village was located near the district town Rajshahi. A total of 387 married females and 295 married males were interviewed.

One interesting finding was that out of 387 married women in sample village, 216 (56 per cent) got married when they were not even 12 years old, whereas the percentage of married males of that age group was only 5. The percentage of all reported marriages below the legal minimum age (16 years) appeared as high as 93 per cent. Out of total married males 64 per cent married once, others married twice or more. The

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\* Para = Para is the area consisting of several houses.

study showed that the nuclear type was dominant being 53 per cent of the total households. Finally the study indicated that a correlation existed between land ownership and family type.

D'Souza Stan et al (1982) based on empirical data from other studies (Demographic Surveillance System for the period of 1974-77, and a nutrition study in Matlab, Bangladesh in 1974) identified some socio-economic mortality differentials in rural Bangladesh. The findings revealed that infant and child mortality decreased with educational level of both husband and wife. Inverse relationship between mortality and socio-economic status was found. Sex-biased attitudes and practices operated to affect health, nutrition and mortality. The data also showed that family allocation of food and health care discriminated against female children and caused higher mortality in childhood.

The review described above shows in recent years that the studies of women have achieved some momentum, but it is evident that the theme of Women and Development is too complex and wide to be exhausted by isolated studies, however, numerous they may be. Governments which are conscious and serious about the uplifting the images and the status of women in society must give priority to the problem by giving more power and allocating more funds to the Ministry or department that concern themselves with women



affair so that they will be able to extend necessary services on a continuing bases for the causes of women. Needless to say Home Economists have significant role to play in such a programme.