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PREFACE

The world is moving fast for development. On eve of twenty first century everyone talks of development. Mankind is passing through an intense crisis of actual-real development. Economic development has dominated cultural scenario of world. Global concept of environment and human development is losing its entity. More and more material wealth is generated ignoring availability of natural wealth. Post-industrial revolution in world in general has brought about significant change in living pattern of human society. Global transformation processes are visualised at great length. Age of interdependence is reality for which we are craving. Economic development is now recognised as a significant and comprehensive part of human development. Women's issues are no longer confined exclusively to women's movement, but find centre stage in frame-work of development thought and policy. Women are recognised as a critical group for development. According to World Bank Country Study (1991)" Gender and Poverty in India", women must be seen as economic actorswith a particularly important role to play in efforts to reduce poverty. With spread of literacy and change like declining birth rates and size of family, women's participation in labour force is increasing. Women are generally contributing more towards country's employment level and economic development. There has been recognition of fact that self-employed and home based workers are a considerable segment of women's labour force. Women have a noticeable presence in unorganised informal sector too. Four major reports in recent times (Towards Equality-1974,Shram Shakti-1988,National Perspective Plan for Women- 1988 and Country Report for Fourth World Conference on Women-1995) have assembled data on work and life style of India's female labour force. One of the most important

results of these reports is discovery that women as a distinct group are more active than men in nation's economic development.

Globalisation and structural adjustment taking place in Indian economy is leading to more flexible reorganisation of labour processes. New technology with its emphasis on skill and exercise of discretion is more gender neutral. This combination of introduction of new technology with flexible work arrangement is resulting in feminisation of labour. However, it is over simplistic to treat female labour force as a homogeneous category. Caste, religion, class and age contribute to plurality of prospective and heterogeneity of this labour segment. Women's access to and control over resources and their potential for mobility change according to region, religion and social status, to which they belong. Custom and tradition also prescribe jobs in which women could be employed. Women's labour force behaviour and their access to resources are linked to gender ideology of community to which she belongs. To the extent that these factors have bearing on their status, their experiences become situation-specific emphasising need to place them in socio-cultural context.

With above context, main objective of this micro level study is to analyse different issues of poverty, education, health, and empowerment etc. of women in relation to men in public and private sphere. An attempt has been made to find way out to remove traditional socio-economic and political barriers so that bulk of population of the country will be included in development agenda by resolving gender issues. The study has been concluded with viable suggestions to policy makers and planners of our country to make all-inclusive plans and policies so that growth and development of the country may be translated in to reality.

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