2. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Trait Yug

According to the Hindu religion, the Supreme Being contains both masculine and feminine traits. The female part is as important and the male part. One has to consider the feminine aspect of the divine, in order to know the ultimate truth. (Pattanaik Devdutt, 1996.).

The Hindu concept of Ardhanarishwara is nothing but the synthesis of the masculine and the feminine energies. Lakshmi is the Goddess of wealth, her husband Vishnu, who metes out punishment, but Lakshmi are kind always, intercedes with Vishnu on behalf of her followers. The energy of Shiva becomes meaningful and complete only when Parvati, the female energy, joins him. Sarsasvati is the wife or consort of Brahma, the creator God who is rarely worshipped. Kali is black and represents the creative and destructive energies of the Goddess and is a prominent factor in the destruction of the Asuras. (Encyclopedia Britannica Premium Service.et.al 2005)

2.2. Epic Period

During the pouranic period women were known as “Pativarta”. It was a definition applied to women who worshipped their husbands alone and didn’t recognize any other God. Mandodari is definitely on the Pativarta list, because the Gods recognized her as a Pativarata and to worship God is not going against a woman’s duty. Draupadi deserves the attention of the modern women. She is not going to tolerate injustice. She will be brilliant and have the properties of purity and purification. In some ways, she upheld the honor of women for all times. Savitri is one of the Indian women who inspired women to love their husbands. However, a wise woman builds her house, but the foolish uproots her house. Sita had great mental strength and exhibited it throughout her life. She represents wifely devotion, forbearance and chastity. Radha, which means prosperity and success, is one of the Gopikas of Vrindavan. Radha is the original manifestation of love and devotion. (Denton L.T.1991)

2.3. Vedic Period :


Through book writer narrate and explain about the position of ancient women in detail. This book also narrates excellent position and status of ancient women and how they enjoyed equal position and status in the society. (Aggarwal J.C. 1999.)

According number of sources scholars believe that in ancient India, the women enjoyed equal status with men in all fields of life. Ghoshala grand-daughter of Dirghatamas and daughter of Kakshiyat both composers of hymens in praise of Ashwins. (Lal B.B. 2005)

Maitreyi, the women prophetess and philosopher, out of 1000 Rig-Vedic hymens, 10 are accredited to Maitreyi. Gargi was one of the eminent philosophers, challenged the sage Yajnavalkya with a volley of perturbing questions on the soul that confounded the learned man who had till then silenced many an eminent scholar. (Kocher Rajesh, 1999.)

During the Vedic age, near bout more than 3,000 years ago, women were assigned a high place in society. They shared an equal standing with their men folk and enjoyed a kind of liberty that actually had societal sanctions. (Das Subhamoy, 2008.)

It is emphasized that girls too should train themselves as students and only then enter into married life. (Trivedi Kshemkarandas, 2007.)

The Vedic period was glorified by the tradition. Many women were rishis and indeed several of them authored many of the slokas in the Vedas. God provided the knowledge of the Vedas in the hearts of women just as He did in the case of men. How can God who is the embodiment of kindness, just and fair discriminate between man and woman among his own children? (Jha Raghbendra, 2007.)

The Vedic times were free from many of the social evils that harmed the Indian society in the later eras. Child marriage, sati untouchability and was not practiced, and widows were free to marry. They inherited rights to the dead husband’s properties. No man or woman was locked into a trade by birth. Members of the same family took to different crafts and trades. (Sreenivasrao 2007)
2.4. Medieval Period

Medieval India was supposed to be the ‘Dark Age’ for women. Medieval India saw many foreign conquests in the decline in women’s status; they brought with them their own culture and for them women were the sole property of her father, brother or husband and she does not have any will of her own. This type of thinking also crept into the minds of Indian people and they also began to treat their own women like, this. One more reason for the decline in women’s status and freedom was that original Indians wanted to shield their women folk from the barbarous Muslim invaders. (www.indianetzone.com > society > 2011)

Polygamy, purhada, dowry, sati, child marriage, jauhar, devdasis and a ban on widow marriages became part of social life among some communities in India. The Bhakti movements and the Guru Nanak preached the message of equality between men and women. Guru Nanak advocated that women should be allowed to lead religious assemblies, armies on the battle field, have equality in marriage and equality in Amrita. (Nalawade Yuvraj, 2009.)

A young medieval woman from wealthy noble family would be sent away to complete her education and taught a range of subjects like French, skills, manners and etiquette, music, dancing, riding and archery were also taught. In spite of these conditions, some women excelled in the fields of politics, literature, education and religion. (Dr.D’Souza Eugence, 2004)

Rani Laxmibai is the Joan of Arc of the Indian freedom struggle. She was very beautiful, intelligent and brave and married with Gangadhar Rao, King of Jhansi. For the protection of the Jhansi from the British they adopted Damodar and this adoption was declared illegal by the Lord Dalhousie’s through Doctrine of Lapse. Rani Laxmibai was refused to accept the order of the British Government. She declared war against British for the protection of her empire. (David Saul, 2003.)

Jodhabai was very beautiful and that is what pushed her, a child bride of 13 years, into his harem as Marim Zamani, Rajput princes became a helpless pawn in that, “political deal” between Akbar and Raja Bharmal. It was Akbar’s lust and her beautiful body, pure and simple sex exploitation and nothing more. She used wealth and influence to build gardens, wells, and mosque around the
country. She owned and oversees the ships that carried pilgrims to and from the Islamic holy city Mecca. (Glynn, Catherine, Smart, Ellen, 1997.)

The Holkar dynasty was succeeded by Ahilyabai Holkar and she ruled with great skill and understanding. Her rule became proverbial for justice and wisdom and she was the rare Indian royalty to be deified in her life time. She contributed a lot to the heritage of India by establishing several religious edifices remarkable in architecture. (Javlekar Arvind 2005.)

Tarabai was wife of Chhatrapati Rajaram. The most significant achievement of her was that she united the Marathas who fought most of the time among themselves and filled that with patriotism. It was she who had against put life into the Maratha Kingdom, which seemed dead after the death of Chhatrapati Shivaji. (Pednekar Sonali and Mukadam Mohsina, 1996.)

Jijabai was the mother of the Shivaji, the legendary Maratha king. Jijabai was known to be an influential and determined woman who was an embodiment of self-respect and virtue. Jijabai was herself an able warrior and administrator and she passed down her quality traits to the growing shivaji, and instilled within him a sense of duty, courage and fortitude to overcome any hardship arising. Under her guidance and care, Shivaji developed within him a human touch that saw him harbor a great respect for all women, religious tolerance, and justice, along with the love for his country, his religion and his quest for freedom of Maharashtra. (Rana Bhawan Singh 2005)

The life of Rani Padmini presents to us a unique historical fact and reminds us of the tradition of Juhar, which was practiced during those days as a custom of brave act of the Rajput women. She performed Johar before the Aladdin army entered the fort, Rani burnt herself alive. The purpose of Johar was not only to give the husband moral support but also to save the honor from the invading of the enemy. (Gupta Renu, 2009.)

This book contains the life history of women who have excelled in courage, confidence fortitude, positive attitude, hard work self respect and determination. Through this book all the writers focus light on the position and status of women of the medieval period and narrate undaunted activities at the time of great danger to their lives and the lives of their countrymen are matchless and cannot be equated with any other person in the history of India. (Sharma A.P. 2000.)
2.5. British Period

In the field of education, social reforms and political struggle, Dr. Annie Besant was the foremost woman leader, born in London and as a member of Theosophical Society of India she arrived in India. She started studying Indian scriptures, religious texts and was drawn by the catholicity of Bhagavad-Gita and the Upanishads. She believed that a nation’s prosperity depends upon the character of the people and concentrated on character-building. (Kumar, Raj, Rameshwari Devi and Pruthi Romila, 2003)

Today we salute our National Flag our very own Tricolor which we keep near to our hearts. The first ever flag was designed and unfurled by Madam Bhikaji Cama. Madam Bihkaji Cama, flew the Indian National Flag at The Socialist Convention held in Germany in 1907. This great revolutionary was instrumental in creating awareness for India’s independence struggle and helping the revolutionary literature. (Dastur, 1994)

Sarojani Naidu spent her childhood in garden; she wrote large number of poems. Characteristics of the poems are indicating deep religious emotion, how fully she had entered into the innermost life of the Indian heart and the passionate love for the beloved motherland. ( Das Sisir Kumar.1995.)

Aruna Asaf Ali was born in Bengali family. She married a person her choice a famous lawyer, Asaf Ali. It was an intercast marriage. She has left unforgettable service in the revolution of “Quit India Movement” in 1942. To honor her, a road in Delhi was named as ‘Aruna Asaf Ali Marg’. ( ICCR website, 2007.)

Each life sketch and memoir in the collection that follows speaks of women who pioneered India’s Renaissance and their imprint on society. Due to their positive attitude, self respect, confidence, hard work and determination they achieve this status and position in life of them and other women. ( Nayar Sushila and Mankekar Kamala, 2002.)
Begum Hazrat Mahal was a great Indian freedom fighter played a major role during The Revolt of 1857. Behinds Begum Hazrat Mahal’s graceful nature and physical charm lay the qualities of a strong leader and an adroit strategist, which were strongly witnessed through her contributions to The Revolt of 1857. (Tylor P.J.O. 1996.)

Savitribai was one such extraordinary lady who fought against the male bigotry in India and became a light of Knowledge who illuminated the lives of millions of women in India. India’s first women teacher, a radical exponent of mass and female education, a champion of women’s liberation, a pioneer in engaged poetry, a courageous mass leader who undertook on the forces of caste and patriarchy is largely unknown figure outside the Dalit movement. For the liberation of women she used education as her important instrument and promoted among the women. (Wamburkar Jaswandi, 2009.)

2.6. Mrs. Indira Gandhi role model

The writer was journalist in Delhi in 1946, he frequently visited to the Teen Murti, Nehru’ house. He was met Indira’s opponents and supporters and thus whatever he was written is reliable. Through this writer narrates different roles of Mrs. Indira Gandhi such as daughter, granddaughter, wife, mother, grandmother and the important among all these is Prime Minister of India. (Bhatia Krishna, 1994.)

The writers narrate the life of Mrs. Indira Gandhi from her childhood and writer stated that due to her dominating nature Indira lost her first tenure. The writer nicely explained about her thought regarding peace, ideas on the equality of men and women, some great virtues of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, he explained her self reliance. (Chawala Lata illustrations by Shankar 2007).

In this book writer wrote about great women of the world. In critical situations, all these women did not lose hope and fought against social, religious and political evils. Some women have regarded as superior to others in their own field because of their positive attitude, courage, confidence, self respect, hard work and determination. Due to their work, now women are not just regarded as Grihini but as decision maker such as Mrs. Indira Gandhi. (Dr.Jain Gagan.2007)
This is biography of one of the most important figures of the 20th century. In this biography writer wrote about her birth, through partition and up to her assassination. (Frank Katherine, 2000.)

Through this article writer narrates about crisis of great nations. How the nations faces problem. Writer explains about the causes’ and consequences of emergency in India. Also explain in details about the situation of India in 1975 and why Mrs. Indira Gandhi insists president to declare emergency in India. (Khrushchev Nikita, 2011.)

2.6. Modern Period

According to her, greater sensitivity to the historical as well as the contemporary social context coupled will Indian women`s particular brand of psychological strength would be worth examine to provide alternative paths of equality. (Kakkar Sudhir, 2001.)

In Patriarchal culture, what we get is a masculinity definition of ideals and images of women. These ideas and visions are not women’s creations. They are not born out of their own experience. Marriage and motherhood are considered mandatory for fulfillment and identity formations. Women are absent from history, political science has simply by passed her. These views have been seriously challenged and are in the process of being revised. (Ghodially Rehana, 2001)

Through this book we get information about the health problems of women and how the health problem is ignored by some women due their social responsibilities. Women faced too many health problems due to shyness sometime they are not discussed their health problem with other, as a result women faced health problem throughout their life. Due to westernization and fashion women also took drugs, alcohol and cigarettes. It is also adversely impact on the life and role of the women. (McPherson Ann, 1993)

All the women authors dealt with domestic issues of women, their characters are more liberated and more advanced in terms of modern life styles. Through their writing a woman is never seen as an individual but is always characterized in relation to a man; she is always someone’s wife,
mother, widow, mistress, concubine daughter, and etc. They also narrate women’s invariably economic dependence. Even when a man is not able to look after his family, a woman never ventures out to explore her strength to supplement the family’s income. (Mrs. Rolly Manjul Horst, 1900-1995).

This sociological research indicates that noteworthy changes have come in family dimensions, whereas in economic and occupational dimensions as very small number of Dhanger women in urban areas are earning, their social status is very low. In education dimension, most of them are illiterate, but they have a very favorable and positive attitude for education, it indicates changes that are coming up in this dimension. Politically these Dhanger women are hardly aware of current issues and events and hardly participated in public or political affairs. But traditional dimension which is associated with traditional customs, such dowry, divorce and Pallu; these seems to be change have taken place their attitude towards these customs have undergone substantive changes. (Mrs. Nalawade Sangeeta, 1990).

Writer directs our attention to the dynamics that keep women in their contracted place in society. The centrality of motherhood in a culture inevitably produces certain kinds of sons and men. A challenge to this all –consuming role contains the seeds of liberation. (Ashi Nandy, 2001)

In this novel, Arundhati Roy deconstructs stereotypical constructs about women and we get the message that women can play an equal part with men, only if they gain a distinct voice of their own and learn to transcend the traditional barriers of their silence. Roy portrays her women character as being torn between traditional boundaries and modern free zones. (Roy Arundhati, 2010.)

The study focuses on women entrepreneurs in Gilbert Hill slum Gamdevi Dongari at Andheri. Decision making role of self employed women regarding major expenses was not remarkable. The most common problem faced by women entrepreneurs were finance, marketing, transportation and space etc. (Sampat Falguni, 1993)

Behinds Begum Hazrat Mahal’s graceful nature and physical charm lay the qualities of a strong leader and an adroit strategist, which were strongly witnessed through her contributions to The Revolt of 1857. In the 1850’s, when the British were eventually annexed Oudh in 1856, exiling
Nawab Wajid Ali Shah to Calcutta, then Begum Hazrat Mahal took over the regains, despite her divorce from the Nawab of Lucknow Wajid Ali Shah she took charge of the affairs of the state of Awadh. (Tylor, P.J.O. 1996)

This book is written for those women who empower themselves, they know what they want, be empowered to attain their heart’s desires through their immense self-belief, and take action to achieve their aspirations every day of their life. Through this book explain about liberty, love and life of the women. In short this book explain that the role of women which was drastically change due to their own strength and their own power. (Valentine James Lee, 2009).

In this paper writer narrates about duality of women in Hindu ideology and identified with nature, she is giver of birth and protector of her children. On the other hand she is evil and destructive and how her sexuality is controlled determines her essentially benevolent or malevolent nature. Everyday behavior and roles she is expected to play her dictated by this mythical views of fearlessness. (Wadley Sushan, 2001)