

CHAPTER – II

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REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The first chapter tried to build-up a conceptual framework of the study by looking into the nature of professions and the concept of professionalism. It also tried to present a rationale for studying the possible impact of the male orientedness of most of the professions on the perceptions of professional women. Moreover, considering the difficult situations into which women professionals are put, on account of the higher demands made by the prescribed concept of the professionalism and male-structuring of the professions and even higher demands made by their social roles in the Indian society, an attempt was also made to understand the nature of the specific problems which women face as professionals. The present chapter attempts to review the literature that has been generated on the above mentioned issues.

At the outset, it might be stated that there is a paucity of literature on professionalism of women professionals. One of the reasons being late entry of women into professions. So, in order to explore into the phenomenon of professionalism, the investigator had to consider the general studies on professionalism, professions and the professionals. Some of these studies, however have taken gender as an important variable or a correlate, throwing

light on different aspects of lives and conditions of professional women. Moreover, there are also some studies which have attempted to look into various dimensions of the concept of professionalism such as professional commitment, accountability, professional autonomy, professional ethics, professional competence and professional status. But all these dimensions of professionalism have been looked into, in an isolated manner, focussing on any one or two of them. There are very few studies which have tried to explore into the nature of professionalism in a comprehensive manner. In the present study, the investigator tries to understand professionalism in a comprehensive manner. These studies have, all the same, helped the investigator to get an insight into the concept of professionalism and to arrive at the definition presented in the study and also in preparing the instruments employed by investigator for the study.

It also needs mentioning here that there is a dearth of studies on professional women in India hence the investigator had to draw heavily from foreign studies and that too from secondary sources. The following section of the chapter presents the reviews related to the investigation. The studies have been classified into four categories.

- (1) Studies related to different components of professionalism i.e. Commitment, Ethics, Accountability, Autonomy and Professional self-image.

- (2) Studies related to professional status and professional roles and participation of professional women.
- (3) Studies related to Problems of professional women.
- (4) Studies related to professional advancement of women professionals.

Studies Related to Professional Commitment

Sen Gupta Parijat (1990) attempted to study the impact of correlates such as age, socio economic status, educational back-ground, occupational choice, marital status, type of the institution, academic freedom and membership in the professional organisation on professional commitment of men and women Teachers in Teacher Training colleges of Calcutta university.

The findings of the study revealed that the type of institution -viz- its administrative and organisational set-up had a definite impact on teachers' commitment. Other correlates such as age, marital status, and socio-economic status also showed a definite relationship with teachers' commitment. One important finding of the study was regarding the occupational choice of the teachers. It was clearly indicated that when the profession was chosen voluntarily, it resulted in higher professional commitment. No significant relationships were found between professional commitment of teachers and academic freedom as well as

membership in professional organisations.

Chesobrough Caroline (1992) studied teachers' commitment to their profession. The findings revealed that those who had chosen teaching profession with a pre-existing level of commitment, showed higher level of commitment and continued teaching regardless of the difficulties they faced. Moreover it was also proved that an entry-year support programme made a positive difference in the commitment of teachers. Lastly, it was found that the commonly assumed reasons for defecting such as class-size and lack of money were found not to be significant.

Drett Annabelle (1992) attempted to probe into the stability and consistency dimensions of the work-commitment and the factors causing change in the work-commitment over a period of time.

The major findings of the study were - (1) Work-commitment was not a stable construct. (2) Work-commitment was found to be higher among those who stayed with the same kind of work over a period of time, and (3) Active Career planning and negative career experiences were not related to work-commitment.

Yang Myan (1992) tried to measure professional commitment of Chinese student teachers. The variables taken were their vocational interests, gender, socio-economic status, college and class-level.

The findings indicated that, of the variables taken into consideration, vocational interests and gender were related significantly to professional commitment, and college and class-level were not significantly related to professional commitment.

Studies Related to Professional Ethics

A study on professional ethics for professors was undertaken by Edmund William (1992) with a view to evolving new models of ethics for the academic profession which takes into consideration specific nature of academic profession.

The study examined the six existing approaches to ethics in higher education. These approaches were (1) Alchetroptism (the creation of an environment in which truth is respected) (2) The Medical Ethics Model (3) Fiduciary Relationship Model (4) The Power disparity Model (5) codification and (6) Nel Noddings version of caring perspective.

Finally the study tried to explore constellations of roles and role sets of professors and students to further characterise the nature of ethical expectations from the academic profession.

Crosby Stephen (1973) carried out a historical study of Evaluation and Enforcement of the code of ethics and standards of professional practice of the Teaching profession in Florida. The study was mainly based on archival records, individual interviews, state statutes and the state boards of Education.

Studies Related to Professional Autonomy, Accountability and Professional Self-Images of the Professionals

Lowther Malcolm, Stark John and Chapman David (1984) studied perceptions of the career school teachers and persons trained as teachers but working in other professions, regarding selected aspects of their work-life, i.e. early commitment to teaching, job mobility prospects, general satisfaction with life and job, work attitudes and professional accomplishments.

The findings showed that the career teachers were differentiated from those in other professions by a stronger sense of being locked into their current jobs and negative view of their prospect for advancement in their current occupational settings. The career teachers, to a lesser extent were also characterized by higher initial commitment to teaching as an occupation, a belief that their educational experiences were well-utilized, a feeling of having leadership in their field as well as having received

positive recognition from supervisors, family and friends. In contrast to the non teacher group, they had less positive perceptions of having the opportunities to influence the organisation through contribution to the decision-making process. They perceived that slightly lower status and prestige accrued from their profession and were slightly less satisfied with life and their job.

A study conducted by Lyall Vicky Lyn (1991) aimed at developing a sense of professionalism in physicians, by studying the impact of socialized beliefs, attitudes, values and principles on the professional conduct of the medical professionals.

The major findings of the study indicated that the period of greatest influence was during the introduction to professional practice phase. Some of the factors affecting the professional conduct of the physicians were (a) modeling teachers and peers (b) values learnt during the formative years, (c) Changing attitudes among doctors prompted by life-style options and (d) ethical dilemma between humanity and self-interests that have evolved from the system of remuneration.

A study of perceptions of the school teachers with regard to professional autonomy was carried out by Hanson Robert (1997). The study examined the two major dimensions of

autonomy, independence of a profession and respect and authority for the profession.

The findings indicated that the teachers did not experience autonomy to the extent they believe they should. This discrepancy was more with respect to the second dimension, - viz - respect and authority for the profession. A pertinent fact revealed was that the degree and quality of autonomy experienced tended to be largely dependent upon the managerial styles of the school administrators. The two variables, levels of teaching and number of years of teaching were found to have no significant relationship with professional autonomy. Moreover, the experiences of autonomy appeared to be dependent on work-site circumstances rather than on district-wide or occupation-wide context of practice and the participants viewed autonomy in terms of individual experiences rather than autonomy as professionals.

Melville Pauls (1993) attempted to study professionalism, working conditions and accountability of teachers in New York state urban high schools. The major finding of the study was that more professional working conditions produced higher levels of accountability. It was found that in small and effectively disciplined buildings with smaller classes, fewer students at risks and more well-behaved students, teachers manifested higher levels of intrinsic accountability.

Larsen Grant David (1993) attempted to study professional socialization, development of professional self-image and professional identification among Alberta social workers. Their professional image and the extent to which they identify with their profession was measured through their evaluative attitudes towards their profession. This attitude scale included their attitudes towards (1) Prestige in society (2) Worth to society (3) Characteristics of members (4) career opportunities (5) Effectiveness of methods (6) Organizational context and Satisfaction and (7) Professional identification.

The results indicated that overall professional self-image was slightly positive but people's attitudes towards the prestige of social-work were negative. It was also revealed that a substantial number preferred to use another occupational title or agency's name in stead of social-workers. It was also found that where the choice of social work as a career was first, the professional self-image was more positive. Similarly those who had received social-work education showed a better identification with the profession.

The above mentioned studies mainly focussed on any one dimension of professionalism. The following studies, however, focus upon more than one dimensions of lives of the professionals.

The area which has comparatively received more attention than other areas of lives of the professionals is their status in different professions and their professional roles. (Participatory and Contributory). These kind of studies are mainly comparative in nature and have considered gender as an important variable or a correlate. Some of these studies are as follows.

Studies Related to Professional status and Professional Roles

Cole and Cole (1975) conducted a study in U.S.A. to explore the phenomenon of unequal participation of women in scientific professions and discrimination faced by them.

The results indicated that women scientists, regardless of their marital status or size of the families, simply produced fewer scientific papers or papers of lesser impact and women were not as frequently promoted to senior positions as men, especially in the better universities.

Another study conducted by the same investigator, Cole (1979) was carried out with the objective of studying women's status in scientific community. The results of this study also indicated evidence of significant gender-based discrimination in the promotion of women scientists to tenure and high academic ranks. Another important finding of the study was that even after taking into account many factors

such as career interruptions and the quantity and quality of research performance of men and women. Women were still less likely than men to be promoted to higher academic ranks.

Gurnani and Sheth (1984), in a review of position and role of women scientists in India, made following observations, (1) Being late entrants in the scientific professions, the proportion of women in science is relatively small (2) The majority of them are employed at policy-making level (3) Although Indian women scientists do not face any apparent discrimination in education and employment, they quite strongly feel that their male colleagues and superiors do not accept them professionally (4) Their choice of science as a profession is yet restricted to its use value, as an instrument for making life more convenient. Only a few women consider science careers in order to express their womanliness, individuality or to achieve attitudinal changes in outlook and (5) As professional scientists, Indian women do not live in isolation from their culture. They continue to consider their family roles more important than their professional roles.

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Srivastava Kavita (1998) conducted a study on job satisfaction, adjustment and socio-economic status of professional women in Varanasi. The professional women in this study included women teachers in schools, women in banking and insurance departments and nurses. It was observed by her that women in all the three professions differed

significantly in their job-satisfaction. It was also revealed that job satisfaction and adjustment of women were positively for women in all the three professions. Another important finding of the study was that professional attitudes of professional women significantly affect their job satisfaction.

An investigation on the gender differences in the academic reward system in the university of Taiwan was carried out by Chora Chuin Prudence (1997). Following were the findings of the study.

- (1) Compared to male faculty members, women academicians tended to spend a greater number of years before being advanced to higher ranks.
- (2) A doctoral degree is more important for a female faculty member than for male faculty members in order to move up to the academic ladder.
- (3) Social net-working in academics tended to result in a higher income for males than for female~~s~~ faculty members.
- (4) Compared to male faculty members, women tended to earn a lower total income.
- (5) Compared to male faculty members, women academicians tended to be two years younger, had more highly educated fathers, raised fewer children and were more likely to remain unmarried. If married, they were more

likely to have academic spouses.

- (6) The male faculty members tended to be less aware of gender differences and inequalities in the academic reward system.

Jaiswal R.P. (1993) carried out an investigation about professional status of women in science and technological professions. This was a comparative study of men and women professionals. The major findings of the study reveal that although compared to men scientists and engineers, women scientists and engineers come from better socio-economic backgrounds, their professional status is lower compared to men scientists and engineers. Men had entered into these professions with clear and definite career objectives whereas women had given less emphasis on future occupational goals. Men professionals were engaged in the activities such as supervision, planning, consultancy and productions whereas women were found to be engaged in the activities like designing, laboratory work, research, sales and marketing. It was also found that men showed higher level of career commitment than women. Another important finding of the study was that there existed not only organisational discrimination against women scientists and engineers but there also existed unequal treatment and subtle discrimination in the behavioural and inter-personal relationships which was mostly in latent and covert forms. Finally, it was also proved that although there has been considerable erosion of sex-based prejudices and

stereo-types among the members of the scientific community, yet they have not vanished altogether. They are more pronounced among men than women members of the scientific community.

The above mentioned studies have dealt with the concept of professionalism and the components of professionalism. But it is evident from these studies that professionalism and other related dimensions have been studied in general terms, ignoring the social reality of women. As has been pointed out in the first chapter, most of the professions even today remain male oriented in terms of their ethos, culture etc, which poses several problems for professional women. These problems do not allow them to function smoothly. They also come in their way of achieving higher level of professionalism. Such studies dealing with problems of professional women were also referred to by the investigator, in order to get an insight into problems faced by professional women. Several of these studies deal with their domestic problems but as the present study is concerned with problems related to their professional lives, only those studies which deal with problems related to their professional lives are included in the present chapter.

Studies Related to Problems Faced by Professional Women

An attempt of studying the role-commitments and role-conflicts of professional women was made by Prasertphat Saita (1984). The focus of the study was on role-conflict experiences of women teachers and women administrators in four areas - (1) own profession (2) discipline (3) social and (4) personality.

It was found by the investigator that there was a significant difference in the total role-conflict experienced by women administrators functioning at three different levels, primary, secondary and college level. There was also a significant difference in the total role-conflict experienced between women teachers and women administrators. An important finding of the study was that women teachers working at college level experienced more professional conflict than those working at primary and secondary level.

Srivastava Kamala (1985) conducted a survey which aimed at getting an insight into the typical problems encountered by women bank employees, their individual and collective efforts to tackle individual as well as gender specific problems at home front and their interest and involvement in trade unions. The study also attempted to compare the perceptions of males vs females about women bank employees.

The findings revealed that some of the problems faced by women bank employees were work over-load, multiplicity of women's roles, transfers, maternity leave, menstruation problems, discrimination, double standards of morality, sexual harassment, refusal of males to accept women as colleagues or seniors, need to work twice as good as men to gain recognition, work atmosphere being uncongenial, lack of solidarity among women, women shying away from responsibilities and their training not related to actual job requirements.

With regard to perceptions about women bank employees, women perceived women ~~the~~ bank employees positively and believed that women were more efficient and sincere than men. They worked strictly according to rules and regulations. They were discriminated against males hence could not advance in their careers. As against this, the perceptions of male employees were mixed. According to them women were efficient, sincere, more systematic, precise, polite and patient with people but were also moody, gossipy, lacking in confidence and unable to take decisions or tackle field problems. Some women bank employees, however, were perceived to be very capable ambitious and highly motivated.

Niger Fatima (1991) carried out an investigation regarding the role-conflict of the female physicians, the reasons for role-conflict and the coping mechanisms adopted by them to reduce this conflict. Following were the main findings of the studies.

- 1) Both social and professional roles reinforce each other in causal relations during the course of life-cycle.
- 2) Familial role expectations are inevitably associated with early phases of life-cycles. As the life-cycle progresses, role-conflict decreases.
- 3) Familial role-conflict also ensues as a result of variant perceptions of different members of the family set-up.
- 4) Professional role-conflict lessens, if responsibility is diffused and an individual is not held responsible for the mistakes.
- 5) Professional role-conflict is higher among senior physicians than among juniors whereas social role-conflict is higher among junior married physicians than in elderly physicians.

Roveira Jillandra (1992) studied home-career conflict, sex-role orientations, levels of self-esteem and locus of control in the black and white females majoring in traditional and non-traditional careers.

The findings revealed that black and white females did not significantly differ in their levels of home and career conflict. The females majoring in non traditional careers possessed more androgynous and masculine sex-role characteristics and higher levels of self-esteem than the females majoring in traditional careers. The loci of control of the females majoring in traditional careers and women in non-traditional careers were significantly different.

Dayanand Vanitha (1992) attempted to study the role-conflict and coping strategies of married professional women with children in Poland. The main focus was on role over-load, inter-role conflict and intra-role conflict of professional women.

The findings indicated that the coping strategies employed by professional women to solve these problems were re-definitions of professional and personal roles. They also manifested reactive behaviour to reduce their tensions.

Studies Related to Professional Advancement of Professional Women

Zakery Fatmah (1991) attempted to study the barriers perceived by female administrators, coming in their way of promotion to higher administrative positions in higher education institutions. The study also tried to

examine the relationships between the barriers identified and the demographic factors and to identify its effects on their administrative styles and their aspirations for higher administrative positions.

The findings revealed a variety of barriers which hinder the advancement of women to higher administrative positions. The barriers were, attitudes of people towards female administrators, lack of leadership images and role-models, family needs and conditions. It was also evident from the findings that age, length of service had significant impact on female administrative positions. On the other hand, marital status, position, number and age of children did not show any significant impact on their aspirations.

A study on professional advancement of women administrators in the ⁴Alabama two-year college system and the variables impacting their opportunities for advancement was conducted by Connel Sera (1991).

The findings revealed that white males remained in most of the top positions within the two-year college system. There was a need to change the methods for identifying, recruiting and promoting administrators so as to accommodate women in administration. It also highlighted a need for women administrators to show-case their talents and achievements, support other women and use monitoring and networking as



powerful facilitators not only for themselves but also for future women administrators.

Rubin Ann Lustgarten (1992) studied psychological well-being, gender-related attributes and developmental process of Achieving Women' in female-dominated and male-dominated professions.

The results indicated that achieving women in general showed blended gender-related attributes. In male-dominated professions, the achieving women followed a developmental path similar to males than in female dominated professions. For the achieving professional women, their identity was stronger than their intimacy, indicating that their self-concepts took precedence over relationship concerns. Lastly, these groups of achieving women saw themselves as lacking in intimacy (connectedness to a significant other) and generality (connectedness to the world in general).

Winship Sally Louise (1992) attempted an analysis of gender differences in position paths of community college presidents with a view to identifying the normal and informal experiences that influenced development of their leadership management skills and also how they affect the route for acquiring leadership positions.

The findings indicated that there were differences in the position paths of male and female community college presidents and events influencing the career advancement of male and female presidents. These differences were mainly in the areas of degrees, career-planning, mentors, support systems, professional organizations, leadership management skills and significant accomplishments.

In a study comparing perceptions of male and female superintendents with regard to career facilitators and inhibitors, Ineger Cheryl Delany (1993) found that at the time of first superintendency, males and females differed significantly on the perceived effects of personal and professional characteristics, job seeking strategies, experience and education. Of the personal and professional characteristics examined, males and females differed significantly on number of children, marital status, father's occupational type, spouse's educational type, political party membership, teacher certification and educational level at the time of first superintendency. When career patterns were examined, the only item that was significantly different between men and women was the length of time it took them to achieve the first superintendency.

Dynor Mary (1990) studied patterns of facilitators and barriers to female faculty career progress at the university of Chicago.

The findings revealed a gap between the stated goals of the institution and the lived experiences of the subjects. The subjects were found to experience differential treatment across numerous measures despite attendance at prestigious institutions, sufficient financial aid, strong collegial network, sufficient time spent on research and adequate research support. Geographic immobility, token status, lack of monitoring, role conflict and lack of interdisciplinary research were found to be barriers to their progress.

Women's experiences as professional administrators at the University of Kentucky were examined by Hurley Janet (1993). The results of the study indicated that these women shared many common experiences which could be combined to define women's normative experiences. These commonalities were as follows.

- (1) Lack of career plans or set career goals.
- (2) Constant need to balance personal, familial and professional needs.
- (3) Managing people and becoming self-confident as the biggest challenges.
- (4) Providing service and achieving personal success as the most important accomplishments.
- (5) Their careers having met their expectations.
- (6) Defining of career success in their own terms.
- (7) Subtle discriminatory treatment, a common occurrence.

- (8) Net-working and peer-relationships found to be equally important for advancement.

Another study on women administrators of colleges (Blacks) was conducted by Harris Bathi (1995) which revealed the following facts.

- (1) Most of the administrative officers were appointed to two years public institutions.
- (2) Majority of them had earned Ph.D or Ed.D degree.
- (3) Their family members were supportive.
- (4) Role-models were pre-dominantly females.
- (5) The career-paths to achieve these positions were varied.
- (6) "Being a hard-worker", "developing a particular reputation" and "presenting papers" got higher scores in their estimation than net-working.

The foregoing review of the related literature leads one to the following conclusions.

- (1) There are very few Indian Studies on professionalism of professional women.
- (2) Most of the studies are foreign which are quite different from the Indian context.
- (3) Most of these studies focus on a single or two dimensions of the professionals such as a professional ethics, accountability, professional competence, professional status etc., but there is hardly any study which deals with professionalism in a comprehensive

manner, taking all the dimensions in a time.

- (4) The studies on professional women mainly focus on their problems and stress and rarely with the professional attributes manifested in their attitudes, behaviour or perceptions.
- (5) Some of the studies related to professional women focus on women professionals of any one or at the most two professions. There has been hardly any attempt to do a comparative study of women across different professions.
- (6) Some of the studies include women professionals in a marginal way where gender is included as one variable or a correlate.
- (7) The studies dealing with their problems mainly concentrate on their social problems resulting in role-conflicts. There are few any studies especially in Indian context, which deal with their problems emerging within the professional set-ups on account of the nature and ethos of the professions.

Therefore, what is needed is, an indepth study on professionalism and problems of professional women in the Indian context.

As social reality is different for men and women, the generalised studies on professionalism of men and women cannot lead one to meaningful conclusions. Women's issues do

require a specific approach. So far, only social reasons were considered responsible for women's so-called lower level of professionalism or for the problems which they face, but now on the lines of feminist perspectives, it is believed that a major factor contributing to this is patriarchal structures and organisations of most of the professions. When the professions evolved, women were not part of them hence the work-ethos, professional culture and even the very concept of professionalism was formulated, keeping in mind only male professionals. Even after the entry of women into different professions, the rules, norms, working conditions etc. still remain the same as before which naturally create problems for professional women.

There are professions like academics and medicine in which women entered long back so the professional ethos of these professions have been created in such a way that they accommodate women. So, women find it easier to function in these professions. In fact, this has led to the classification of all the professions into two categories, 'masculine' and 'feminine' professions. Therefore, a comparative study of women professionals across the professions is required to throw more light on this premise.

Even regarding the problems which professional women face, a comparative study of women in different professions will help in establishing the fact whether the nature and structures of the professions have any effect on

their problems or in other words whether nature and ethos of the professions determine their nature of the problems.

The academic profession requires a special mention here as it is considered the most 'feminine' of all the professions. This was one of the first profession with which women made their entry into the professions. Hence it is significant to compare women in the academic profession with women professionals in other professions.

The present investigation attempts to study the perceptions of professional women with regard to professionalism and the problems which they face. This will not only reveal their perceptions but can also throw some light on their performance as professionals as these perceptions, at least to some degree are bound to be reflected in their day-to-day performances as professionals.