CHAPTER – 3

Problem Definition and Scope
3 Problem Definitions

Comparing the level of empowerment among women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector along the six dimensions of empowerment namely economic empowerment, education awareness, health awareness, decision making ability, media contact and social contact.

Based on gaps identified in literature review following objectives and hypothesis were set for the research study

3. 1 Objectives

1. To analyze the role of women cooperative in socio economic and political empowerment of women compared to wage earners self employed women in unorganized sector

2. To study and compare the Economic empowerment of women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector

3. To study and compare empowerment in the area of education awareness of women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector

4. To study and compare empowerment in the area of health awareness of women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector
5. To study and compare the decision making ability among women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector

6. To study and compare the women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector in terms of their exposure to media

7. To study and compare the degree of social empowerment of women employed in cooperatives with women employed in unorganized sector

8. To study the role of cooperatives in building confidence in women to be head of their families

9. To study the relationship between health and decision making ability of women.
3.2 Hypothesis

Hypothesis -1

There is significant difference between the total empowerment score of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

Specific Hypothesis

H 1.1: There is significant difference between the economic empowerment of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

H 1.2: There is significant difference between the score on Education awareness of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

H 1.3: There is significant difference between the score on Health awareness of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector
H 1.4 There is significant difference between the score on Decision making ability of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

H1.5: There is significant difference between the score on Exposure to Media for women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

H1.6: There is significant difference between the score on Social Contact of women employed in cooperatives sector and those employed in unorganized sector

Hypothesis -2

H2: Percentage of women as head of the family in cooperatives is significantly higher than women employed in unorganized sector

Hypothesis -3

H3: There is positive correlation between women’s awareness on health and her decision making ability.
3.3 Defining Variables for Study

Independent Variables: Income, Education, Health, Decision Making, Media Contact and Social contact

Dependent Variable: empowerment

3.3:1 Operational Definition of Variables:

Empowerment

Empowerment literally means “give power to” or “to invest with power”. Empowerment is a process whereby women become able to organize themselves to increase their own self-reliance, to assert their independent right to make choices, and to control resources which assist in challenging and eliminating their own subordination.

Income

It is defined as the ability to save, invest and spend on essentials like house and children's education.

Education

It is defined as awareness about various aspects of life and undergoing training.
Health
It is defined as the ability to consult a qualified doctor when unwell, go to hospital for delivery, immunize the children and understand importance of family planning. Cook nutritional food for the benefit of entire family.

Decision Making
It is defined as ability to make purchases from a house, vehicles to jewelry and clothes. It is the ability to operate your own bank account.

Media Contact
It relates to the exposure with media by way of TV, Newspapers, magazines and cinema, also, exposure to local transportation (bus and train schedules).

Social contact
It is defined as interaction with other members of community and participation in local cultural programs, social mobility and political participation.
3.4 Scope of Study

This is a Research to determine the difference in empowerment levels of members of women cooperatives and self employed women and wage earners who are not members of cooperatives.

The research is directed at women workers from poor and marginalized section of society because for them poverty does not mean just scarcity but denial of human rights. The ceaseless cycle of a woman’s labor rarely shows up in economic analysis of a society’s production and value.

The scope is aimed at women in cooperatives and self employed, wage earner women in unorganized sector in four states-Uttarkhand, Rajasthan, Gujrat and Maharashtra- North West of India for following reasons:

➢ Laws and social customs prevent women from owning land or other productive assets, from getting loans or credit, or from having the right to inheritance or to own their home, they have no assets to leverage for economic stability and cannot invest in their own or their children’s futures.(Agarwal,1994)\(^{129}\)

There has been a rise in movement of women cooperatives in these states and it is recognized as an institution of mutual help and sharing among poor, illiterate and unskilled women.

There are a large majority of women employed in unorganized sector who is struggling for productive employment and stable income generation opportunities.

There research observes the transition in society from women as victims of poverty and marginalization to women who are empowered to challenge and change the context in which they live.

### 3.5 Limitation of Study

The study is limited to women cooperatives and women working in unorganized sector in four states of India.

Due to constraint of time and resources the sample size is limited only to 4 cooperatives in four states, so the results are area specific and thus can be expanded further.

Another limitation of study is in the difficulty to neatly separate these dimensions of empowerment for practical measurement. For example, many aspects of economic or social empowerment overlap considerably as in the case of control over domestic spending or savings, or the limitations on mobility or social activities. Further, some
dimensions of empowerment may be more closely interlinked than others.

Though this survey and analysis have advanced efforts to measure empowerment in many ways, an important limitation has been the overwhelming focus on the married women, where empowerment is deliberated largely in terms of relations between marital partners.

The research lays greater emphasis on micro level analysis (comprising of individual, household, communities and institutions) of women empowerment and little emphasis on macro level analysis (comprising of markets and political system) of women empowerment.