CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

Women are the integral part of any society as they have always strived to give themselves to their families and society and in so doing they participate in the growth and development of the community. Despite their significant contribution to societies, a patriarchal conspiracy has seemingly prevented women's contribution from receiving its due recognition. However they are excluded from contributing significantly to production, and are denied adequate representation in many social and cultural organisations in society. Even if they are included, they are bound by cultural, political and economic constraints, which prevent them from being on a par with men. While in the family they play second fiddle to their husbands, in the development field they play a subordinate role. Not only do they not enjoy equality with men in social, economic, political and cultural sectors of life they are as well prevented and restricted from aspiring for individual freedom. Even many of the working women, both educated and uneducated, are denied equality and justice in their homes as in their work place.

How should women emancipate themselves? Unless they realise that they are in bonds, they cannot aspire for freedom. They have to get rid of their mental slavery and fight against the feeling of inferiority to
men. A woman should understand her own potential and should be able to express herself and have the courage to oppose exploitation and be able to identify the root cause of the problem she faces. Women have to ensure that they get their rightful share out of the development plans and be able to assume their rightful role in society. Educational backwardness among women cause to curtail their involvement and shame their status in society.

Training can be used as an agent of basic change in the status of women. It is with this aim in view that most of the women's organisations (Mahila Samajams) are being registered. Women's organisations and their structure need to have a leadership style that creates awareness and a sense of equality among women. The basic rationale for training women leaders is to promote leadership among the members of Mahila Samajams and through them to other women in the village. Training helps to empower women's organisations to act as catalysts at the local level and as pressure groups for securing social and economic justice for women. It helps them to plan out their objectives and action programmes and also to identify the areas in which they need to bring change. Training has become a need for women as they have to enhance their self-esteem, learn new behaviour for managing the situations, and develop leadership and team building skills. Thus training becomes the most vibrant component of human resource development programmes.
Training for Women's Groups in Rural Areas

A training package for the empowerment of rural women known as 'Training for Women's Groups in Rural Areas' form the basis of this study. The training was implemented by a Dutch Charitable organisation known as CEBEMO for the members of Mahila Samajams (women organisations) through ten voluntary organisations working in ten districts of Kerala. The long term objective of the training was the empowerment and self reliance of women. The specific objectives of the training were as follow:

a) To improve the level of awareness of women on women’s rights and women’s issues.
b) To change the socio-economic status of women in family and society.
c) To strengthen the functioning of Mahila Samajams.

The training was given for forty days in different phases over a period of two years. The methodology for the training was lectures, group discussions, debates, workshops, role plays, audio-visual aids and paper presentations. As part of the training the participants were given individual assignments like preparation of essays on social problems and women issues, home visits, conducting awareness programmes in the local areas, conducting social survey of the villages and study of the people’s organisations.
The present study is envisaged to examine the impact of training programme for the empowerment of women.

**General Objective**

To analyse the impact of training in empowering the rural women in Kerala with special reference to the training imparted by CEBEMO known as ‘Training for Women’s Groups in Rural Areas’.

**Specific Objectives**

a) To find out the level of awareness created among women about women’s rights and women’s issues.

b) To find out the leadership qualities and skills developed in women and to assess how far they have influenced them in organising the community for development.

c) To find out the changes that have occurred in the social and economic status of women in family and society.

d) To analyse the inter linkage and difference between the selected socio-economic variables and other dependent (subject) variables such as knowledge, attitude, practice, self confidence, communication skill, organisation skill, managerial skill, participation in decision making, social independence, economic independence, recognition and acceptance.

With these objectives, certain hypotheses were formulated in order to get a direction for the investigation.
Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated for giving directions to the research.

1. Trained women will have a higher level of knowledge, positive attitude and greater will be their responding capacity towards women's rights and issues.

2. Qualities and skills (self-confidence, communication skill, organisation skill and managerial skill) will be more for the women who have attended the training.

3. The level of participation and perception towards independence will be more for the trained women.

4. Trained women are not influenced by the selected socio-economic variables with regard to their level of awareness, leadership qualities and socio-economic status.

Definition of the Major Concepts

1. Training

   a) Conceptual

   According to Calvin and Rollin (1970) training refers to the teaching / learning activities carried on for the primary purpose of helping members of an organisation to acquire and apply the knowledge skills, abilities and attitudes needed by that organisation to carry out its mission.
b) Operational

In the context of the present study, training means the training implemented by the agency CEBEMO known as ‘Training for Women’s Groups in Rural Areas’ for the empowerment of women. The training was implemented through 10 voluntary organisations for the members of mahila samajams.

2. Empowerment

a) Conceptual

Though different authors have treated this concept differently the following two definitions are more applicable in this study. According to Marilee Karl (1995) empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, to greater decision-making power and control, and to transformative action.

Empowerment is a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systematic forces, which marginalise women and other disadvantaged sections in a given context (Sharma, 1991-92).

b) Operational

In this study empowerment means an increase in the level of awareness on women’s rights and women’s issues, enhancement of leadership qualities and skills in the areas of self-confidence, communication, organisation and management, and thus securing more social and economic status in the family and society due to the training programme.
3. Impact
   a) Conceptual

   Impact means a net differential forceful change.

   b) Operational

   In this study impact means the change brought about in the level of awareness, leadership qualities and skills, and social and economic position of the women in family and society through training programme.

4. Awareness
   a) Conceptual

   Awareness means having knowledge or consciousness (Webster, 1989).

   b) Operational

   In this study, awareness is measured in terms of the variables such as knowledge, attitude and practice (responding and questioning).

   Knowledge- In this study knowledge refers to how informed the women are about the different acts relating to women's rights and governmental welfare measures for women and children.

   Attitude- It is the understanding and view or outlook that the women have regarding the women's status and education.
Practice- It refers to the questioning and responding capacity women have gained as a result of the knowledge input and the related change in attitudes.

5. Leadership

a) Conceptual

According to Rao and Narayana (1987) leadership is the process of influencing group activities towards the accomplishment of goals in a given situation.

Harold Koontz and Heinz Weihrich (1988) define leadership as the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically towards the achievement of group goals.

b) Operational

In this study leadership is defined in terms of self-confidence, communication skill, organisation skill and managerial skill.

Self confidence- It is the feeling in women, that they have the ability to do things in a better way.

Communication- Communication here means the ability to convey and express the message clearly.

Organisation- Organisation here means the ability or capacity to take initiative in co-ordinating the programmes and activities effectively.
Management - Management means the art of planning, implementing, analysing and evaluating the activities and programmes effectively for the accomplishment of goals.

6. Status

a) Conceptual

The concept status is used to refer to the relative standing and worth of men and women in the area of family relations, economy, politics and religion. (Jayaraman, 1981)

Status, in the strict sense, is taken as a defined social position for whose incumbents there are defined rights, limitations of rights and duties. (Hornby, 1980)

b) Operational

In this study status is referred to women having greater participation in decision making roles, having better social and economic independence and recognition and acceptance in the family and society.

Participation - Participation refers to the role and extent to which women involve themselves in the decision making process and the implementation of such decisions in the household activities.

Social independence - Social Independence refers to women having social mobility and the extent to which they take part in the decision making process in family and society.
Economic independence- Economic independence means women utilizing and managing the finances with respect to household activities.

Recognition- Recognition here refers to the acceptance and respect given to women and they are being considered as citizens having equal rights in the society.

7. Socio-Economic Variables

In this study the socio-economic variables are age, education, religion, marital status, occupation, income, kind of family, land holding and position in Mahila Samajam.

Pilot study

The first step in the process of data collection was a pilot study undertaken to collect preliminary information regarding the scope for undertaking the study. The researcher collected information from the Directors, and Co-ordinators of women development programmes of the ten voluntary organisations on women’s training programme. The discussion with the Directors, Co-ordinators and representatives of women groups (Mahila Samajam) helped the researcher in gaining some preliminary insights into the variables of the study. The pilot study was helpful in finalising the areas of study in terms of time, place, universe and sample size. It was also helpful in getting the full support and cooperation of the authorities. Above all it was instrumental being
introduced to the respondents and in eliciting their cooperation and readiness to respond to the queries.

**Universe**

The universe of the study consisted of 350 Mahila Samajam members who have attended the women's training programme known as 'Training for Women's Groups in Rural Areas' implemented by CEBEMO through ten voluntary organisations working in the ten districts of Kerala.

**Sampling**

One hundred and seventy-five respondents were selected by simple random sampling method from the universe of 350 women who had attended the training programme.

Similarly, another 175 respondents who had not attended the training programmes were selected randomly for comparative purpose. They were selected from the same Mahila Samajams who attended training programmes having similar socio economic profile.

Thus a total number of 350 respondents were included in the study.

**Design**

The design of the study was descriptive and diagnostic in nature. While the descriptive design helps to study in depth the characteristics concerning individuals, group and situation; the diagnostic design explains the association between the variables related to the study.
Source of Data

The data source consisted of primary and secondary data. The primary data source was the respondents.

The secondary data for the study were books, journals, reports and records related to the topic.

Tool of Data Collection

Personal interview with the help of the schedule was the main tool for collecting information from both the categories of respondents. The English version of the schedule was translated into Malayalam for easy administration. The same interview schedule was administered for both the categories of respondents who have attended the training and who have not. Methods like observations, focussed group discussions and informal discussions were also used for eliciting data. The interview method was very helpful in collecting information directly from the respondents and besides it was the ideal tool since the respondents were not highly educated.

The interview schedule consisted of 4 parts. They are:

Part I Personal profile of the respondents: Questions regarding age, education, religion, marital status, occupation, personal income, family income, kind of family, land holding and position in Mahila Samajam were included in the schedule to get the
detailed information regarding the personal profile of the respondents.

**Part II** Level of awareness of respondents about women's rights and women's issues. This part consisted of 3 sections.

1) **Knowledge:** Questions were asked to know the level of knowledge of respondents on different Acts and government welfare measures for women.

2) **Attitude:** To test the attitude of respondents on women's status and education a standardised scale was incorporated in the interview schedule. The scale on Attitude was taken from the work of Mamta Agrawal (1988), Department of Measurement and Evaluation, NCERT, for the study. This scale is based on Thurstone's method of 'Equal Appearing Intervals'. There are 60 items in the scale. The scale is based on six indices of modernisation grouped in sections – i) marriage and family, ii) women's status and education, and iii) religion and caste. The second section women’s status and education was selected for the study. This part consists of 20 items. The questions asked were to be answered as agreed or not agreed. The item values are given in parenthesis. Fairly high reliability values have been reported. Validity is established by judge's rating. In addition to the validity implied by the judging procedure, it was shown that educated women scored higher than the uneducated women did. The maximum score respondent could obtain is
100.63. Higher scores on this scale shows that the respondent is having positive attitude. For reliability the split-half method is used. The correlation between the two forms was 0.82. The reliability coefficient = 0.90.

2) Practice: Questions were integrated to understand the questioning and responding capacity of women.

Part III Leadership qualities: This part has 4 sub divisions.

1) Self confidence: To test the self confidence of respondents a standardised scale was chosen. Scale on Self-confidence was chosen from the work of Agarwal’s (1986) Multi Dimensional Personality Inventory. The tool has got six sub-dimensions of personality viz., a) Introversion - Extroversion b) Self concept (Self -confidence) c) Independence d) Temperament e) Adjustment f) Anxiety. Each sub-dimensions has got 20 items with (Yes, Sometimes, No) responses. Scoring: For all the items Yes = 3, Sometimes = 2, No = 1, is the key.

Reliability and Validity: The reliability for overall items (120 statements) is 0.74 and validity 0.86. However, the author has found out the reliability and validity results for all the sub-dimensions. Since the reliability and validity coefficients for sub-dimensions are very high and as per the instructions of the author, the sub-dimension can be studied
separately. Hence for this research study, the second sub-dimension namely self-concept (self confidence) was taken and used. According to the author the reliability and validity of self-concept are 0.69 and 0.83 respectively. (Higher the score higher the self-confidence or self-concept)

2) Communication skill: Under this the questions were asked to study the communication pattern of respondents.

3) Organisation skill: Question were incorporated to find the organisation skill of respondents.

4) Managerial skill: Another set of question were asked to find the managerial skill of the respondents.

Part IV Socio-Economic Status of women in family and society. This part has four subdivisions.

1) Participation in decision making roles: Under this variable, questions were made to find the level of participation of respondents in decision making roles of household activities.

2) Social independence: Questions were asked to study the factors that led to the social independence of respondents.

3) Economic independence: Under this variable questions were made to measure the level of economic independence of respondents.
4) **Recognition and acceptance**: This was to find out the level of recognition and acceptance the respondents got in family and society.

**Pretest**

Pretest was carried out to test the applicability of the tool of data collection. After preparing the interview schedule for data collection, it was pre-tested on an actual sub sample of the respondents in the study. Interview schedule was administered to 40 respondents i.e. 20 each from both categories of respondents. It was found that a few questions were to be modified since they were not very clear to the respondents. An important aspect observed is that the respondents who did not attend the training were taking more time for furnishing the data than the respondents who attended the training.

**Collection of Data**

Data were collected personally by the researcher. All the respondents were interviewed on a pre-tested structured schedule. Information gathered from the respondents were enriched by observations and verified by cross-questioning. Care was taken that only reliable and valid information is being noted down in the schedule. It took almost six months to collect the data from the 350 respondents. During this period the researcher made use of the opportunities available to conduct discussions, talks and informal chats with the women group. Interaction with these groups helped the researcher, to a great extent, in gaining
considerable insight into the dynamics prevailing in the Mahila Samajams and it was also found that the respondents were very co-operative.

Though the collection of data was time consuming, involved extensive travelling, and walking through some hilly terrain, it was an enriching experience for the researcher.

**Editing and Coding**

The collected data were edited, coded and then entered into code sheets manually by the researcher. Each item of data was strictly checked for its accuracy before entering into the code sheets. For each respondent a separate code sheet was used. Thus 350 code sheets were furnished for entering into the computer for statistical treatment using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) package.

**Statistical Analysis**

The data were analysed in terms of objectives and hypothesis of the study. After the statistical treatment of data tables and diagrams were prepared for easy presentation of data. The following statistical tools were used for analysis and interpretation of data.

1. **Cross tabulation** was done in order to see the association between two or more variables. Such tables made possible the grouping of cases that occur jointly in two or more categories.
2. 'T' test was applied to find out the differences between the respondents who have attended and not attended the training on different subject variables.

3. One way Anova is the abbreviation of one way analysis of variance. This is an inferential statistical procedure, which has the same general purpose as the 't' test to compare groups in terms of the mean scores. The difference between the two procedures lies in the number of groups that can be compared. The 't' test is designed for comparing the two groups whereas the one way Anova was used to compare two or more groups. Both procedures yield identical results in a two-group comparison, but the one way Anova is more versatile because it was used to compare three or more groups. Here the one way analysis of variance technique was applied to find out whether the selected socio economic variables are influencing the dependent (subject) variables for the category of respondents who have attended training.

4. Two way Anova was used to test whether or not the different socio economic variables are influencing the dependent (subject) variables of both categories of respondents.

5. Correlation Matrix is a more specialised form of correlation table. The correlation matrix presents all the possible combinations of correlation between a certain number of variables. In a correlation matrix, the number across the top of the table corresponds to the variables listed on the left of the table. Each figure in the table represents the correlation between the variables. Correlation matrix
was administered to find out the interrelationship between the 11 dependent (subject) variables.

6. **Discriminant Analysis**: The higher order multivariate statistical analysis namely Discriminant analysis was used to find out, among all the variables in the study, which of the variables vary and will discriminate the two criterion groups.

**Chapter Scheme**

The study report is presented in six chapters.

The **first chapter** deals with the introductory part of the problem under investigation. The **second chapter** presents a detailed review of the available literature on training and empowerment of women. In the **third chapter** the methodology adopted for investigating and analysing the research problem is presented. **The fourth and the fifth chapters** deal with the analysis of the data collected, their results and interpretations. The major findings and suggestions of the study and implication of the study for the future research is discussed in the **final chapter**.