Chapter -3
Research Methodology
3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter gave a deep insight of the children’s learning through museums in their development. In this chapter, an analysis of the research methodology used in this study will be discussed in detail.

The present research methodology was intended to select main variable as the educational activities in the museum and has examined museums as non-formal learning institutes for the different age group of children. The National Children’s Museum has been selected as an operational area of the present study because it is one of the biggest institution or a platform to enhance the creativity among children in India.

Most of the social researches come under descriptive research studies. As the museum is a social organization, to study the characteristic of museum organization and its functioning, this research work follows principles of descriptive research. In this research work, to collect primary data, the researcher observed the activities especially the National Children’s Museum organized for children. Additionally, museum visits were made and museum professionals were interviewed through questionnaires, for more in-depth details. To collect secondary data, literature references (Museum, Library, University), the internet and other external sources were utilized. In this study, both sets of methods of data collection, i.e. questionnaire as well as personal observation have been used and they have created valuable information to this research work.

Case study of the research work included the study and the analysis of the museum functioning of the National Children’s Museum, New Delhi.

The research was designed to collect baseline data about the children’s experiences and activities which is offered by these children museums. ‘Children’ in this research included school children, children from slums or those who are physically handicapped. I examined the role of the National Children’s Museum and recognized broad definition of education, including cognitive, affective and psychomotor learning.

3.2 Data Collection

The following methods were adopted in order to collect data on different aspects of the topic of the research “A Study on the History, Development and Role of
children museum in India with Focus on National Children’s Museum, New Delhi,” considering the time constraint for the study:

1. Through Questionnaire
2. Through Interview
3. Through Personal Observation
4. Through Photography

The methodological tool that was chosen for the NCM, New Delhi is the questionnaire. In the present study researcher was designed two questionnaires. One is for the visitor of the National Children Museum, New Delhi and other for the curator and museum staff of the various visited children’s museums in India. The questionnaire for Children of NCM, New Delhi included 19 questions (Annexure-I), and for the staff, questionnaire included 15 questions (Annexure-II) in the form of multiple choice answers, also including options “Yes” or “No”. In addition, the questionnaires were commenced with a short information statement declaring the purpose of the study.

The researcher tried to collect the information as much as possible by designing the questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on various educational activities of the museums especially for the children. The data were collected through questionnaires from children who visited NCM, New Delhi.

The designed questionnaire for the NCM’s visitors was distributed among the children personally through the researcher. The distribution of the questionnaire took place randomly during the study period from May to June, 2012 and another lapse from May to June, 2014. Before the distribution of the questionnaire, a letter was sent to the curator of the National Children Museum, New Delhi, pursuing permission for the survey. It was done with the support of the guide.

The researcher aimed at finding the information from the questionnaires about the visitors of NCM, New Delhi, and the conceptions related to learning inside the museum.

Findings were also made to what extent children acquire the skills learnt after their observation in learning programs or activities organized by the museum.

Investigation was made to understand the reasons behind the children’s regular visit to the NCM and the educational programs organized by the museum.
Whether the visitors were aware of the exhibitions and programs offered by the NCM or not was also examined. The main attraction of children in the exhibitions and how these exhibitions fulfilled the educational needs of the children were investigated.

Conceptions regarding the use of the museum as a learning set up for children were also evaluated at the NCM. It was observed as to how often the Children’s Museum was visited by children for different means like a museum visit, participation in educational programs and workshops etc. Furthermore, the frequency of their visits was explored in order to recognize the popularity and development of museum among the children.

The information collected by means of the questionnaire from the respondents has been handled and analyzed for testing the hypothesis. The collected data was analyzed and presented with the help of the SPSS 16.0 Version.

Secondly, the children were interviewed at the NCM, New Delhi, to know the understanding of the children and what they learn from their visit to museums? And how do they learn? Also, how the experience of the children was after their visit was observed. The study provided a glimpse into the lives of young visitors.

Along with the NCM, the researcher also surveyed other children museums like Motilal Nehru Children Museum (Lucknow), Chacha Nehru Children Museum (Kerala), Children Museum (Chennai), Nehru Children Museum (Kolkata). All the information and photographs collected from, these children museums are incorporated in the thesis and also mentioned the list of children museum in India and United State (Appendix-VIII-IX).

Additionally, the questionnaire was used for the staff of the above mentioned children museums in India was analysed and gave a comparative study of the Museums.

The researcher also analyzed the data using the visitors’ record of the past ten years at the NCM. This data has been provided in the thesis.

Gallery layout (Annexure-III-VI) of different children’s museums visited by the researcher has been prepared and provided in the thesis.

Most of the data about the children museum in India and the NCM were collected by the researcher through personal visits and interaction with staff, officials
of the concerned museum and the researcher also consulted the publications including reports and brochures published by the museum.

The museum galleries of different children museums and their educational activities was digitally documented by the researcher.

3.3 Research Design

This study is concerned with the qualitative approach to the research problem. This study analyzed the various children’s museums in India. Primary data are collected first hand from the National children museum, New Delhi which has been used in the research. The design of the research entirely depends on the primary information. Well-developed questionnaire has been carefully used. Children’s museums are properly analyzed. The secondary data have been collected from museums, libraries, internet, and journals.

Research Process & Methodology

Fig 2.1 The Research involved above stages
3.4 Field Study

The researcher surveyed the National Bal Bhavan and mentioned the activities and programs in this thesis because all these activities are organized by the cooperation of the National Children Museum. The details of which are given along with the details of the NCM as well. National Children Museum (NCM), is an integral part of the Bal Bhavan, New Delhi. The study consists of information on children museum curators and children. Some secondary data have been taken from internet, seminar reports and journals.

Out of the many museums of India, only Motilal Nehru Children Museum (Lucknow), Children Museum (Chennai), Nehru Children Museum (Thiruvananthapuram), Nehru Children Museum (Kolkata) and National Children’s Museum (New Delhi) were chosen for this study and focus was drawn to the National Children Museum, New Delhi. Most Children Museums gave valuable information but some children’s museum refused to cooperate by sharing essential information about themselves like Stellar Children’s Museum, Gurgaon and Children’s Museum of Chennai which is still under constructions.

3.5 Screening/Filtration

Educated staff was found on very small scale except the curators of the museums. At the Thiruvananthapuram museum, the staff was unable to understand the language of the questionnaire so all the data were filled up by the researcher according to their responses in their own languages (Tamil).

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The present study is based on survey and primary data collection. Secondary data are collected from other sources. 450 children were included in the study for information. A questionnaire has been used to collect the desired information.
The aim and purpose of data analysis is to extract as much information as possible.

3.6.1 Primary Data

Primary data has been collected through questionnaires and photographs. This study obtained the responses of curators as well as children. The study essentially depends on primary data. Two types of questionnaires were designed: one for the children and the other for the museum curator or the museum (Annexure 2). 450 questionnaires have been filled in which 75% children cooperated with me.

An interview protocol was designed to gain in-depth and detailed observation on each museum under the case study. The nature of questions ranges from the reporting of known attribute information to those of solicit opinion and personal experience concerning children’s museum.

3.6.2 Secondary Data

To support any research problem existing literature is very much helpful. For this reason, data were collected from different journals, thesis and dissertations, libraries, museum and internet.
3.7 Limitation of the study

Most of the Children’s Museums did not document detailed background information concerning the motivations, needs and commitments, and philosophies to create such programs or exhibits.

Certain archival documents, i.e. earlier articles or research were not easy to get even through inter library. The most difficult aspect of this study was to generate a truly natural and objective interpretation. This research is basically based on the primary data produced through the questionnaire.

Stellar Museum Gurgaon and Children’s Museum, Chennai refused to cooperate by sharing essential information about them.

3.8 Significance of the Research topic

- To be a creative resource center for all children, schools and educational institutions.
- To offer learning facilities in the areas of science, art, music, creative performance, creative writing through traditional and innovative methods and to act as an alternative medium for arts, physical, academic and science education.
- To complement and supplement the school system by providing children with a free environment that is conducive to creative activities.
- To inculcate a scientific temper in children and develop in them a spirit of inquiry, experimentation, innovation and creativity.
- To develop children’s museums, science corners, astronomical units, rural Bal Kendras and tribal Bal Bhavans.
- To develop in children the concept of right and wrong and motivate them to adopt good basic moral values of life in a non-formal way.
- To provide a common platform for children for mass activities like mass-painting, mass-greening project, environmental awareness program, Bal Mela, Vigyan Mela, Children’s creative exhibition etc.
- To conduct and commission research for developing new methods and techniques of teaching and learning for teachers and children.
- To make available to the nation, a original ample children’s institution for free learning experience.
• To develop creative and innovative methods and techniques of teaching and act as a National Training Resource Centre for Creative Education.

3.9 Summary

This chapter gave a comprehensive idea about the research methodology used in developing the questionnaire. Data collection and data processing and analysis were discussed. More details of the analysis will emerge in chapter seven which brings into the light the results obtained in the research.