CHAPTER 4

METHOD OF INVESTIGATION

4.1. Scope of the Study

Systemic study of significance, as mentioned earlier, has not yet been made on the issues and struggles of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district from the perspective of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars. Already an explorative study on “Folklore of the Arunthathiyars in Vembakkottai Union of Kamarajar (Virudhunagar) District - An Ethnographic Study” by Masillamani (2004) was done in collaboration with KARISAL, a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) which was started and is being managed by Jesuits working for the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district. This study primarily deals with the folklore aspect of the Arunthathiyars and not very much directly connected to the issues of untouchability and victimization of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district.

KARISAL which is the acronym for KAmarajar (Virudhunagar) district Rural Institute for Social Action & Liberation was started in 1993. It has tried and is still trying to empower the Arunthathiyars at various levels, like conscientization, education, health, cultural development, economic development and community organization. Since empowering the Arunthathiyars is a long-term process, at present KARISAL concentrates more on children, youth and women who are the backbone for the future of the Arunthathiyar community. Among the various activities of KARISAL, education of the Arunthathiyar children and health-related activities with special reference to the development of the Arunthathiyar women are given more importance and special
attention. More than one decade, the researcher has been directly involved in various activities of the Arunthathiyars in collaboration with the Arunthathiyar movements in Virudhunagar district through KARISAL. With much cooperation from this organization, the researcher started a scientific study on the caste discriminations of the Arunthathiyars from the victimological perspective. The Arunthathiyar leaders of KARISAL sangam enthusiastically welcomed the idea of doing a scientific research on the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district.

The researcher also received the assistance of another NGO called SIDO (Social Innovative Development Organisation) which is working for the empowerment of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district. It was initiated in 2006 by Mr. M. Sakthivel, an Arunthathiyar himself. Its goal is to empower the Arunthathiyars for the eradication of untouchability and child labour that are commonly found in the district. To achieve this goal, SIDO is involved in mobilizing and organizing the Arunthathiyars socially and politically through organizational programmes, awareness programmes, health programmes, and training programmes.

The aim of the research is to make an in-depth study on the various manifestations of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar District through socio-cultural, religious, occupational and political discriminations imposed by high castes, the State and the other Dalits and to analyse the consequences of caste victimization on the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district.

A detailed review of literature was done by the researcher to focus the present study and identifying the key concepts related to the study. A critical analysis on the account of what has been published on the research related topics such as caste,
untouchability, discriminations and victimization by accredited scholars, organizations and researchers is given in a synthesized manner. Though a lot of literature is available on castes, Dalits, untouchability and discriminations, hardly any research study is available from the victimological perspective of the Arunthathiyars. Even the studies which were done on the Arunthathiyars in various States only deal with socio-economic issues of the Arunthathiyars with the sociological and social justice perspectives.

In order to analyse the sufferings, pain and agony imposed on the Arunthathiyars through the inhuman caste discriminations, the study develops a concept namely ‘Caste Victimization’ of the Arunthathiyars. This research aims at studying: the socio-cultural, religious, occupational and political discriminations; victimization of high castes, the State and the other Dalits on the Arunthathiyars; the consequences on women and on the psychological consequences like low self-esteem, fear and stress of the Arunthathiyars and how these variables are related to the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district. With this research approach, the study is titled: Caste Victimization: A Study of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar District. The scientific approaches to caste victimization in order to assert the identity, dignity and rights of the Arunthathiyars are also developed in this study.

4.2. Operational Definitions:

4.2.1. Discrimination and Victimization:

**Discrimination:** Discrimination is an act of dehumanization or inequality or exploitation or exclusion of individuals or an entity based on logical or irrational decision-making. In this study, the discrimination is an act of the high castes or the State or the other Dalits on the Arunthathiyars which creates dehumanization or inequality or exploitation or exclusion of the Arunthathiyars.
Victimization: In general, victimization is the consequential effect of the discriminating process which creates asymmetric relationship which is inhuman, unbalanced, exploitative and oppressive, and having inherent agony and harm on individuals or an entity and making them sufferers of the society. In this study, victimization is the consequential effect of the discriminating process of the high castes or the State or the other Dalits which creates asymmetric relationship which is inhuman, unbalanced, exploitative and oppressive, and having inherent agony and harm on the Arunthathiyars making them sufferers of the caste society.

4.2.2. Dependent Variable:

Caste Victimization:

In this study, Caste victimization is defined as a sum of

- Victimization of the Arunthathiyars by high caste people through socio-cultural, religious, economic and political actions and interactions,
- Victimization of the Arunthathiyars by the state through the ways and approaches of implementation of laws and policies of government and their actions and interactions with the Arunthathiyars,
- Victimization of the Arunthathiyars by the other Dalits through socio-cultural, religious, economic and cultural actions and interactions.

4.2.3. Independent Variables:

- **Union, village and town where the respondents live**: Union, village and town where the respondents live within the Virudhunagar district are the geographic locations divided for the administrative purposes of the government. Three Panchayat Unions namely Rajapalayam, Sattur and Vembakkottai are selected for the study purpose. Each Union has 36, 46 and 48 Panchayat villages respectively and a few towns within its limit.

- **Sex**: Sex refers to the physical attributes associated with the respondent being male or female.

- **Age**: Arunthathiyar who has completed 18 years of old.
Marital status: Marital status indicates whether the respondent is married or not, or widow(er), or separated or deserted.

Religion: Practicing religion of the respondent.

Education: Literacy status of the respondent.

Occupation: The present occupation of the respondent, and if the person is retired then the occupation of the respondent had been doing earlier.

Income: Income of the family which includes the earnings of the parents and the unmarried children.

Land Owning: Land owning is the state of the respondent in owning land for agricultural purpose.

Housing: Nature of the residence of the respondent with reference to the ownership and the type of roof of the residence.

Language: Language of the respondent which is spoken at home other than Tamil.

Membership in other Dalit movements: It refers to the respondent being a member of a movement of other Dalits other than the Arunthathiyars.

Membership in Political Parties: It refers to the respondent being a member of a Political Party.

Membership in the Arunthathiyar Movements: It refers to the respondent being a member of a movement of the Arunthathiyars.

4.2.4. Discrimination Related Variables:

1. Socio-cultural Discrimination: High caste people or the other Dalits or the state abusing the Arunthathiyars verbally as well as physically, imposing practices of socio-cultural disparities, forbidding the Arunthathiyars not to use the common places and or not to follow the common customs and giving sexual harassment to the Arunthathiyar women.

2. Religious Discrimination: High caste people or the other Dalits or the state imposing discrimination on the Arunthathiyars in worship, not allowing them into the worshipping places, forbidding them to participate in rituals and festivals, forcing
them to do the menial works during religious festivals and avoiding participation in the celebrations of the Arunthathiyars.

3. **Occupational Discrimination:** High caste people or the other Dalits or the state forcing the Arunthathiyars to do works like manual scavenging, doing cobbling, burying the dead animals, sweeping the streets, beating the drums etc. which are considered by the caste society to be filthy, unclean and polluted, and not giving proper wages to their work.

4. **Political Discrimination:** High caste people or the other Dalits or the State denying the Arunthathiyars their right to voice their opinion in village meetings and their right to participate in elections, using the Arunthathiyars only as vote banks, creating hurdles against the development of the Arunthathiyars in politics, interfering in the disputes among the Arunthathiyars and making them powerless.

4.2.5. **Victimization Related Variables:**

1. **High Castes:** The castes which are considered higher than the Dalits in the caste hierarchy; according to Vedas, by their birth they are called touchable castes or pure castes of the caste society which are created as the human castes by Brahma, the creator God. They are socially kept in high status, economically well off and politically powerful. They do not engage in jobs which are considered undignified, filthy and menial. They are called as the victimizing castes in this study.

2. **State:** Government consists of the legislators, administrators, and arbitrators in the administrative bureaucracy who represent the State. The government is composed of a body of individuals who control and exercise control over political decision-making. Their function is to make and enforce laws, implement policies, and arbitrate conflicts.

3. **Other Dalits:** The persons belonging to the castes other than the Arunthathiyar caste which are considered as the lowest in the caste hierarchy. According to Vedas, by their birth they are called untouchable castes or impure castes of the caste society which are created by Brahma, the creator God as having less status than the human castes. They are socially kept low, economically very poor and politically powerless. They are considered as slave castes to the high castes engaging in all types of works which are considered undignified. They are called the victimized castes in this study.
But they feel that they are in higher status than the *Arunthathiyars* in the caste hierarchy imbibing and imposing the dehumanising qualities of the high castes on the *Arunthathiyars*. Hence in this study, the *Arunthathiyars* are called the victims of the victimized castes.

4.2.6. Consequences Related Vulnerable Group Variable:

1. **Women**: Consequences on the *Arunthathiyar* women is defined as women being treated inhumanly, not consulted for any decision making at home or village or at any level, not even paid the minimum wages and sexually exploited by high castes, the other *Dalits*, the State and the men of the *Arunthathiyar* community.

4.2.7. Consequences Related Psychological Variables:

2. **Low Self-esteem**: It is a feeling of the *Arunthathiyars* that they are not able to live with self-respect. Do not like to be called *Chakkiliyars*, having a feeling that I am useless, having low self-image from their birth and the discriminatory acts of the high castes or the State or the other *Dalits* degrading the self-worth of the *Arunthathiyars*.

3. **Fear**: Feelings of the *Arunthathiyars* that the degrading acts of the high castes or the State or the other *Dalits* affect their inner freedom, makes them live in constant panic, reduces the courage to fight for their rights and against the untouchability and not able to react when being dehumanised.

4. **Stress**: Creating a feeling of self-depreciation, and mental pain and torture in the *Arunthathiyars*. Aggravates the hatred of oneself, feeling of being ashamed before the society and making them accept with agony the dehumanising conditions created by the high castes or the State or the other *Dalits*.

4.2.8. Laws and Policies Related Variables:

2. **Perception on the Implementing Agencies of Laws and Policies:** The assessment of the functioning and implementing agencies of the above Laws and Policies.

### 4.2.9. Empowerment of the *Arunthathiyars* Related Variables:

1. **Constructing a New Identity:** A new identity of the *Arunthathiyars* which asserts self-esteem, self-image and fearlessness, and power to decide for themselves, is to be constructed in order to fight against the caste victimization and to assure their equal rights and dignity as human persons in the society.

2. **Free and Compulsory Education and Higher Education:** It is the responsibility of the government to give free education to the children of the *Arunthathiyars* up to higher education.

3. **New Job Opportunities:** It is the duty of the government to give new job opportunities other than scavenging works to the *Arunthathiyars*.

4. **Increase in Inner-Reservation:** Government should take steps to increase the inner-reservation to the *Arunthathiyars* from 3% to 6%.

5. **Preference to the *Arunthathiyar* Women in Education and Jobs:** Among the *Dalits*, government should give first preference to the *Arunthathiyar* women in education, job opportunities and in politics.

6. **Equal Power in Making-decision for the *Arunthathiyar* Men and Women:** The *Arunthathiyar* men and women should get the power to make decision for themselves and equal powers to make decisions in the government from the local governance to higher level.

7. **Preference to the *Arunthathiyars* in Government programmes and policies:** Among the *Dalits*, government should give first preference to the *Arunthathiyars* in implementing the government programmes and policies.

8. **Land to all the Landless *Arunthathiyars*:** Government should give at least 2 acres of cultivable land to the landless *Arunthathiyars*.

9. **The *Arunthathiyar* Movements coming together as a Single Movement:** It is an urgent need for the *Arunthathiyar* movements to come under single platform.
10. **Joining Hands with Other Dalits and Revolutionary Movements**: in order to achieve liberation from caste victimization, the *Arunthathiyars* need to join hands with the movements of the other Dalits and revolutionary movements.

11. **Supporting Inter-caste Marriages**: Whole heartedly supporting the inter-caste marriages as a sign of caste annihilation.

12. **Fighting for the Annihilation of Caste**: The *Arunthathiyars* as a single entity joining with others need to fight for the annihilation of castes.

### 4.2.10. Empowerment of the *Arunthathiyars* Related Variables Making Impacts on Caste Victimization:

1. **Education**: Education has not brought high status to the *Arunthathiyars*, educated are also considered as untouchables, forced to do as non-literate do and have the same experience of victimization.

2. **Reservation**: Benefits of reservation are being denied. Social and economic status remains the same. Continue to do the manual scavenging, not increased the opportunities of government jobs, participation in elections and in politics. Atrocities and untouchable practices have not been stopped.

3. **Movements**: Movements create strength of power of the *Arunthathiyars*, decreases the atrocities, increases the awareness of politics and power, the state begins to respect the *Arunthathiyars* and there is an increase of social awareness among the *Arunthathiyar* youth and women. The *Arunthathiyars* are able to fight for their own rights.

### 4.3. Research Questions

In the context of caste untouchability and discriminations on the *Arunthathiyars*, the present study aims at exploring the various manifestations of caste victimization in socio-cultural, religious, occupational, gender and political discrimination of the *Arunthathiyars*. The present research will deal with the following research questions:
4.3.1. Demographic Related Questions:

1. What is the relationship between the socio-economic status of the Arunthathiyars and the caste victimization?
2. Is there any relationship between village and town settlements and caste victimization?
3. Is there any relationship between sex and caste victimization?
4. What is the relationship between age and caste victimization?
5. What is the relationship between education and occupation?
6. Is the access to education reducing the caste victimization?
7. What is the relationship between land owning and caste victimization?
8. In what ways are the Arunthathiyars being victimized on the basis of religion?
9. Does the membership in the Arunthathiyar movements reduce the caste victimization?

4.3.2. Discrimination Related Questions:

10. What are the socio-cultural, religious, occupational and political discriminations imposed on the Arunthathiyars to make them as caste victims?
11. What is the level of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars by high castes, state and other Dalits?
12. What are the various manifestations of the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars?
13. What are the main occupations done by the Arunthathiyars which make the Arunthathiyars caste victims by high castes?
14. What are the reasons for doing such occupations by the Arunthathiyars?
15. Do the Arunthathiyars have fair and free political participation?
16. Are the Arunthathiyars being victimized by the other Dalits?
17. How and why are the Arunthathiyars being victimized by the other Dalits?
18. How do the Arunthathiyars face caste victimization?

4.3.3. Consequences Related Questions:

19. What are the consequences of the caste victimization on the Arunthathiyar women?
20. Are the Arunthathiyar women victimized more than the Arunthathiyar men?
21. What are the impacts of such caste victimization on the Arunthathiyars?
4.3.4. Laws and Policies Related Questions:

22. What is the level of understanding of the Arunthathiyars on the Laws which are enacted by the Government to safeguard the rights of the Arunthathiyars?

23. In what way are the Arunthathiyars treated when they approach the legislators and bureaucrats of the state?

4.3.5. Making Impacts on Consequences Related Questions:

24. Has education brought changes among the Arunthathiyars to be free from the caste victimization?

25. Has the reservation policy of the Government helped the Arunthathiyars to come out of their social, occupational and political victimization?

26. Are the atrocities on the Arunthathiyars disappearing due to the emergence of the Arunthathiyar movements?

27. What impacts have the Arunthathiyar movements created on them to address the issue of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars?

28. Does the participation of the Arunthathiyars in the activities of Arunthathiyar movements increase the level of awareness of caste victimization among them?

29. What is the role of media in reducing the caste victimization?

30. What are the ways and means to empower the Arunthathiyars against caste victimization?

4.4. Methodology

The scientific methodology followed in the study enabled the researcher to analyse critically the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars in the Indian caste system in all its guises and forms. With a view to obtain scientific response, and analysis on the above research questions, the following methodology was adopted. This would include specific area of study, selection of samples, sources of data, tools of data collection, data analysis and chapterisation.
4.4.1. Universe of the Study

Virudhunagar district (Annexure I) was selected for the purpose of the present study. As the reasons are enumerated in Chapter 1, Virudhunagar district is known for caste based violence and untouchable practices, and the *Arunthathiyars* in the district are the most marginalized, living in acute poverty as coolie workers. In this study, the field of survey on caste victimization of the *Arunthathiyars* is confined to Virudhunagar district.

4.4.2. The Research Tool

In order to construct the research tool, the researcher had organised meetings with the various groups like the leaders and cadres of the *Arunthathiyar* movements from the district including women leaders, the administrators and animators of KARISAL and SIDO, some of the intellectuals, writers, lawyers and a few officials in the district, and had preliminary discussions with them.

A detailed study of review of literature on the research problem gave a comprehensive understanding on the major concepts which are being dealt in the study and motivated the researcher to chalk out research design. The available studies on concepts like caste, caste system, untouchability, discrimination, victim and crime gave a clear understanding of caste victimization with a special focus on victimization of the *Arunthathiyars* in Virudhunagar district.

4.4.2.1. Interview Schedule

Based primarily on quantitative questionnaire data, the study aims to articulate the causes and consequences of caste victimization of the *Arunthathiyars*. In order to measure victimization and other related variables with appropriate scoring techniques, the researcher decided to use the interview schedule as a basic research tool for investigation of the caste victimization of the *Arunthathiyars*. This method of securing information
from the respondents from the concerned universe was decided because there is a significant number of non-literate among the *Arunthathiyars* in Virudhunagar district. In order to assess caste victimization and other related variables, the tool was prepared covering all the variables selected for the research. The interview schedule was prepared after due consultations with the leaders, both men and women of the *Arunthathiyar* movements, the *Arunthathiyar* youth animators and field workers of *KARISAL* and *SIDO*. Different scales were used to assess those variables. The interview schedule starting with simple and factual questions on socio-economic profiles of the respondents which helped the respondents to develop a confidence with the interviewer, gradually led towards eliciting responses on more and more complex phenomena.

Using the alpha reliability index method, each index in the interview schedule was tested for reliability. Keeping in mind the scientific way of processing like editing, coding, classification and tabulation of collected data, the interview schedule was appropriately pre-coded (The Interview Schedule is attached as Annexure V).

4.4.3. Trainings

This method of data collection lies in the fact that the schedules are filled in by the enumerators who are specially trained for the purpose. In order to achieve the aim of the study, 25 experienced *Arunthathiyar* animators (14 women and 11 men) of *KARISAL* and *SIDO* were identified as enumerators and were given four intensive trainings on how to approach and collect data from the *Arunthathiyar* respondents using the schedule. During the trainings, the exercise of collecting proper and correct information was done within enumerators in order to know what kind of difficulties they face during the data collection. After due consultation, the draft interview schedule was again modified according to the suggestions given by the enumerators to make it an effective instrument of investigation.
4.4.4. Pilot Study

Each enumerator was asked to conduct interview in randomly selected 30 villages from the selected three unions among 30 randomly selected samples. The modified tool was pre-tested through this pilot study in the selected universe. To detect measurement bias and verify whether the questions in the tool contribute to the intended variables restricted factor analysis, an established technique was applied to the data received through the pilot study. It was confirmed through the pilot study that the questions prepared for various variables contributed to caste victimization. Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to codify and to process the collected data. The data collected through the pilot study helped the researcher to determine the reliability and validity of the interview schedule. The results and analysis derived from the pilot study were discussed with the same group of leaders of the Arunthathiyar movements and animators. Their response and feedback on the interview schedule based on the analysis of the pilot study helped the researcher to make appropriate changes in the questionnaire and to rearrange the questions on caste victimization and other variables.

During the Pilot study, the researcher also closely followed the investigation of the enumerators to find out whether the work is done in a systematic manner. Based on some of the difficulties they faced during the field work, a few modifications were done in the interview schedule to make it a perfect one in order to collect accurate information.

Cronbach’s alpha coefficient (Alpha) was used for reliability test. A high value for Cronbach’s alpha indicates good internal consistency of the items in the scale. Alpha reliability coefficient of the various indices used in the interview schedule is given in Table 9.
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<tr>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Indices</th>
<th>Question No.</th>
<th>Alpha Reliability Coefficient</th>
<th>Index of Reliability</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Socio-cultural Discrimination</td>
<td>16.1-16.8</td>
<td>0.865</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Religious Discrimination</td>
<td>17.1-17.8</td>
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<td>Occupational Discrimination</td>
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<td>Political Discrimination</td>
<td>19.1-19.8</td>
<td>0.909</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>High Castes Victimization</td>
<td>20.1.1-20.1.8</td>
<td>0.795</td>
<td>0.891</td>
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<td>State Victimization</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Other <em>Dalits</em> Victimization</td>
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<td>0.970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Impact on Women</td>
<td>21.1-21.8</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Impact on Low Self-esteeem</td>
<td>22.1.1-22.1.5</td>
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<td>Impact on Fear</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Impact on Stress</td>
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<td>Education</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>Movements</td>
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<td>Knowledge of Laws</td>
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<td>Empowerment Actions</td>
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<td>0.928</td>
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</table>

**4.4.5. Data Collection**

Primary data from the field were collected using following techniques:

1. **Schedule:** An interview schedule was prepared to collect information on the topic of the research which was filled by the enumerators. It was the main source of primary data.

2. **Interview and Focused Group Discussion:** Information was gathered through individual interviews and focused group discussions (Annexure VI) were conducted based on the research topic.

3. **Case Study:** In order to provide deeper understanding of the victimization of the *Arunthathiyars*, a few case studies of victims were also considered.
4. Participant observation: The researcher was part of the field research team to observe the reality of caste victimization of the *Arunthathiyars* in order to interpret from the perspective of the victims.

The secondary data which were already collected on the *Dalits* and particularly on the *Arunthathiyars* through the studies of others and have been passed through the statistical process are also used in this study.

The primary data were collected from 450 *Arunthathiyar* respondents using the interview schedule. Each enumerator was given 20 interview schedules for the investigation in their respective assigned areas with sufficient time allotted. To ensure sincere work from the enumerators, occasional field checks on their work were also done properly.

**4.4.6. Selection of the Samples**

Instead of using all the elements contained in the selected clusters, multiple-stage random (Multi-stage) sampling is used in randomly selecting elements from each cluster. Constructing the clusters is the first stage and deciding what elements within the cluster to use is the second stage. Given the nature of the universe of the study, multiple-stage random sampling was found appropriate by the researcher. Accordingly the multiple-stage random sampling was used by the researcher in selecting the samplings. Each revenue division, each union, each village and each respondent has the equal chance and the same probability of being included in the sample.

**Stage 1: Revenue Division**

Virudhunagar district is officially divided into two Revenue Divisions comprising four taluks each. Kariapatti, Tiruchuli, Aruppukkottai and Virudhunagar taluks are parts of Aruppukkottai Revenue Division, and Sattur, Sivakasi, Srivilliputur and Rajapalayam taluks form the Sivakasi Revenue Division. Among these two Revenue Divisions, by casting lots, Sivakasi Revenue Division has been selected by the researcher.
Stage 2: Panchayat Union

According to Demography available by Census 2001, the population of scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in the eleven panchayat unions of Virudhunagar district are given in Annexure II. Among the eleven Panchayat unions in the district, in Sivakasi Revenue Division alone, there are six Panchayat unions namely Rajapalayam, Sivilliputtur, Watrap, Vembakkottai, Sattur and Sivakasi. The researcher drew lots to select three panchayat unions from these six panchayat unions, all having equal probability to be selected and Rajapalayam, Sattur and Vembakkottai panchayat unions were selected for the study.

Stage 3: Panchayat Villages

Once again the researcher drew lots to choose the panchayat villages in each union, all having equal probability to be chosen for the study. As per the calculation of sample size, the researcher selected 50% of panchayat villages in Vembakkotai, 45% of panchayat villages in Sattur and 35% of panchayat villages in Rajapalayam panchayat unions. Accordingly, out of 48 panchayat villages in Vembakkotai panchayat union 24 panchayat villages (50%) were selected. Out of 46 panchayat villages in Sattur panchayat union 21 panchayat villages (45%) were selected and out of 36 panchayat villages in Rajapalayam panchayat union 13 panchayat villages (35%) were selected by lots. Since Rajapalayam and Sattur are the towns within the area of the selected unions, the selection of number of panchayat villages from these two panchayat unions are less in number than from Vembakkottai union. Most of the respondents from the town in the study are selected from these towns besides the selected 13 panchayat villages and 21 panchayat villages from Rajapalayam and Sattur unions respectively. Altogether 58 panchayat villages were selected from these three panchayat unions which comes around 44.6% of the total 130 panchayat villages of these three panchayat unions and 12.9% of the total 450 panchayat villages of Virudhunagar district (Annexures III & IV).

Stage 4: Respondents

The enumerators were allotted specific panchayat villages or towns to conduct the interviews. According to the calculation of the sample size vis-à-vis the family size the final interview was carried out randomly one respondent out of 10 families in a panchayat village or a town, all the Arunthathiyar families of these selected panchayat villages or towns having equal probability to be chosen as a sample for the study. Any person in the family who was available at the time of interview and has completed 18 years of age was interviewed. The persons who were interviewed for pilot study were not interviewed for the main study. A total number of 450 interviews were conducted by the enumerators - 329 from villages (73.1%) and 121 from towns (26.9%).

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4.4.7. Measuring Caste Victimization

After reviewing the available studies on victimization, the researcher identified three main variables to measure caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars. High castes, State and other Dalits are the three variables taken for the study which contribute to the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars.

The following areas of high castes contribute to caste victimization: verbal abuse by mentioning caste name of the Arunthathiyars, forbidding the Arunthathiyars the use of public places like wells, ponds, roads cremation grounds etc., forcing the Arunthathiyars to sweep the streets, cleaning the drainages and to cremate the dead bodies, forbidding the elected Arunthathiyar representatives like ward members, panchayat presidents to act independently, making the Arunthathiyars run after them for works when they boldly oppose untouchable practices and sexually harassing the Arunthathiyar women.

The variable caste victimization by the State includes the following areas: government officials make the Arunthathiyars wait for a long time when approached, they act according to caste one belongs, asking the Arunthathiyars to come again and again, scolding the Arunthathiyars by mentioning caste name, expecting bribe from them, refusing to implement SC/ST Acts, no cooperation from the officials in implementing the government policies and their caste biased dealings with the Arunthathiyars.

The items included in the caste victimization by other Dalits are: abusing the Arunthathiyars by mentioning the caste name, forbidding the Arunthathiyars to use common places, treating the Arunthathiyars as low castes, keeping the Arunthathiyars under their control, threatening the Arunthathiyars through katta panchayat, ‘high caste consciousness’ existing among the other Dalits and not allowing the Arunthathiyars to get into political power.
4.4.8. Scaling

Scaling describes the procedures of assigning numbers to various degrees of opinion of the respondents regarding the variables of caste victimization and other related variables of this study. Scaling consists of the highest point and the lowest point along with several intermediate points between these two extreme points.

To measure the caste victimization, Likert scale was mostly used in the interview schedule. It started from the highest point ‘strongly agree’ to the lowest point ‘strongly disagree’ with intermediate points ‘agree’, ‘do not know’ and ‘disagree’ or the highest point ‘fully accept, ‘accept’, ‘do not know’, ‘deny’ and the lowest point ‘fully deny’. The highest point had the score value 5 and the rest were given 4, 3, 2 and the lowest point had the score value 1. Later recoding was done and the responses were converted into a three point Likert scale, ‘yes’, ‘do not know’ and ‘no’ having score values 3, 2, and 1. The 5 points scales ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly deny’ or ‘fully accept’ to ‘fully deny’ were recoded as first two scales together as ‘yes’ with score value 3, third scale ‘do not know’ having score value 2 and the last two scales together as ‘no’ having score value 1. In other words, score value 3 indicates ‘victimization’, score value 2 denotes ‘neither victimization nor non-victimization’ and score 1 represents ‘no victimization’. Since there are 8 items under each variable - high caste, state and other Dalits, the probable total score is between 8 to 24 and the mean value is 16. The score value between 8 to 16 is considered as low victimization and the score value between 17 to 24 is considered as high victimization.

Following the same procedure, to measure the other variables related to discriminations, Likert scale was used in the interview schedule which started from the highest point ‘always’, ‘often’, ‘occasionally’, ‘do not know’ and ‘never’ having the
highest score value 5 and the rest were given 4, 3, 2 and the lowest score value 1. Later recoding was done and the responses were converted into a three point Likert scale, ‘yes’, ‘do not know’ and ‘no’ having score values 3, 2, and 1. The 5 points scales ‘always’, ‘often’, ‘occasionally’, ‘do not know’ and ‘never’ were recoded as first three scales together as ‘yes’ with score value 3, fourth scale ‘do not know’ having score value 2 and the last scale as ‘no’ having score value 1. In other words, score value 3 indicates ‘discrimination’, score value 2 denotes ‘neither discrimination nor non-discrimination’ and score 1 represents ‘no discrimination’. Since there are 8 items under each variable – socio-cultural, religious, occupational and political discriminations the probable total score is between 8 to 24 and the mean value is 16. The score value between 8 to 16 is considered as low discrimination and the score value between 17 to 24 is considered as high discrimination.

In the same way, to measure the impact variable *Arunthathiyar* women, Likert scale was used in the interview schedule starting from the highest point ‘strongly agree’ to the lowest point ‘strongly disagree’ with intermediate points ‘agree’, ‘do not know’ and ‘disagree’. The highest point had the score value 5 and the rest were given 4, 3, 2 and the lowest point had the score value 1. Later recoding was done and the responses were converted into a three point Likert scale, ‘yes’, ‘do not know’ and ‘no’ having score values 3, 2, and 1. Recoding the scales was done as the first two scales together as ‘yes’ with score value 3, third scale ‘do not know’ having score value 2 and the last two scales together as ‘no’ having score value 1. In other words, score value 3 indicates ‘impact on women’, score value 2 denotes ‘neither impact nor non-impact on women’ and score 1 represents ‘no impact on women’. Since there are 7 items under this variable, the probable total score is between 7 to 21 and the mean value is 14. The score value between
7 to 14 is considered as low impact on women and the score value between 15 to 21 is considered as high impact on women.

Similarly to measure the impact on the psychological variables low self-esteem, fear and stress, Likert scale was used in the interview schedule. It started from the highest point ‘fully accept, ‘accept’, ‘do not know’, ‘deny’ and the lowest point ‘fully deny’. The highest point had the score value 5 and the rest were given 4, 3, 2 and the lowest point had the score value 1. Later recoding was done and the responses were converted into a three point Likert scale, ‘yes’, ‘do not know’ and ‘no’ having score values 3, 2, and 1. The 5 points scales ‘fully accept’ to ‘fully deny’ were recoded as first two scales together as ‘yes’ with score value 3, third scale ‘do not know’ having score value 2 and the last two scales together as ‘no’ having score value 1. In other words, score value 3 indicates ‘impact’, score value 2 denotes ‘neither impact nor non-impact’ and score 1 represents ‘no impact’. Since there are 5 items under each variable – low self-esteem, fear and stress, the probable total score is between 5 to 15 and the mean value is 10. The score value between 5 to 10 is considered as low impact and the score value between 11 to 15 is considered as high impact. In the same way, to calculate empowerment related variables education, reservation and movement, Likert scale was used and accordingly recoding was done.

4.4.9. Data Processing

The researcher classified the raw data into purposeful and useful categories under different variables of the study. The collected raw data were meticulously checked and then they had been codified. After the data had been codified, using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme, the entire data was entered into the
computer. Missing values were checked in the coded data through the simple frequency analysis. A few variables like age, education, occupation, income and land-owning were grouped using appropriate intervals for the purpose of analysis of the data. For easy analysis, as a part of the technical procedure, the classified data were put in the form of tables and charts.

Univariate analysis is primarily used for descriptive purposes of giving the socio-economic situation of the Arunthathiyars in Virudhunagar district. The analysis gives the description of a single variable and its attributes of the applicable unit of analysis. This analysis brings out the relationship between the independent variables. For example, education and occupation are analysed in relation to land-owning since most of the Arunthathiyars are landless. Bivariate analysis is the analysis of two variables simultaneously - or multivariate analysis - the analysis of multiple variables simultaneously. Bivariate and multivariate analyses are geared more towards explanatory purposes.

Bivariate analysis such as correlation and chi-square explains as to whether two variables are related and how changes in one variable are related to the other. Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) is a measurement of the strength and direction of the linear relationship between two variables. It explains the linear relationship between two continuous variables like income and caste victimization. Correlation is a broad class of statistical relationship between two or more random variables. The value of correlation coefficient (r) ranges from -1 to +1. If ‘r’ is 0 then there is no linear relationship between the variables. If ‘r’ is more than 0 then there is a positive relationship between the variables and if ‘r’ is less than 0 then there exists a negative relationship between the variables.
Chi-square is a statistical test used for comparing observed data with expected data in one or more categories. It leads to establish whether there is a significant difference between the observed and expected data. This analysis is used, when the variables are dichotomous, for example landless and land-owning, to determine the degree of association between variables. In case of continuous variables, the variable is divided into two categories as high and low. For example, based on mean, the variable caste victimization is divided into two groups as high caste victimization and low caste victimization. These two groups are used for chi-square analysis to establish the association with other variables.

Path Analysis is a causal modeling approach which is used to explore the correlations within a defined network. The method is also known as Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). It is closely related to multiple regression. It provides the estimates of the magnitude and significance of hypothesized causal connections between sets of variables. As a scientific method, Path analysis is used in this research to establish the relationship between the causes and consequences of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars.

Figure 1 depicts the model to be tested in this research. Using multivariate analysis the researcher proposes a model to be tested in order to determine the causes and consequences of caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars.
Figure 1: Caste Victimization of the *Arunthathiyars* in Virudhunagar District: Causes, Consequence and Empowerment

Model to be Tested

Background Variables

Socio-Economic Status
- Age
- Sex
- Education
- Language
- Religion
- Rural-Urban
- Occupation
- Income
- Land Owning

Personality Related Variables

Socio-cultural Related Variables

Religious Related Variables

Occupational Related Variables

Political Related Variables

Knowledge of Law

Consequences of Caste Victimization

Empowerment of *Arunthathiyars*

Education Reservation Movements

Consequences of Caste Victimization
4.5. Limitations of the Study

Caste victimization is a consequential effect on the Dalits who are the victims of the socio-cultural, religious, occupational and political discriminatory process of a caste society. But among the Dalits, the Arunthathiyars are the doubly affected victims of the caste society as well as the other Dalits. The Arunthathiyars have expressed strongly that the other Dalits also contribute for the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars. The present study is based on the data collected from the Arunthathiyars only. The opinion of the other Dalits on their contribution to the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars would have been a complement to the present study and have made it complete from the perspective of the other Dalits who are also undergoing the pain and sufferings of the caste victimization of the high castes.

In the same way the opinion of government employees on the way they treat the Arunthathiyars and the difficulties they face to implement the laws and policies will also complement the study and give an overall picture of the caste victimization of the Arunthathiyars.

The term ‘Arunthathiyars’ includes also Chakkiliyar, Madari, Adi Andhra, Pagadai, Madiga and Thoti, according to the Report of Justice M.S. Janarthanam (2008) One Man Committee of Inquiry for Special Reservation for the Arunthathiyars. Among the different groups, there are no Madari, Adi Andhra and Madiga in the study area. And so the opinion expressed in this study reflects only the experience of the other groups (Chakkiliyar, Pagadai and Thoti) of the Arunthathiyars who live in Virudhunagar district.