CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY
Scientific precision and reliability of results in any study largely depend upon the efficacy and suitability of the strategy adopted for investigation. Methodology is like a blueprint of an architecture based on a systematic programme that helps a researcher to proceed smoothly in quest of undertaking study from its beginning to end. It is, therefore, very important to plan a programme before carrying out research. The present investigator had also taken serious steps in the formulation of research methodology keeping in view the proposed problem entitled, "A Study of organisational variables and personal characteristics as correlates of absenteeism".

In the light of the afore-mentioned contentions, a great difficulty was visualised in the planning of methodology specially with regard to the recording of absence nature and the total number of days absent from work but investigators' continuous and concerted efforts led to resolve some sort of hurdles which however, could not have been possible without the help of HMT authorities who sanctioned permission for undertaking study and had extended official help too. The details of the methodology employed in this study is being discussed below.
Sample

It has always been difficult or rather impossible task for any researcher to cover the whole population for the purpose of study, hence, sample from a given population is used. A sample is a miniature population which should represent adequately the entire population. The research topic of the present study had warranted to choose the sample from amongst the population entrusted with certain work responsibilities directed to achieve stipulated organizational goals. Therefore, sample of this study was randomly drawn from HMT—a big public enterprise situated in the outskirt of Srinagar.

In the mid-sixties, the Government of India decided to set up a watch factory in Kashmir valley in the vicinity of Srinagar as a part of over-all programme towards an organized industrialization of the area. The project was approved by the Government of India in June, 1970 and soon after the work was started for establishing the factory at Zainakot near Srinagar city. The organization with the investment of a capital of Rupees 675 lakhs had stimulated the process of industrialization in the valley. The unit had provided employment initially to about 1,200 persons, of which nearly 320 were females. In view of the cold weather of Srinagar during the major portion of a calendar year, the entire
factory was built centrally heated to provide warm atmospheric condition to employees in the cold weather. HMT, at present, employees approximately 1,500 workers at all levels, i.e., from the top position of General Manager to the lowest position of production line workers. Every worker had been receiving minimum Rs.1600/- per month by the end of 1989 when the data collection came to the end.

Sample of the present investigation consisted of 300 male and female employees engaged in production line. These workers have a different grade ranging from WG-1 to WG-5 and the promotion to them in the various afore-mentioned grades are generally given after every two and a half years which is awarded to them on the basis of overall performance evaluation but when they reach to the grade position of WG-5 majority of them experience stagnation. It is worth-mentioning here that change in grade is only the mode of perceived promotion of these employees as their status and nature of work remains the same.

A very few aforesaid employees get a chance to hold the position of supervisor which is rarely held by any one in the whole job tenure. The breakup of the sample has been given in Table 2.1.
TABLE 2.1
Showing the breakup of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Group</th>
<th>Sample Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Irrespective of sex difference the sample does not seem to be highly educationally qualified. Majority of them are matriculate and a few are diploma holders. However, after recruitment for the job every one has to undergo a training programme which equip employees to develop technical skill to perform job effectively. The information about the respondents' biographical characteristics have been supplied in Table 2.2.

TABLE 2.2
Showing Biographies of the Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Group</th>
<th>Average Age in years</th>
<th>Average Job tenure in years</th>
<th>Average No. of dependents</th>
<th>Average Income in Rs.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>31.42</td>
<td>8.17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2130.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30.68</td>
<td>9.53</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2385.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to the conventional rule when a worker joins the organization at production line his job starts from WG-1 and after 2 1/2 years he gets promotion and to the next higher grade i.e., to WG-2 and may climb up to the grade of WG-5. It has already been mentioned earlier that employees may get promotion to the position of a supervisor but it is rarely attained. The promotion to the supervisory level does not only depend on tenure but also on employees' productive skill, efficiency, their level of interest, enthusiasm to seek voluntarily additional responsibilities, and their level of interpersonal behaviour, etc. Promotion is a sort of reward for encouraging those who make a successful effort to increase their skill and try their level best to enhance and maintain higher level of productive efficiency.

The work nature of employees working in assembly and escapement sections, is different from each other but their work activities are highly interrelated and the achievement of the organizational productive targets is only possible through coordinated activities of the employees working in the two different production line sections. According to the rules of the organization, workers have to work for six days a week. The employees of the factory are eligible for the different categories of leaves as earned, casual and sick leaves. Earned leave is 2.5 days per month, i.e. 30 days per year and the maximum accumulation is 90 days. The limit may
be raised to 120 days in special cases with the permission granted by the General Manager. Casual leaves of 10 days per calendar year are admissible to all employees. Sick leave of 10 days per calendar year is allowed to all employees. Women employees are not covered by the ESI scheme and they are also eligible for maternity leave with full pay for a maximum period of six weeks. Crossing the limit of these leave if an employee remains absent from work he suffers in pay deduction.

Collection of Data

It has been pointed out earlier, that the data for the present study were collected from HMT, Srinagar. For this purpose the investigator had taken prior permission from the Company’s competent authority and the schedules for data collection were strictly predetermined by the company authorities. The present investigator visited to the organization every day from 9.00 AM to 5.00 PM but most of the data were usually collected during lunch and tea breaks.

Description of tools

Questionnaire since long has been a favoured instrument for psychological studies. There has not been any single psychological test which can tell about all aspects of behaviour. Since human being is a composite of numerous
behaviour so, for testing each behavioural aspect an independent psychological tool is used. Developing questionnaire and other psychological tools, is a painstaking process as standardization of a psychological test must conform its various aspects like reliability, validity which determine the efficacy and proficiency of a psychological test. Hence, it is important that there must be an adequate selection of psychological tests to be used for behavioural investigation. A comprehensive detail of the measures used in the present investigation follow.

Measure of Absenteeism

It has been usually found extremely difficult to gather information regarding the rate of absenteeism. Since the present report is based on the data collected from a larger organizational unit of a public sector namely, HMT, Srinagar, so with the help of the administrative personnel the data collection pertaining to the nature and the rate of absenteeism could be done. The present investigator only collected the year-wise information of the three consecutive years from 1987 to 1989 and as have already been indicated earlier that plainly total number of days absent in a year was recorded irrespective of the controversy of authorized or unauthorized absence. There is no hesitation to point out here that recording monthly detailed information for each and every employees' nature and duration of absenteeism, is not
only a difficult task but a task which has been rather experienced impossible. Absenteeism record has been covered with the informations of the individual biographies (see Appendix III).

Inventory covering organizational variables and personal characteristics

Since the purpose of the present study was to see the influence of personal characteristics and organizational variables on absenteeism, so, an extensive spade work was carried out for the preparation of the inventory covering both organizational and personal factors. Organizational variables covered in the inventory are economic factors, level of autonomy for exercising authority and power, opportunity to learn new skills, chances for fulfilling selfactualizing need, level of participation in decision making and level of job security, etc. On the other hand type of relationship with fellow-workers, feeling of respect at work, autonomy for self-expression, etc. are the factors covered under the dominance of personal characteristics. (See Appendix-I).

To each of the above organizational variables and personal characteristics employees were required to respond either in 'Yes' or 'No' where response 'Yes' referred to the source of absenteeism and 'No' to having no influence on
Moreover, in case of 'Yes' responses subjects were also required to give their personal experiences that to what extent these factors could have been either avoided or unavoidable in the given situation on a 5-point scale ranging from highly avoidable to highly unavoidable.

Apart from the aforementioned inventory one more independent measure was administered for predicting its relationship with absenteeism.

**Work Identification Scale:**

Work identification is a psychological dimension which can be taken as an aspect of personal characteristics because identification with the work is solely an individual's personal perception based on his perceived experiences in the work context. It is being visualized that work identification being psychopersonal variable would be having its influence on absenteeism. The scale used has been developed by Shrivastava and Dolke (1978). The items included in the scale pertained to two important aspects of work, i.e. (1) importance attached to work and (2) satisfaction of needs through work. To ensure equal emphasis on the two facets of work identification, equal number of items (six each) have been included in the scale (see Appendix-II). The items included in the scale are both negatively and positively phrased and the subjects were required to respond on a 5-point scale ranging from scale value of '1' referring to
'high disagreement' to the scale value of '5' referring to 'high agreement' passing through the value of '3' indicating to 'neutrality' and similarly scale value of '2' and '4' referring to 'disagreement' and 'agreement' respectively. The scoring of the positively phrased items were done by adding the scores given to various statements, but the scores were reversely counted in the case of negatively phrased items. In such a manner scoring of the scale was done. The pattern of scoring clearly state that high score of the scale is indicative of high work identification where as low identification is indicated by low score.

It is worth-mentioning that authors of the work identification scale had simply developed the scale for the purpose of their project which was carried out on Ahmedabad Textile Industry's workers. They had not reported the reliability and validity of the scale. Later, Ansari (1988) while using this scale had obtained the reliability as well as the validity of the scale. The split-half reliability as obtained and reported by Ansari is \( r = .82 \) which is sufficiently high to prove the scale reliability. For finding out the validity, Ansari (1988) had obtained the correlation between the scores of Lodahl and Kejner's (1965) job involvement scale and the work identification scale. The obtained value \( r = .75 \) was found to be quite high for inferring the validity of the scale too.
Biographical Information Blank:

Some more personal characteristics have been taken in the study which were recorded by obtaining biographical informations from the respondents. Therefore, biographical information blank was prepared (see Appendix-III) and used for recording respondents age, job-tenurer, income, etc. in addition to the various scales which have already been discussed above in detail.

Hypotheses

Following null-hypotheses have been framed.

Hypotheses related to Organizational Variables

(Ho1) The amount of fringe and benefits will not be related to employees absence from work behaviour.

(Ho2) Amount of freedom (autonomy) at work will not be related to employees absenteeism.

(Ho3) The opportunity to learn new things at work will not be related to work absenteeism.

(Ho4) Autonomy to accomplish something worthwhile at work will not influence employees absenteeism at work.

(Ho5) Employees participation in decision making will not determine the behaviour of absenteeism.

(Ho6) Amount of job security will not be related to employees staying away behaviour from work.

(Ho7) Income will not influence absenteeism.
Hypotheses related to personal characteristics

(Ho8) Need satisfaction through work facet will not influence employees absenteeism.

(Ho9) Importance attached to work will not be related to absence from work behaviour.

(Ho10) Work identification will not influence absenteeism.

(Ho11) Friendliness with co-workers will not be having any influence on absenteeism.

(Ho12) Perceived feeling of respect from supervisors and co-workers will not be related to absence from work behaviour.

(Ho13) Perceived feeling of worthiness will not affect the behaviour of absenteeism.

(Ho14) Perceived relationship with supervisors and co-workers will not influence employee absenteeism.

(Ho15) Age will not be related to employees absenteeism.

(Ho16) Job tenure will not influence the behaviour of staying away from work.

(Ho17) There will be no relationship between employees' past and present absenteeism.

Statistical Analysis

Scientific explanation of any finding is not possible unless some statistical treatment have been given to the data obtained. Statistics provides a very clear picture of the results only in the form of its numerical values.
Therefore, statistical treatment to the data obtained is inevitably necessary be become sure about the reliability and the patterns of results as well.

In the light of the objectives of the study hypotheses were framed to be tested. Thus, adequate statistics were chosen to test the various hypotheses. The details of the statistics used in this investigation are given below:

In order to understand the relationship of numerous personal characteristics like age, job tenure, perceived relationship with supervisors and co-workers, feeling of worthiness, etc. and organizational variables like income, amount of fringe and benefits, participation in decision making, and amount of job security, etc., product-moment coefficient of correlation (Garret 1966 pp.134-139) was used.

Percentages have also been used for obtaining employees' ratio of giving reasons to the various personal and organizational factors as the sources of absenteeism though, percentage being an important technique in some of the instances, is not a sophisticated statistical method. Moreover, chi-square statistics (Siegel, 1956, pp.45-51) has also been applied to predict employees' absenteeism behaviour from the consistency in their past absenteeism behaviour.