The second chapter deals with the Review of literature of earlier studies, Methodology and the Profile of the study.

The third chapter analyses the characteristics of the Christian and Muslim women respondents and their family profile.

The fourth chapter examines the relationship between socio-economic variables of Christian and Muslim women and their monthly income.

The fifth chapter examines the Work-Family Conflict, Quality of both Work life and Job involvement of Christian and Muslim women employees.

The sixth chapter deals with women empowerment through decision making.

The last chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusion and suggestions.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE, METHODOLOGY AND PROFILE OF THE STUDY AREA

SECTION – A

REVIEW OF LITERATURE
A survey of related studies was undertaken by the investigator to get an insight into the work that has already been in the field of this investigation and also to get suggestions regarding the ways and means for the collection of relevant data and interpretation of results.

2.1 Review of Literature

Kamala Nath (1970)\textsuperscript{11} examines the geographical differences in work participation ratio among women in different states and districts. It is found in Industry-vise analysis of female-male ratio that women are represented in household sector of each industry and their number is small in modern organized sectors. Moreover, it is found that work participation of urban women is lower than that of rural women and that of literate women is significantly lower than of illiterate women.

Premilla Kapur\textsuperscript{12} in another study (1974) finds out the reasons for women’s work. The author says that women work is not because of economic necessity but because they want to have economic independence in dividable status (or) intellectual realization of some of their sociological needs.


Patel and Dholakia (1978)\textsuperscript{13} examined the effect of certain development variables like income, marital status, child rearing, and cast on female participation rates and concluded that female participation rates lend to have a ‘U’-shape curve with respect to income and that married women tend to have a higher participation rate than those not burdened with a family responsibility. Lastly, socio-cultural factors have a significant bearing on the level of female participation rate.

Singh (1980)\textsuperscript{14} reported that in a study of self employment women in the settlement colonies of Delhi, a very small proportion of women was considered polymeric earners although 81 percent of them stated that they worked to provide basic support to their families. The author points out the dependency assumption that a woman cannot be a primary earner as long as there is an adult male in the household. All household surveys under estimate the economic contribution of women to the household.

Lalitha Devi’s (1982)\textsuperscript{15} “Status and employment of women in India” examined the rate of white collar employment in contributing to higher status among women. The author explain that the employment has given women an opportunity to shoulder


responsibility, play new situations etc. The effective performance of these new roles exploded the myth of female in ferocity. They participate in socially meaningful and prestigious programmes.

A study conducted by Hazen D’ Lima and Hazeld Lima (1983),\textsuperscript{16} “Women in local government in Maharashtra” deals with the role of women in local bodies namely Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti. The study traces the social emergence of women in the country is socio-economic political background of women members in the Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Parishad.

According to Banerjee (1985)\textsuperscript{17} women’s economic position was worsening, because, their role in the traditional economy slowly became redundant, while their going in the modern sector remained negligible. In a study about garment industry, it was found that home-based production system provided cheap labour to the industry. The national skills of women were on sale at cheap rates in home based work and the availability of large number of women contributed to low wages among them.


Radha Devi and Ravindran (1985)\textsuperscript{18} concluded that the burden of household duties might not always create a barrier to the employment of women. Women may participate in work outside home and would toil at home either because of their husbands or their family members. What really matter in the context of increased work participation of women, is employment opportunity and not relief from household activities as such.

According to the study of Malthier and Rogers (1987)\textsuperscript{19} in Britain, although female entry in to some occupations such as the professions has been quite, racial, the overall employment distribution has only been marginally affected by these changes. Most women work in occupation that has been traditionally female dominated, and as relatively few men have entered these occupations, sex, inequalities in occupational distribution remains substantial.

In a study by Indira Devi (1987)\textsuperscript{20} to identify the changes emerging from education and employment of women in family, a sample size of 160 couples of Visakapattanam was taken. The major finding was that women’s education and


employment had helped to change the role performance, decision making and behavior pattern for egalitarian society.

A study by Mehta (1989)\textsuperscript{21} was to examine the extent of differences in employment opportunities and earning opportunities among similarly educated men and women. The study revealed that there exists inequalities in employment opportunities and earning among men and women despite similar levels of education.

Kabeer (1991)\textsuperscript{22} interprets women empowerment as a radical transformation of power relations between and men.

Devaki Jain (1992)\textsuperscript{23} in her analysis of the 73\textsuperscript{rd} constitutional amendment writes that the main intention of the policy makers behind reservation is two-fold democratic justice and resource utilization (human). She further states that as the half of the population is women, the country is development cannot achieve without the proper participation of women.


Alagh N. Sharma and Seema Singh (1993)\textsuperscript{24} offered a detailed study to the issues relating to female migration in India. With education, the number of job seekers among women tends to increase considerably and at a rate much faster than among their male counterparts.

S.K. Basu (1993)\textsuperscript{25} has discussed the health status of tribal women in India. The health status of tribal women was analysed in relation to sex ratio, age at marriage, fertility, morbidity like expectancy, nutritional status, maternal and child health care practices, STD and genetic disorders. The author has pointed out health related studies (among the tribal population) sound to be limited. Most of the studies are fragmentary in nature without an adequate sample size and standard methodology.

Studies by the Tamil Nadu Muslim Graduates Association\textsuperscript{26} (1993) over the last few years revealed that an increase of 10 percent in the female literacy rate reduces the total fertility rate by less than half child per women and about 2.3 children per women with 80\% female literacy. The analysis of data for 15 major states covering 96 percent of the country shows that female literacy and education are conversely related to the birth rates, death rates and infant mortality rates. Literacy in India means completion of the


\textsuperscript{26}Documentation on Women and Children, July – December, Chennai, 1993, pp.23-28.
primary stage of education and therefore the anticipated results have not been achieved. Better results were seen in women who have completed at least the secondary education.

According to J.S.Apete (1995) power is the key word of the term “empowerment” which means having control over material assets. Like land and finance, intellectuals and ideas, and to generate, sustain and propagate an ideology.

Studies Relating to empowerment in J.K. Pillai’s (1995) view, empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, greater decision making power and control and transformative actions.

According to Adams (1996) empowerment means the process by which individuals, groups and communities take control of their circumstances and achieve their own goals, thereby being able to work towards helping themselves and others to maximize the quality of their lives.

According to Lakshmi Devi (1998) the concept of Empowerment is, “an active, multi dimensional process which should enable women to realize their full identity and powers in all spheres of life”.

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Dhubhusi (2000)\textsuperscript{31} considered empowerment as exercising control over one’s lives firstly on resources – financial, physical and human and secondly on beliefs, values and attitudes.

Angela (2001)\textsuperscript{32} has explained the factors influencing the labour force decisions either part time (or) full time. The author has also studied the relationship between motherhood ideology and material labour force participation.

Deshmukh (2002)\textsuperscript{33} has argued that empowerment can be understood as an expansion in spaces. This expansion includes spaces in economic and political spaces.

According to Shyam Sunder Singh et al.,(2002)\textsuperscript{34} women’s empowerment could be considered as a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money and access to money and control over decision making in the home, community, society and nation, and to gain power.


\textsuperscript{33}Deshmukh (2002), Space for Power: Women’s Work and Family Strategies in South and South East Asia, Rainbow publishers, New Delhi, p.64.

Anupam (2005)\textsuperscript{35} Gupta argues that empowerment is a process of awareness and capacity building, leading to greater participation, greater decision-making and power of control.

Sayed Afzal Peenzade and Prema Parande (2005)\textsuperscript{36} found that women’s empowerment is a global issue, which has gained momentum in recent decades. In India, besides ratification of international conventions, there are provisions in the constitution and several acts have been passed to ensure women empowerment. It however appears that on this front the situation on ground is far from satisfactory. Despite concerted efforts of government and NGOs, there are certain gaps of course we have come across in empowering women, yet the future journey is difficult and demanding. We need to draw strength from the determination and will to empower women, come what may. The efforts of government and its different agencies are ably supplemented by non-governmental organizations that are playing an equally important role in facilitating women empowerment.

O.O. Yadara (2005)\textsuperscript{37} points out it is important to educate women on preventive measures such as, reducing fat levels in blood, avoidance of obesity and increasing


\textsuperscript{37} O.O. Yadava, (2005), CEO and Chief Cardiac Surgeon at National Heart Institute, All India Heart foundation, \textit{Yojana}, July, Vol.49, pp.24-28.
physical activity levels. Heart disease isn’t just a man’s disease. Heart attack, stroke and other cardio-vascular diseases are devastating to women too. In fact, coronary heart disease, which cause heart attack, is the leading cause of death for women. Nearly twice as many women die of heart disease and stroke as from all forms of cancer, including breast cancer. Further the disease in women merits major alteration as it is different for coronary heart disease in men both its presentation as well as its effects.

R. Shashikumar (2006)\(^\text{38}\) in his paper made an attempt to explain and analyse the multifaceted and multidimensional role of Indian women in our socio-economic life. The coverage of this paper is three-fold namely, participation of women in developmental activities in India, assessment of women programmes, followed by issue of women empowerment.

According to Shanthi Ezhil Idu J.P and J. Nirmala (2007)\(^\text{39}\) Human development is a combination of the development of human capabilities and the development of opportunities for people to use capacities created. The development of women lies in the fact that “If human development is not engendered, it is endangered”.


Nahid Sarikhani (2008)\textsuperscript{40} in his study analysed Muslim women’s work participation in India based on population census in 2001. In this study, descriptive research has been used. Results have indicated that Muslim constitutes 13.4\% of India’s population. Indeed, India has the second largest Muslim population in the world. Sex ratio among Muslim population at the national level is 9.36. Illiteracy of Muslim women is high and they have not been able to take full advantage in society.

Joy Deslimukh – Ranade (2009)\textsuperscript{41} explains gender in equality is an issue that has been reverberating through the society for decades. There are basic inequalities in gender relations with in family or the household that can take various forms. This book highlights women survival and the sacrifices they make in India, where family norms and value systems are non democratic, their expressions of patriarchal ill-treatment through various forms, like folk songs and theatre arts the changing scenario of family relationship with neither agencies and nor the administration of just and the inclusion of and supportment in the mission to challenge existing-discriminatory social norms to establish gender equality and domestic democracy.

\textsuperscript{40}Nahid Sarikhani (2008), “Muslim Women’s Work Participation in India”, \textit{Journal of Social Science}, Vol.17, No.3, pp. 219-222

According to Alak Bhattacharya, Mostafakamal and Chandana Nath (2009)\(^ {42}\) Muslim constitute the largest minority group in India as well as in Tripura. But their socio-economic condition remains the same from the national average. The aim and the objective of this paper was to explore the status of Muslim minorities of Tripura in terms of their anomalous demographic position, declining trend in electoral status, unemployment, low level literacy, uneven development and unstable security situation under the purview of the Sachar Committee Report (2006), Prime Minister’s 15 points and Chief Minister’s (Tripura) 8 points development programs for minorities. The paper tends to sensitize the social scientists and policy makers to pay their attention regarding the access to the basic human rights of the Muslim community of the state.

According to Maya. S. Gankar (2010)\(^ {43}\) Women empowerment is broadly described as a process as well as the outcome of the process by which women gain greater control over resources, physical, human, financial and intellectual. Further, women empowerment challenges the ideology of patriarchy and the gender-based discrimination against the women in all the institutions and structures of society.

Women empowerment has two dimensions, static and dynamic


\(^{43}\)Maya. S. Gankar (2010), “Political Empowerment of Women in India”, *Third Concept*,. Vol.24, No. 278, April, p. 44.
1. Static empowerment of women relates to their capacity to participate in decision making that asserts their lives and to influence those decisions. Women will have an affective voice in this context.

2. Dynamic concept of empowerment as a process of developing capacity of individual to participate effectively in making and implementing decisions that directly or indirectly affect them.

2.1.1 Research Gap

The problems of minority women are enormous. A few studies in India and abroad have highlighted the status of religious minority women. But they covered only certain aspects of the problem. A comprehensive study covering various aspects of women employees like workforce participation, quality of work life and empowerment of women has been missing. To overcome this defect the researcher has chosen this vibrant topic for study.

SECTION – B

2.2. METHODOLOGY

Designing a suitable methodology and selection of analytical tools are important for a meaningful analysis of any research problem. In this section, an attempt has been made to describe the methodology which includes sampling procedure, period of study, collection of data and tools of analysis.

2.2.1. Sampling procedure
In order to analyse an economic study of religious minorities with special reference to women in Madurai district a meticulous sampling procedure is necessary. The present study is confined only to religious minorities of Christian and Muslim women in Madurai district. In Madurai district, the information regarding the list of religious minorities women were collected with the help of office of the Assistant Director of Statistics in Madurai. Out of 6,88,391 Christian and Muslim females in Madurai district, a total of 350 sample women were randomly selected for the purpose of primary data collection. 350 sample women were post-stratified into two categories namely Christian women and Muslim women. Out of 350 sample women, 175 (50 per cent) came under Christian women and the remaining 175 (50 per cent) came under Muslim women.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Males</td>
<td>1303363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>1274838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2578201</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census of India 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Religious</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Hindus</td>
<td>2351019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sl. No.</td>
<td>Name of the Religion of Females</td>
<td>Number of women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Christians</td>
<td>86352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Muslims</td>
<td>137443</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3387</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2578201</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Census of India 2001

**TABLE 2.3**

RELIGION OF FEMALES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Religion of Females</th>
<th>Number of women</th>
<th>Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Christian Females</td>
<td>41176</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Muslim Females</td>
<td>647215</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>688391</strong></td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source:* Census of India 2001

2.2.2. Period of Study

The field survey was carried out from October 2012 to March 2013 for the collection of primary data.

2.2.3. Collection of Data

The data required for this study have been obtained from primary and secondary sources. First-hand data were collected from the field, directly through structured comprehensive interview schedule.
Primary data have been collected through personal interview method with a pre-tested schedule which consists of information about the socio-economic characteristics, family characteristics, quality of work life, job involvement and the like.

Secondary data related to study have been taken from the District Collector’s Office, Madurai, Office of the Assistant Director of Statistics in Madurai, Madurai Corporation, District Employment Office, Employees State Insurance and Different categories of government organizations. The researcher collected information from the Centre for Development Studies (CDS), Trivandrum and also from a few magazines, journals and Census reports.

2.2.4 Tools of Analysis

In order to examine the relationship between socio-economic variables of both Christian and Muslim women and their monthly income, Chi-Square test was carried out.

ANOVA was used to test the variation in income among the women workers in public and private sector, Central and State and Industry and Service categories.

In order to assess the contribution of women employees in family income, a log linear multiple regression model was estimated for public and private sector separately.

To quantify the work-family conflict, quality of work, job involvement empowerment, scaling technique has been adopted for the present study.
Two-way ANOVA was carried out to examine whether there was any significant variation in quality of work life and job involvement.

Step-wise regression model was computed to assess the contribution of independent variables to quality of work life and empowerment.

The correlation co-efficient technique has been used to analyse among the variables of work-family conflict.

One way ANOVA was carried out to examine the variation in empowerment of different sectors.

In order to find out the level of empowerment, arithmetic mean and standard deviation were computed.

To examine the relationship between the level of empowerment and socio-economic factors, Chi-square test was applied.

2.3. Concepts

Meaning and definitions

A clear definition of certain concepts that one might come across in the discussion of the subject would be helpful in the proper understanding of the issues. Hence, before proceeding with the actual discussion of the problem on hand an attempt is made in this chapter to provide a clear meaning and definitions of certain concepts which are used in this study.
Households

A group of persons normally living together and taking food from the same kitchen constitute a household. It usually excludes guests and includes temporary absentees.

Age

Age has been considered as the number of full years completed by women workers at the time of investigation.

Family Size

This term means the number of members in a household.

Joint Family

More than one family sharing food from the same kitchen.

Nuclear Family

It is a family in which the husband and wife live with any number of their unmarried children.

Separation

When husband and wife do not live together and they have no marital relations that is called separation.
Divorce

It means when either of the party approaches the court or follows some other legal method claiming that relations between them have so much deteriorated that it is impossible for them to lead married life as husband and wife and request is made that the marriage be legally dissolved. It inevitably leads to a divorce.

Socio-Economic Background

It is an accepted fact that socio-eco-background is of special significance to the investigator. Socio-economic background assumes a continuous ranking from high to low on the basis of occupation, education, income and so on.

Education

The term ‘Education’ in the widest sense may be held to include the whole process of development through which human being passes from infancy to maturity, gradually adapting himself to his physical and social environment.

Educational Status

The educational status of the population of the sample households has been classified as illiterate, primary, middle, high, higher secondary and collegiate education.

Literate
According to 2001 census a literate is defined as a person who can both read and write with understanding in any language.

**Illiterate**

It is defined as a person who does not know how to read or write any language.

**Occupation**

The nature of work which the person has to perform is denoted by occupation.

**Income**

It refers to the wealth measured in money which has been at the disposal of an individual or a community per year. It may be considered to be a flow of purchasing power which may be expended at once on goods or services or retained for the purposes of capital accumulation.

Income is derived from various sources such as land, labour or capital. The word “Income” in this study refers to family’s monthly income or earnings from various sources for the entire family per month.

**Wages**
The term ‘wage’ denotes all payments for labour services irrespective of the form or shape in which they are received such as daily basis, weekly basis, monthly basis and other payments in monetary or real terms.

**Expenditure**

The term ‘expenditure’ here is defined as family size expenditure and investment expenditure.

**Public Sector**

That part of the economy in which the state acts as entrepreneur.

**Private Sector**

That part of economy which is left to private enterprise.

**Status**

Status is defined as the degree to which a person possesses characteristics valued in a particular society or has been discussed in terms of categories or kinds of persons.

**Status of women**

At micro level, the status of women is defined as a conjunction of the positions she occupies as a student, worker, a wife and a mother.

**Empowerment**
It is a process giving employees more power to exercise control and take responsibility for their work. It gives more scope for individuals to exhibit their abilities by encouraging them to take decisions close to the point of impact. It is about encouraging both hands and minds of the people involved. It speeds up decision making process. It accelerates the response to time to meet the changing needs of the customer. It exhorts creativity of employees. It provides greater job satisfaction to them. Finally, it leads to motivation, commitment and responsibility of the employees.

**Organisation**

An organization may be defined as a consciously co-ordinated social unit, composed of two or more people that functions on a relatively continuous basis to achieve a common goal or a set of goals.

**Work-family Conflict Variables:**

The concept of work-family conflict used in the present study is given below:

a) work involvement and work expectation are predictors of work conflict and work-family conflict, b) family involvement and family expectation are predictors of family conflict and work-family conflict, c) work conflict is a predictor of family conflict, d) work conflict and family conflict are predictors of work-family conflict, e) work conflict and work-family conflict affect an individual’s quality of work life (QWL), f) family conflict
and work-family conflict affect an individual’s quality of family life (QFL) and g) QWL and QFL jointly affect life satisfaction.

The definition of work-family conflict variables is given in the following paragraphs.

i) Work Involvement

The work involvement is defined as “a person’s psychological response to his or her current work-role or job, the degree to which a person identifies psychologically with the job, and the importance of the job to the person’s self-image and self-concept”.

The work involvement is positively related to the number of hours spent in the work. The hours spent in turn have been linked to increased work-conflict resulting from role overload.

ii) Family Involvement

Family involvement is conceptualized as the “degree to which a person identifies psychologically with family roles, the importance of the family to the person’s self-image and self-concept, and the individual’s commitment to family roles”.

As work involvement, family involvement has also been shown to be positively related to the number of hours spent in family activities which in turn is to be linked to increased family conflict.
“Women’s self-concept has traditionally been associated with their performance of the parenting and spouse roles”. Sensitization theory predicts that when women are involved in the family role, it raises anxiety and guilt regarding their performance in non-traditional roles. Higher family involvement leads to more work-family conflict for women because they are playing a traditional family role along with a non-traditional role.

iii) Work Expectations

Work expectations are defined as the pressure an individual perceives in assuming increased role responsibilities.

High work expectations have been significantly linked to high levels of work conflict. Women do have mutually supportive and family roles. Central to the traditional roles of wife and mother is the obligation to be available to meet the needs of the family. Career women are often unable to find adequate time to liberate themselves from their family roles to satisfy work expectations. Several researchers have reported a positive association between work role expectations and work-family conflict. High work expectations have also been found to be positively associated with work-family conflict.

iv) Family Expectations
Family expectations are more in the case of women employees. High family expectations have been linked to greater perception of family conflict. Expectations surrounding the family role can evoke pressures that dominate the time of an individual. Family expectations are associated with the performance of the work role. Women have traditionally experienced stronger sanctions for non-compliance with family demands. Women’s lack of control in balancing family needs against the demands of their job leads to greater work-family conflict.

v) Work Conflict

The work expectations cause work conflict since the women employees have to play two major roles as mother and employee. The work-role characteristics such as the amount and scheduling of work time, that place demands and restrictions on an individual’s work behaviour must be accommodated by women employees. These requirements contribute to work conflict. The conflict at work drains and preoccupies the individual, making it difficult for her to participate adequately in family matters. The inaccessibility of the women worker to a family member while she is working can create psychological problems in the family and lead to family conflict.

vi) Family Conflict

The women are expected to manage their home domain, and such family responsibilities are likely to enter their work life. Since women have to take full
responsibility for domestic work, the women’s families are expected to make adjustments to accommodate the demands of her work-roles. It is generally claimed that there is an asymmetrical boundary between work and non-work and that for women, this boundary is permeable in the sense that non-work responsibilities are likely to enter and affect work life.

vii) Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict occurs when an individual has to perform multiple roles: worker, spouse and in many cases, parent. Each of these roles imposes demands requiring time, energy and commitment. The cumulative demands of multiple roles can result in role strain of two types, namely overload and interference”.

When the total demands of time and energy associated with the prescribed activity of multiple roles are too great for the roles to be performed adequately or comfortable, overload exists. Interference occurs when conflicting demands make it difficult to fulfill the requirements of multiple roles.

Women are more likely to allow the demands of the family role to intrude into the work role. This vulnerability of the female work role to family demands is a major source of work-family conflict because the sex role norm that women should take responsibility for the family, conflicts with the norms of the job role.
viii) Quality of Work Life

There is a link between the quality of work life and the levels of job satisfaction. Similarly work-family conflict is predicted to affect the quality of family life also.

Quality of work life is a comprehensive construct that includes an individual’s job-related well-being to the extent to which work experiences are rewarding, fulfilling and devoid of stress and other negative personal consequences.

ix) Quality of Family Life

Quality of family life is a construct that includes an individual’s family-related well-being and the extent to which his or her roles as parent and spouse are rewarding, fulfilling and devoid of stress and other negative personal consequences”. Family conflict has been negatively associated with quality of family life.

x) Life Satisfaction

Life satisfaction is conceptualized as deriving from satisfaction experienced through having a good job and family life”. The women employees receive more life satisfaction from family on account of their traditional roles. Hence, life satisfaction also influences the work-family conflict variables.

SECTION – C
2.4. Profile of the Study Area

2.4.1 The Study Area

Madurai, is known as the biggest village in the world, which is said by the western thinkers and literates. It is worldwide famous for its antiquity, unchanged culture, art and architecture. As it has possessed more temples for the various sections of religious sections, it has been known as the Temple City. As it has been possessed at the land Marudham - which is one of the five kind of lands and which is filled up with agricultural lands, it had been named Madurai. It is compared to lotus, the Meenakshi Temple as the pericarp and all the streets around it as the petals. The names of the streets which had been named by the names of Tamil months is the evidence of its antiquity. It had been the center place of many ancient Puranas and Ithikas. It is known as the capital city of Pandya's kingdom, where the ancient Tamil literature had been enhanced by Sangams.

2.4.2 Location

The Madurai district is one of the thirty two districts of Tamil Nadu. Madurai city is located at 9055' N and 78 07' 02” E and lies at a distance of about 500 kms South West of Chennai. It lies at a low attitude of about 100 mts above the sea level. It enjoys favourable location and this locational advantage has helped it to become a seat for higher learning, flourishing business and industries. The city enjoys the status of being the head quarters of the Madurai District.
2.4.3. Area

The district covers 3741.73 Sq.k.m. It has seven taluks, namely, Madurai North, Madurai South, Melur, Vadipatti, Peraiyur, Usilampatti and Thirumangalam. It has 13 blocks, namely, Madurai East, Madurai West, Tirupurankundram, Melur, Kottampatti, Vadipatti, Alankanallur, Kallikudi, Usilampatti, Chellampatti, T. Kallupatti, Tirumangalam and Sedapatti. It consists of fifteen town panchayats and four hundred and thirty one village panchayats.

2.4.4. Population

As per the census, 2001, the district has a population of 24,78,201 including 13,03,363 men and 12,74,838 women. Of them, a total of 14,44,176 are living in urban areas and 11,34,025 are living in rural areas. The number of households in the urban areas is 3,36,095 against 2,77,380 households in the rural areas.

As per the demographic profile of census of India 2001, Madurai accounts for more number of scheduled tribes in urban areas than in the rural areas from where they hail. The district has 3918 ST's in the urban areas from a total of 5972 and 2054 in the rural areas.

2.4.5. Literacy

A consoling factor is that the district occupies the sixth position in Tamil Nadu in literacy rates and comes on levels with those of the Kanyakumari, Tuticorin, Chennai,
Nilgiris and Trichy districts. The percentage of literacy is 77.82 percent against the state average of 73.5 percent. The literacy rate accounts for 85.74 percent in the urban areas and 67.6 percent in the rural areas. The district is 22nd in sex ratio.

2.4.6. Workforce

Agricultural labourers account for 30.35 per cent workers. In cultivation, 11.67 per cent workers, in household industry 3.85, other workers constitute 54.12 per cent and the marginal workers account for 5.39 per cent. In terms of the overall growth Madurai stands in the 23rd position with 197.41 per cent in growth rate.

CHAPTER III

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM WOMEN AND THEIR FAMILY PROFILE

Christian and Muslim women participation in the economic activity is important for their own personal advancement and improvement of their status in the society and uplift their saving behaviour and to enhance their empowerment in socio-economic and domestic decision making. In India, women cannot be viewed as a homogeneous group as the society is stratified on the basis of class, caste and religion. It has been found that participation in work especially for female remains tied to class, caste and religious