Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

Modern social science researches in the field of gender studies are keenly interested in the topics related with women. But men and masculinity became a topic for discussion only related with some social deviance. In a fast moving contemporary society the topics like men and masculinity needs to be discussed and the analysis of these areas have some far reaching results to attain. In traditional societies the social structures and interferences were constructed on the basis of religion, caste and social norms, but “sex” became the most important determinant for all those in the contemporary society. With the massive social development all the existing determinants of interactions lost their significance and ‘sex’ developed as one of the key factors in determining the social differences and interactions. It is a notable feature that the basic character formation of an individual takes place based on, whether the person is male or female.

Sociology is interested in how the human behavior is shaped by group life. Although all group life is ordered in a variety of ways, gender is one of the key components in this ordering. Twentieth century witnessed a vast growth in the field of Gender Studies. All these researches point out to a common factor that, all interactions and the social institutions in which those interactions took place are gendered in some manner. This shows the relevance of the branch of gender studies in Sociology.

Men are not considered as gendered in majority of literature, but recent works focus on men as gendered rather than generic beings. Diverting
from the earlier interpretations recent works on gender studies recognise the variations among men and women. Gender studies now concentrate on masculinities and feminities rather than masculinity and feminity, as a singular expression. Every society constructs some gender position for men. What men actually are not completely corresponding to that social construct. It is therefore important to study about men and masculinity. In Judith Butler’s most known work ‘Gender Trouble: Feminism and Subversion of Identity’, published in 1991. Gender is never a stable descriptor of an individual, but an individual is always “doing” gender, performing or deviating from the socially accepted performance of gender stereotypes. All human beings are doing gender in their daily life and constructing their gendered identity. As taking inspiration from this relevant statement the researcher try to make an attempt to understand the construction of male gendered identity and the involvement of institutional settings of family and occupation in the construction of masculine identity.

**Statement of the Problem**

Men in the society are always keeping similarities and contradictions. When we investigate into the topics of men and masculinity the most striking feature is its contradictions and repetitions. All individuals are developing their identity by converting their life experiences to their knowledge. The differences between the generations are quite natural. In that case, as mentioned earlier the differences in the same generation are common among men. This reveals the fact that a man’s personal attitude is also an important contributor in the development of masculinity. Feminity and masculinity are being moulded with the needs of institutions. The institutions like family and occupation contribute a lot in the development of a person’s gendered identity, and in turn these institutions are restructured in accordance with the gender system.
Generally men are struggling for creating and maintaining masculinity. That struggle is emerging as a result of social interference. The development of feminism, social media and the newly developing work sectors jointly made a drastic change in the socio-cultural situations in all parts of the world. As a result of all these masculinity and femininity are transforming. All individuals are creating their own self identity. In such creations individuals are consciously or unconsciously breaking the moulds of existing gender stereotypes. The relevance of gender stereotypes is lacking its rigidity.

As Bem (1993, 9.154) observes, “The gendered personality is more than a particular collection of masculine or feminine traits; it is also a way of looking at reality that produces and reproduces those traits during a life time of self – construction.” This view shows that the larger world is a provider of raw materials and by using that the individuals construct their gender identity, and this identity in turn determine their actions and attitudes.

Every individual plays some roles in their day to day life. A role is an expected behavior associated with a status. Roles are performed according to social norms, shared rules that guide people's behavior in specific situations, and it determines the privileges and responsibilities a status possesses (Lindsey, 2011). Society allows a degree of flux in these roles, but in contemporary society the social change is rapid, this causes an uncertainty in the prescribed roles. These uncertainties lead to a state of anomie – normlessness- because traditional norms and role sets changed but the new ones are yet to be developed.

The last few decades show a new trend of increasing participation of women in workforce. This made a huge impact on the institutions of family and work. Women should do both the work of a breadwinner and caretaker of the family. The dual role played by women and its struggles became the
subject of investigation in many sociological researches. But the other part (the male side) are not discussed much in our studies. Change is reflecting in male life too. Their occupational and familial roles changed a lot. Men started to involve more in emotional roles along with the instrumental role as a primary breadwinner of the family. It became a necessary for men to tune their life in accordance with the changing social situations which is unfamiliar to them. Some men easily accepted the circumstances but some hesitated. The so called power strategies between men and women needed a reconstruction with the advent of feminism and increasing economic participation of women. The new trends in social life are leading men to more struggling situations which is the byproduct of the uncertainty in defining appropriate roles. In a fast moving society the transmitted knowledge from the past generation is not enough to survive as a man. The personal contributions of a man in developing his masculine identity are so important in such social situations. Along with this the institutions like occupation and family in which the interactions of men take place, can also influence his masculine behavior. As mentioned in the introduction chapter masculinity in all cultures is complex in nature. We cannot consider masculinity as a single homogenous entity. All men create their gendered identity, and this is influenced by a large number of socio-cultural, psychological, and biological factors. So masculinity can be considered as a multiple dynamic entity.

So here is the relevance of men and masculinity studies. Half of the population (men) need to be under the vicious circle of the social researchers to complete the spectrum of gender studies. For understanding men and masculinity a researcher needs to analyse his interactions and the places/institutions in which these interactions take place. His attitudes, attributes, life styles all are in a way the reflections of his gendered identity. A detailed
analysis of all these will help to understand masculinity. In this research the researcher tries to investigate the perceptions, attributes, stereotypes and lifestyle of men in Kerala to understand the construction and dynamics of men and masculinity. The institutional impact of occupation and family is also a major concern in this study. Occupation and family make a great impact in formulating the new equations of men and masculinity.

Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is confined to an in depth analysis of men and masculinity in contemporary Kerala. It aims to analyse the behavioural traits, habits and stereotypes among men in Kerala, with a special focus on the occupational and familial influence in structuring the masculine behavior. The following parts of this chapter will provide detailed description about this research work and the main aims of this study.

Research Questions and Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the lives of men in Kerala in general and special focus is given to the institutional impact of family and occupation in the construction of masculine behaviour, perspectives and stereotypes. Engendering in an adult human male is a complex area of analysis. Men who are going through all the so called male responsibilities and their gendered identity is not much a discussed area, in contemporary society. Occupation is considered as more important for men than women, as the provider role is generally entrusted on men. And family is also a vital institution which moulds the child as well as the adult human. By keeping these areas of concern the study focuses on the following research questions and objectives.
Research Questions

The current study tries to answer the following research questions.

What are the behaviour traits, perspectives and stereotypes found among men in contemporary Kerala?

Do the institutions of occupation and family influence men in the construction of their masculine identity?

Objectives

The aim of this study is to explore the lives of men in Kerala in general with special focus on the institutional impact of family and work in the construction of masculine behavior and identity. Engendering in an adult human male is a complex area of analysis and their gendered identity is not much discussed in the contemporary society. The provider role of men, assigns him the title of Primary Bread winner, which shows the significance of occupation in the life of a man. And family is also a vital institution which moulds the child as well as an adult human. By keeping in mind these perspectives, the study focuses on the following objectives.

The main objectives of the present study are as follows:

- To evaluate the impact of family and work in the construction of masculine behaviour, and stereotypes
- To identify the similarities and differences in the lives of men.
- To explore the domestic work sharing among men, their familial roles and fatherhood
- To understand the perceptions of men towards gender equality
➢ To identify the stress factors, hobbies and interests of men in Kerala

➢ To investigate the health consciousness and habits of men.

➢ To examine how men evaluate the masculine qualities

➢ To assess the level of masculine behavioural stereotypes and its dynamics among men.

Hypotheses

To achieve the objectives of the study, the main hypotheses formulated for the present study are as follows

Hypothesis 1: The extent to which men share their domestic tasks are not affected by their occupation, type of family and the employment status of their partner.

Hypothesis 2: Occupation, type of family and the employment status of the partners do not alter the Health consciousness of men.

Hypothesis 3: Approaches of men towards fatherhood is neither swayed by the kind of family they belong, nor by their profession or their partner’s employment status.

Hypothesis 4: Perspectives of men to gender equality is not resolved by their work profile, family classification and the designation of their partners.

Hypothesis 5: The employment status of partners, family type and the occupation of men do not influence the presence of masculine stereotypes.
Research Design

This study is designed as both an exploratory and descriptive one based on secondary and primary data. Published resources in this field of study are taken as the source of secondary data. The study mainly used primary data for drawing inferences. The population of the study is the married men in Kerala those who are having at least one child and come between the age group of 30-44 from three different working sectors. Primary data collected from 387 samples from selected districts of Kerala state. Data was gathered through a detailed survey, using structured and pre-tested questionnaire. Discussion were held with experts in the field of Gender studies and Sociology to collect relevant information.

Methods

Sociologists use a wide variety of quantitative and qualitative methods to analyse the social world. These methods will help the researcher to gather information and a scientific backup to their empirical claims. The knowledge about society is derived from multiple branches of studies and theoretical perspectives. Different disciplines raise various kinds of questions. The interplay of diverse perspectives and methods facilitates the addition of knowledge. This kind of approach is essential in the study of a subject like gender, because it reflects in all spheres of individual life. Interdisciplinary approach will help to get clearer information on the topic like men and masculinity. So for procuring accurate information through scientific analysis, a Psychological tool for measuring the Masculine Behaviour is used in this study. Statistical methods were used for analyzing and interpreting the collected information. The analysis of data has been done by using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences(SPSS).
Masculine Behaviour Scale

The Masculine Behaviour Scale (MBS) is developed by Snell in 1989. It is an objective self-report instrument designed to measure four behavioural tendencies stereotypically imputed more to males versus females. MBS measure the extend to which people engage in behaviours associated with Restrictive Emotionality, Inhibited Affection, Success Dedication and Exaggerated Self Reliance and Control. Restrictive Emotionality, which deals with the public restriction of privately felt emotions. Inhibited Affection is concerned with the inhibition of love and tenderness for loved ones. Success Dedication, refers to being dedicated to the pursuit of success in one’s life. Exaggerated Self Reliance and Control, deals with the tendency to be pre-occupied with being self-reliant and maintaining independent control over one’s life.

The respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the twenty MBS Statements (5 items per subscale) by using the following five point Likert Scale: Agree (+2), Slightly Agree (+1), Neither Agree Nor Disagree (0), Slightly Disagree (-1), Disagree (-2). Subscale scores were computed by summing the responses to the items assigned to each individual subscale. The range of scores of each of the subscales was from -10 to +10. With positive/negative scores indicating that the subject described themselves as engaging or not engaging in stereotypically masculine behaviours measured by the MBS(Snell,1989).

Sample Design

In this study, as the population is quite large it is not possible to conduct a population survey throughout Kerala. Hence a sampling study has been conducted. This study of men and masculinity is conducted among men in Kerala. In the first stage of sampling Area Sampling is used, the entire state was divided into three geographical regions such as Northern, Central
and Southern regions. Northern region consists of 6 districts namely: Kasargod, Kannur, Wayanad, Kozhikode, Malappuram and Palakkad. Central region covers 4 districts namely: Thrissur, Ernakulam, Alapuzha and Kottayam. And the Southern region covers: Idukki, Kollam, Pathanamthitta and Thiruvananthapuram districts. Three districts, Kozhikode district from northern region, Thrissur district from central region and Thiruvananthapuram from southern region were selected randomly.

In the second stage Stratified sampling method is used in this study. As taking masculinity and work as the important objective of the study, the study population was divided into three strata. In this work the researcher selected samples from three different working groups. **First:** Government Employees, those who are doing clerical and office jobs. **Second:** men who are doing Manual works in an institutional setting both from government sector and private limited companies. **Third:** category is those who are working as Executives – with special attention to sales and marketing executives of corporate and other private firms. On the basis of this the sample population is categorised into Clerks, Manual Workers, and Executives. From each stratum, 129 samples were selected by using the simple random sampling method. Men in the sample are married and biological fathers to at least one child. Men from single earner and duel earner families have been included in this study. Nuclear and Joint families are also included. Men at their most productive age group of 30-44 are selected as the sample population.

**Determination of Sample Size**

The information regarding the accurate number of men from each occupational category is not available. So the sample size is determined on the basis the total number of men between the age group of 30-44 based on the Kerala Population Census data 2011.
Sample size is determined on the basis of the following equation:

\[ n = \frac{z^2 \sigma^2}{e^2}. \]

Here, \( n \) = size of sample.

\( Z \) = the value of standard Normal Variable at a given confidence level (It is 1.96 for 95% significance level),

\( \sigma \) = standard deviation of the population (Here standard deviation of the variable which has the greatest variance has been taken), 1.53923

\( e \) = acceptable error (it is assumed as 0.154),

and \( n=(1.96)^2(1.53923)^2/(0.1545)^2=381.2 \)

Therefore sample size is 382. The details of sample size determination is given in the following Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>No. of Men</th>
<th>( \sigma )</th>
<th>( \sigma^2 )</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>11282117</td>
<td>0.331102</td>
<td>126.481</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-39</td>
<td>1161819</td>
<td>0.340963</td>
<td>130.248</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>1117424</td>
<td>0.327935</td>
<td>125.257</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3407460</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kerala Population Census Data 2011

The statistically calculated sample size is 382. For taking equal number of sample from each stratum (three different occupational sectors) the researcher fixed the sample size as 387 and 129 men from each working group are selected as samples.
Pilot Study and Pre-test

Pilot study gave a right direction to the study. Men and masculinity is a highly complicated and fresh area of analysis in the Kerala context. All this created disorientation in fixing the area, samples and methodology of the study. The study became focused and took a proper course after the pilot study. The questionnaire was primarily designed on the basis of pilot study. The structured questionnaire was pre tested among 40 respondents and statistically checked its reliability. After calculating the standard error the questionnaire is fixed for data collection.

Tool

Each study began with a qualitative phase, where researchers held discussions with the field experts and contacted some people who belong to the sample group. On the basis of the qualitative findings a questionnaire was designed. The draft questionnaire was pre-tested among 40 respondents. After the pre-test the questionnaire was modified by way of adding some relevant questions and deleting some unwanted ones. A structured pre-tested questionnaire was used for collecting data from the respondents. The final questionnaire contained 10 parts, with a total of 86 questions based on different objectives.

Variables

The present study is concerned in understanding men and masculinity in contemporary Kerala and focuses on the institutional impact on men and masculinity. Therefore Behaviour traits, Perspectives and Stereotypes of men are the dependent variables in this study, which include- Domestic Work Sharing, Health Consciousness, Fatherhood, Gender Equality and Masculine Stereotypes. And the independent variables are categorized into two- family and occupation. In the family domain two variables are considered- the types
of family and the employment statuses of partners. Common independent variables like age, education, income, place of residence, and religion are also taken into consideration.

Data Analysis

Primary data was collected by using questionnaire, and the collected data was analysed by using SPSS. All the informations collected has been tabulated and presented in percentages. The analysis of the Likert Scale statements were tabulated and given their Mean Values and Standard Deviations. Pearson’s Chi square, Mann Whitnney U, and Kruskal Wallis tests were applied for testing the relationship between variables. Both mean values and percentage were given to detail the Masculine Behaviour Scale.

Clarification of Concepts

Masculinity: “Anything that a man think, say and do comes under the concept of masculinity. If men are involved then so too must be masculinity” Gutmann (2003). In this study Masculinity could be defined as things which man do in his everyday life, his attributes, perspectives and stereotypes.

Institutions: Roland Verwiebe (2011) defines, “Institutions are a system of behavioural and relationship patterns that are densely interwoven and enduring, and function across an entire society. They order and structure the behavior of individuals by means of their normative character.” In this study family and occupation are taken as the institutions which are influencing the masculine behavior and stereotypes.

Masculine Stereotypes: In the present study Masculine stereotypes are defined as the established patterns of behavior and practices which are commonly considered as typical for men. The study deals with four masculine stereotypes Restrictive Emotionality, Inhibited Affection, Success Dedication, Exaggerated Self Reliance and Control.
**Dynamics:** The Concise Oxford Dictionary (2011) defines “Dynamics is the motive forces, affecting behavior and change in any sphere.” In this study, dynamics means factors which are involved in the construction and transformation of masculine perceptions, attributes and stereotypes.

**Theoretical Frameworks**

Theory is something which is connected with observable and unobservable. Theory becomes relevant in the context of unobservable. In order to find out unobservable we need theory. Theorizing can be an ever ongoing intellectual endeavour, where concepts, thoughts and ideas about how society is constituted, organized and structured are investigated. Theorizing may reset and redefine our conceptual tools, making them more suitable for empirical investigations. (Johansson 2011)

There are many theoretical social science perspectives on men and masculinities. These include positivism, cultural relativism, psycho analysis, interpretativism, critical theory, neo Marxism, feminism (of various forms) and post modernism. All of these and other theoretical perspectives have been influenced in the development of studies on men and masculinities.

**Constructionist Theory**

Gender construction is a way in which a person, a group of people or the whole society builds an understanding of what it means to be either a man or a women. The elements of construction are the discourses, understandings, beliefs and perceptions that form the basis on which gender is developed and enacted. This construction of gender is revealed in the behaviours that men and women engage in, and the discourses that they use. Gender is not fixed in advance of social interaction, is an important theme in the modern sociology of gender. The new research explores the making and remaking of conventions in social practice itself (Connell, 2005, p.35).
Signature term in constructionist gender studies is doing gender, the title of an article published in Gender and Society in 1987 by Candace West and Don Zimmerman. They argued that ‘Gender is not a set of traits, not a variable, nor a role but the product of social doings of some sort….. Doing Gender means creating differences between girls and boys and women and men, differences that are not natural, essential or biological. Once the differences have been constructed, they are used to reinforce the “essentialness” of gender. (West & Zimmerman pp.129, 137). Given membership in a sex category, doing gender is inevitable and unavoidable. What is more, one’s gender performance is evaluated by others, and one is accountable for its appropriateness. The end result is not only personal or interpersonal gendering but gendered work places, politics, medical and legal system, religions and cultural productions. “Doing gender furnishes the international scaffolding of social structure, along with built-in mechanisms of social control”. According to them, gender is not a personal trait, “it is an emergent feature of social situations: both as an outcome of and a rationale for various social arrangements, and as a means of legitimating one of the most fundamental divisions of society”(West and Zimmerman,1987)

Contemporary constructionist perspective, as proposed by Fenstermarker and West, proposes treating gender as an activity (“doing”) of utilizing normative perceptions and beliefs about sex categories based on situational variables. This focus on situational factor on gender rather than its inherent, essentialist and individual nature. “Doing Gender” is not just about conforming to stereotypical gender roles- it is the active engagement in any behavior that may be evaluated as gendered. The performance of gender varies according to the given context: time, space, social interaction etc. the enactment of gender role is context dependent- roles are “situated identities” instead of “master identities”.

From a social constructionist perspectives, however, men and boys are not passive victims of a socially prescribed role, nor are they simply conditioned or socialized by their cultures. Men and boys are active agents in constructing and reconstructing dominant norms of masculinity. This concept of agency- the part of individual play in exerting power and producing effects- in their lives is central to constructionism (Courtenay, 2000). In the traditional society what man/women should do is clearly defined and the knowledge about their fixed behavioural traits were transmitted to the next generation through the process of socialization. The individuals were able to lead their life with their learnt behavior without much more modification. But, in the rapidly moving contemporary society the transmitted knowledge through socialization is not enough for men/women to lead their life. Such situations pressurize men and women to restructure or remold their existing masculinity and femininity. The theoretical framework of ‘constructionism in gender’ is gaining more relevance in this context.

**Scheme of Chapterisation**

The study comprises of six chapters. The *first* chapter tries to explore the importance of men and masculinity studies and also describes about gender, men, masculinity and institutions of family and occupation. The *second* chapter deals with the existing literature in the field of men and masculinity studies and it also included the theoretical frame works in this area of knowledge. The *third* chapter gives a detailed account of the methodology of the study and it explains the framing of all aspects under the study. The concepts, theories, objectives, hypotheses and all the other factors which frame the study is depicted in the third chapter. The *fourth* chapter focuses on two parts. Part A, dealing with the personal profile of the respondents and Part B, pertaining to the perspectives, habits and stereotypes
among men in Kerala. The *fifth* chapter explores the institutional impact of family and occupation in the construction of masculine behaviours and stereotypes. The *sixth* and the final chapter is all about the findings of the study. This chapter details the major findings of the study under seven headlines: Approach towards work and work satisfaction, Men in familial roles, Health consciousness and habits, Images of masculine qualities, Perspectives to gender equality, Stereotypes and Institutional impact on men and masculinity.

**Limitations of the study**

One of the major challenge in this study is to explain what is mean by masculinity under this study. In common usage the term masculinity is used primarily to denote the sexual/ reproductive capacity of a man. Giving an explanation beyond that was a tough task for the researcher. Limited number of literature in the field of men and masculinity studies was another challenge endured during the course of this study. Literature concerning men and masculinity in Kerala are very limited. Find out a scale to measure the masculine stereotypes which is appropriate for men in Kerala was another adversity confronted in the path of the study.