Chapter 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
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3.1 Statement of the Problem

Marriage and motherhood are the two important stepping-stones to adult womanhood in any Indian Women’s life cycle. Divorce is generally considered as a social problem, though it is a painful personal experience. In all communities divorcee’s role is often difficult as well as humiliating and the divorced women face several acute problems. By analyzing previous researches done in this particular area, we would conclude that divorce in any society has far-reaching consequences, with regard to person, social institutions and community. This is a study of analyzing various problems confronted by Divorced Muslim Women in Malappuram district.

Muslims all over the world draw their sense of identity from the teachings and practices of Islam. The institution of marriage and family life is central to the teachings of Islam. Islam places great emphasis on the preservation of family life and perpetuity is viewed as being ordained by God. The importance of marriage and family life is enshrined in the Quran and strong disapproval is expressed upon its breakdown and dissolution.

Although the breakdown of marriage is highly disapproved in Islam, it does not mean that the dissolution does not take place amongst the Muslim. ‘The high rate of divorce cases among Muslim is alarming. “On an average, the number of divorce among Muslims is twice as high as among non-Muslim (Ling, 2013)”’. The causes of marital breakdown comprise the interaction of many psychosocial and economic factors. Apart from these factors; religious, historical and cultural factors are also important in determining the extent to which couples enjoy marital stability.
In the Malappuram district of Kerala state many Muslim women are united by a common agony, callously cast away by a Muslim male, exercising his religious privileges to divorce. A man can divorce at will just by uttering the words “I divorce you” three times, anytime, without any witnesses. Child marriage, polygamy and ‘Instant Talaq’ are practiced among Muslim community of this region. It was found that a total of 1264 cases were registered in the family court of Malappuram concerned with divorce related issues from 1/1/2009 to 31/12/2009. During this the total number of registered cases among Muslim community were 682. A survey conducted by Malayalam Manorama Daily revealed that there are 1405 divorced cases registered in the family court of Malappuram during the year 2012 (upto july 2012). Even in this twenty first century child marriages are common in Malappuram district. In 2008, while 4,249 of the 4,955 brides in the child marriages were Muslims (Gopakumar, 2013). A wide disparity in age between the spouses had become a common cause of strained relations in Malappuram district. In this area, poverty and non-support made the disruption of marital bonds. Dowry is a social evil where a constant demand for more and more money from the bride’s parents is made by the groom’s family. Dowry as the primary cause of conflict was observed in this district. Unnecessary interference of in-laws causing marital disharmony was common in this area. Also women’s own parents made unnecessary involvement in the marital issues of the couples.

Whatever may be the causes of divorce, the consequences confronted by a divorcee is troublesome. This miserable condition make the divorced women anxious, desperate, angry, frustrated and nervous, which adversely affected their adjustments and self concepts. There is clear evidence of starting of emotional and behavioral problems among these groups of individuals. Compared with married and unmarried women, the Psychological General Well-being and Quality of Life of divorced women is
not so promising. (*Walter, 1989 and Umberson, 1996*). Usually in the case of divorcees the Attitude Towards Divorce is associated with General Psychological Well Being and Quality of Life. The maladjusted mothers bring up their children with severe personality problems. Individuals who had suffered from parental disharmony or bad parent-child relationship reflected many concomitants of maladjustment in the dynamics of their personality. Muslim divorced women in this region are reported to be confronted with serious issues like problems of remarriage and maintenance as per the records of the family counseling centers, social activists and key persons selected for the study. It is in this context that a study on the Psychological Well being and Quality of Life of Divorced Muslim Women was undertaken by the researcher.

### 3.2 Objectives of the Study

**General objective**

To study the Psychological Well Being and Quality of Life of Divorced Muslim Women in Kerala.

**Specific objectives**

1. To study the Socio-Economic background of Muslim Women under Study.
2. To identify the Causative Factors/ Pre-divorced Life leading to Divorce.
3. To find out the Problems associated with the Process of Divorce among Muslim Women.
4. To find out the Consequences associated with Divorce in terms of Social, Economic and Psychological Aspects.
5. To examine the Problems associated with the Re-marriage of the Divorced Muslim Women and the Problems related to the Maintenance of Divorced Women.

6. To Understand and Measure their Attitude towards Divorce.

7. To measure the level of Psychological Well Being and Quality of Life of the Divorced Muslim Women.

8. To find out the association between Selected Socio-demographic Factors and Psychological aspects such as Attitude towards Divorce, Psychological Well Being and Quality of Life.


3.3 Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses have been formulated for the present study.

- The higher the Psychological Well being the higher will be the Quality of Life for the Divorced Muslim Women.

- The higher the Psychological Well Being the higher will be the Positive Attitude towards Divorce.

- The higher the Positive Attitude towards Divorce the higher will be the Quality of Life.

- The selected Socio-Demographic variables have significant relationship with the subject variables namely (1) Attitude to Divorce, (2) General Psychological Well being, and (3) Quality of Life for the Divorced Muslim Women.
3.4 Definition of major Concepts and Terms

3.4.1 Impact

*Theoretical:* The Little Oxford dictionary defines ‘Impact’ as striking;
(Immediate effect or influence. In the field of social sciences impact means influencing strongly; a forceful consequence; a strong effect.)

*Operational:* ‘Impact’ means psychological social and economic problems confronted by a divorced Muslim woman. Impact is the effect of divorce.

3.4.2 Divorce


*Operational:* ‘divorce’ is the dissolution of marriage by saying ‘talaq’ or any permanent type of separation by the act of parties. In Islam, when it is impossible for the parties to carry on their union with mutual love and affection, it is better to leave them to be separated instead of compelling them to live together in an atmosphere of hatred and sufferings.

3.4.3 Muslim

*Theoretical:* A Muslim is a person whose religion is Islam.

*Operational:* A person whose parents were both Muslim at the time of birth is regarded to be a Muslim.

3.4.4 Causative factors

*Theoretical:* The Little Oxford Dictionary defines causative factor as: the factors or things producing effect, reason or motive, justification, principle, belief or purpose,

*Operational:* In this study, causative factor refers to the specific reasons behind divorce. The causes of marital breakdown are known to be many. A combination and interaction of a number of casual factors like in-law
problems, infidelity, marital violence and abuse, alcohol and drug abuse etc. lead to dissolution of a marriage.

### 3.4.5 Pre-divorce

*Theoretical:* The Little Oxford Dictionary explains pre as prefix before time, place, order, degree or importance. It is the factors associated with marital life before divorce. There are number of causative factors like financial problems, ill-treatments, alcoholism, communication difficulties etc. may be happen in the pre divorce life.

*Operational:* In this study pre-divorce refers to the period of life in between marriage and divorce.

### 3.4.6 Process

*Theoretical:* Process is the course of action or proceeding; especially series of stages in manufacturing.

*Operational:* In the present study process refers to the stages before divorce.

### 3.4.7 Consequence

*Theoretical:* Consequence is the result of what has done before.

*Operational:* In this study, consequence refers to the effects as a resultant of divorce in the life Muslim women.

### 3.4.8 Attitude Toward divorce

*Theoretical:* Attitude is defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner with respect to a given attitude object *(Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975)*

*Operational:* In this study, attitude is the predisposition to respond in favourable or unfavourable manner with response to divorce of the respondents. Here, the researcher used 5 point Likert Scale developed by *(Kamala Gopala Rao 1976)*, for measuring the attitude of divorce.
3.4.9 Quality of Life

_Theoretical:_ Quality of Life is defined as individual’s perception of their position in life in the context of culture and value systems in which they live and in relations to their goals, expectations, standards and concerns.

_Operational:_ In this study Quality of Life of divorced Muslim women is measured by using four domains viz. Physical Health, Psychological Aspects, Social Relationship, and Environment etc.

3.5. Variables

The Independent variables of the study under the Socio-Demographic profile are: Age, Education, Occupation, Health Status, Monthly Income, Savings, Debts, Type of Marriage, Gap in Age, Ill-treatment etc.

The Dependent Variables under Quality of Life are Physical Health, Psychological Health, Social Relationship, Environment etc.

The Intervening Variables are Attitude towards Divorce and Psychological General Well being. Anxiety, Depressed Mood, Sense of Positive Well being, Self Control, General Health, Vitality etc. can be grouped as Psychological General Well Being of divorced women.
3.5.1 Variable Maps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Independent Variables</th>
<th>Intervening Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variables</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-Demographic profile</td>
<td>Attitude to divorce</td>
<td>Quality of Life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Psychological Well Being</td>
<td>Physical health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Psychological health</td>
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<td>Health status</td>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>Social relationship</td>
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<td>Monthly Income</td>
<td>Sense of positive well being</td>
<td>Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savings</td>
<td>Self control</td>
<td>Total QOL</td>
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<td>Debts</td>
<td>General Health</td>
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<td>Type of marriage</td>
<td>Vitality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gap in Age</td>
<td>Total PWB</td>
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<td>Ill treatment</td>
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3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to Gay (1990), “descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test the hypothesis or to answer the questions concerning the current status of the subject of the study”.

It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing (Best & Kahn, 1992). Based on this theoretical back up descriptive method was employed.
The researcher had made an attempt to present the Socio-Demographic profile of the Muslim Women, the Causative Factors, Problems Associated with the Process of Divorce, Social, Economic and Psychological Consequence of Divorce, Problems of Remarriage, Attitude towards Divorce, Psychological Well Being, Quality of Life etc. and finally found out the association between the selected Socio-Economic conditions and Psychological aspects such as the Attitude towards Divorce, Psychological General Well-being and Quality of Life.

3.7 Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to test the feasibility of the study, to finalize the universe and to decide on the tools of data collection. The researcher conducted a series of discussion with experts who were involved in the field of judiciary, counseling, family welfare and also with experts in research field. Pilot study received permission and cooperation from the family court of Malappuram to conduct the study. The discussion with experts in the field and information gathered through the review of literature shaped the basis for limiting the area of the study, tool selection and finalizing the sample. The pilot study helped the researcher to modify the design of the study appropriate to the research problems and objectives.

3.8 Universe of the study

Divorced Muslim Women of Malappuram District in the state of Kerala constituted the universe of the study. The geographical area of the study was Malappuram District.

Geographical Area

Malappuram is a district in the state of Kerala, south India with headquarters at the city of Malappuram. It was carved out of Ernad taluk and portions of Tirur taluk of Kozhikode district and portions of
Perinthalmanna and Ponnani taluks of Palakkad district. According to the 2011 census Malappuram district has a population of 4,110,956, the district has a population density of 1,158 inhabitants per square kilometre (3,000/sq metres). Malappuram has a sex ratio of 1096 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 93.55%. Muslims constitute the majority of the population, followed by the Hindu and Christian communities. The district is also known for its communal harmony and peaceful atmosphere.

3.9 Unit of the Study

Unit of the study was a single divorced woman who had approached family court for maintenance and other divorce related proceedings.

3.10 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

3.10.1 Inclusion Criteria

Divorced Muslim Women who registered a civil suit in the family court of Malappuram for divorce related issues from 1-1-2009 to 31-12-2009 were included in this study. Considering economic status; lower class, middle class and upper class were included.

3.10.2 Exclusion Criteria

Divorced women with a history of mental retardation, psychiatric illnesses, serious physical/ neurological problems, drug dependence etc. were excluded from the study. Women who were not cooperative were also excluded from the study.

3.11 Sampling Procedure

It is the process of choosing the units of the target population which are to be included in the study. As stated earlier all registered cases considered in the family court of Malappuram district, from the period 1/1/2009 to 31/12/2009 had constituted the universe of the study. It was found that a total of 1264 registered cases had been during this period. In
consultation with research guide and statistician, it was decided to select 25% of the universe as sample. Though total number of registered cases among Muslim community was 682; the researcher selected 25% of the total respondents as sample population from the Muslim community which fulfill inclusion exclusion criteria. Thus, total final sample size was 316. These samples have been selected from the list using proportionate random sampling method.

The researcher approached each of the divorced women individually and explained to her about the intention of the visit, with an interview schedule which contains 210 questions regarding personal data of the divorcees. Each interview took approximately 2 hours. Most of them cooperated very well.

Among 316 divorced women, two cases were studied in-depth using case study techniques.

The investigator collected information from 15 key persons about the impact of divorce among Muslim women. The key persons numbering 15 were constituted in the following manner. Judge of the family court (1), Psychiatrists (2), Psychologist (1), Advocates (4), Muslim religious leaders (2) Social workers (3), Counselors of family counseling centre (2).

3.12 The Methods and Tools of Data Collection

3.12.1 Methods of Data Collection

The methods used to collect primary data were interviews, informal discussions using interview guide, and case study. In order to collect data from divorced women interview schedule was used. Interview guides were used for interviews with key personnel such as Psychiatrists, Psychologist, Advocates, Muslim religious leaders, Social workers, counsellors etc. Case studies were conducted in order to get an in-depth knowledge about
respondents and their physical environment. Informal discussions were held within and out of their home. Secondary data were collected using methods like referring to secondary sources of data such as journals, court verdict and other relevant document related to the subject of the study.

3.12.2 Tools of Data Collection

3.12.2.1 Interview Schedule

In the light of the pilot study and review of literature, a structured schedule was prepared for collecting information pertaining to the study. The interview schedule constituted mostly of closed questions and very few were open ended questions. The draft was pretested to determine the reliability. On the basis of the pretest, relevant changes were incorporated in the structure of questions and the schedule was perfected. The entire schedule was divided into various sections dealing with crucial elements of the problem.

The first part of the schedule is socio-economic profile which includes personal data, family profile and economic profile of the respondents. The second portion of the schedule is dealing with causative factors of divorce and the third is dealing with problems associated with the process of divorce, the fourth is dealing with consequences of divorce. It includes social, economic and psychological consequences of divorce. The fifth portion of the schedule is dealing with the problem of remarriage of divorced Muslim women. The sixth is dealing with the problems of maintenance and the seventh is dealing with the suggestions for improving conditions of divorced Muslim Women.

3.12.2.2 Scales

Seventh portion of the tools of data collection is revealing the attitude of divorced Muslim women towards divorce. It is a standardized scale made
by Kamala Gopala Rao (1976). To measure the Attitude towards divorce, the 20 items, 5 point Likert Scale developed by Kamala Gopala Rao (1976) was used. This instrument was used to assess the general conservative orientation to social problems, to assess Attitude towards divorce, marital adjustment etc. Item numbers 1,2,3,4,5,7,8,10,11,13,17,19 and 20 are positively worded. The remaining seven items are negatively worded. For positive items the response viz. strongly agree gets 5 points, undecided gets 3 points, disagree gets 2 points and strongly disagree gets 1 point. For the negative items scoring procedure is reversed. Theoretically the person may get minimum of 20 points and a maximum of 10 points in the scale. The author has suggested that higher the score, the higher will be the positive Attitude towards divorce. The reliability value for the scale is found to be 0.891 and the validity as 0.944. Hence, this instrument can really measure what it is supposed to measure.

Eighth portion is dealing with the Psychological Well being of Divorced Muslim Women. This is a standardized scale developed by Dupuy (1970). The PGWB scale was developed in 1970 for the National centre for Health Statistics by H.J. Dupuy who wrote the conceptual description of the scale in an unpublished paper. According to Dupuy, the scale assesses how the individual feels about his ‘inner personal state’ rather than about external conditions such as income, work environment, or home environment.

The scale has 22 items that are aggregated to provide score in subscales viz. Anxiety, Depressed Mood, Positive well being, Self control, General health and Vitality.

The scale, a self-administered questionnaire includes both positive and negative questions with a time-frame and a six-point response representing intensity or frequency for the first 14 questions. The last four questions use 0 to 10 rating.
The test retest reliability coefficients after three months are in between 0.68 to 0.85 with an internal consistency of 0.95. The correlated validity of the scale is very high. The scale has been compared with several other scales, particularly with various mood disorder scales, and has been reported to have values between 0.68 and 0.90. Several psychometric studies have shown that the overall score is fairly stable over time. The higher the score the higher will be the general Psychological Well Being.

Ninth portion of the schedule is dealing with Quality of life of divorced Muslim women. This is a standardized scale by WHO-QOL (1996). To understand and measure the level of Quality of Life, the 26 items, field trial version by WHO – QOL (1996) is used. This instrument was developed by WHO and tested, standardized in various countries. The 26 items Scale is the short version of WHO-QOL-BREF and has sub-dimensions viz. physical health (7 items), psychological health (6 items), social relationships (3 items) and environment aspects (8 items). The raw scores for each domain was transferred to (0 to 100) so that the entire domain can be easily comparable. The internal consistency for India domain I 0.77, domain II 0.83, domain III 0.72 and domain IV 0.82. The higher the score the higher will be the Quality of Life.

3.12.2.3 Case Studies

Two cases were studied in- depth using case study guidelines.

3.12.2.4 Interview Guide

In order to obtain information from key personnel viz. Social workers, Judges, Psychiatrists, Psychologists, Advocates, Counselors, Religious leaders’ etc. Interview Guide was used.
3.13 **Sources of Data**

Sources of data include primary and secondary data

**Primary Data**

Primary data were obtained from Interview schedule, the three Scales used, Interview Guide, and Case study of respondents viz. divorced women.

**Secondary Data**

The secondary data were collected from documents, reports, books, journals, periodicals etc. related to the subject of study.

3.14 **Pre-Test**

The tools for the study were translated into vernacular language. The researcher then administered a pre-test of the tools among 10 divorced Muslim women. Questions which were difficult to answer were rephrased and wherever possible responses were pre-coded. The problems in asking questions were noted and irrelevant and unwanted questions were eliminated. Every question was asked and ascertained whether the respondents understood the meaning. The final draft of the schedule was given to three subject experts for content validity to ensure that the instrument have adequately and precisely covered the topics under study. The final instrument was evolved with the incorporation of their suggestions. Thus the tool was prepared with utmost care.

3.15 **Data Analysis & Interpretations**

The collected data were edited, coded and entered into the computer for analysis. The trial versions of SPSS Version 14, were used for the analysis of the data. Both descriptive and inferential analyses have been performed on the given data. The descriptive analysis was concerned with presenting the frequency distribution and development of certain indices and measures from raw data. Inferential analysis is concerned with various test
of significance for testing the hypothesis in order to determine with what validity, data can be said to indicate some conclusion or generalization. It is based on inferential analysis that the task of interpretation (i.e. the task of drawing inferences and conclusion) is performed. The statistical techniques such as Mean, Standard deviation, Correlation, F-value and Multiple regressions were employed at the appropriate place during this phase, in addition to percentages.

3.16 Chapterisation

The report is divided into 5 chapters.

Chapter I  Focuses on Introduction Aspects
Chapter II  Throws light on the various Previous Studies in the field
Chapter III  Focuses on the Research Methodology Aspects
Chapter IV  Discusses the Analysis and Interpretation of Data.
Chapter V  Explains the Major Findings and Suggestions

3.17 Limitations of the Study

While this research work constituted an important study of divorced Muslim women of Kerala, there were some limitations which are quite natural.

1. This study was conducted only in one district of Kerala.

2. Marital disruption like divorce and separation are very delicate and emotional. When the researcher approached the divorcees, most of them were unhappy. A few were hesitant to reveal personal information.

3. The colloquial languages used by the Muslim community were another difficulty for the researcher. Researcher overcame this by seeking the assistance of the counsellors of the local community.
4. The study was conducted among divorced Muslim women who appeared in the family court of Malappuram as either respondents or petitioners in divorce related issues.

3.18 Ethical Considerations

The respondents were informed in detail regarding the study and their consent was obtained before the study. Confidentiality was strictly observed on the responses.