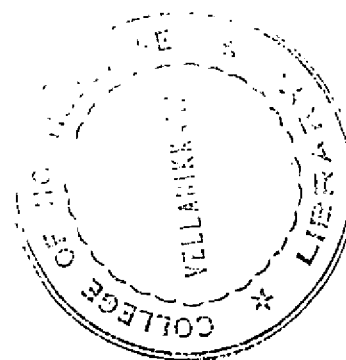


**FAMILY EDUCATION PROGRAMMES IMPLEMENTED  
BY THE STATE DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
FOR THE UPLIFT OF SCHEDULED CASTE  
HABITATS OF TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT**

By  
**JESY T. C., B.Sc., B.Ed.**



DISSERTATION  
SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN  
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DEPARTMENT OF HOME SCIENCE  
KERALA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE  
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DECLARATION

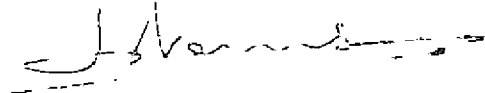
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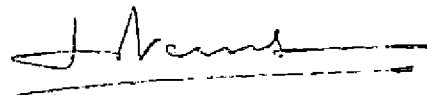
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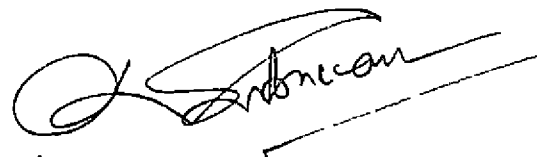
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*Jesly T.C.*  
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# **INTRODUCTION**

## INTRODUCTION

Rural transformation, or rural development in India, is a strategy designed to improve the quality of life of 78 crores of people living in nearly 6 lakhs of villages covering about 75 to 80 per cent of the total population in the country. Of this 30 crores are females.

India's varied and luminous heritage has always been reflected through women celebrities - Seetha and Savithri, though they have been only mythological characters. Indian civilization seems to have given women a place in society, where she could exercise her ability and her judgement without having to forfeit any of her essential femininity (Jain 1975). This being only one side of the coin, the other side remains quite dark and gloomy. The rural women who constitute nearly half of the population are deprived of their rights, forced into drudgery, destined to early marriage; subjected to frequent child bearing, suffering from severe mal-nutrition and are the victims of high mortality rates. Their lives are a constant struggle for mere survival (Abed and Rehman 1980). It has been rightly pointed out by the Lutheran World Foundation (1980) that, though women perform specific roles such as "food gatherers, food makers and

food distributors, yet paradoxically, they themselves, are the most under nourished, economically the most vulnerable, and socially the most depressed groups of workers in society (Patel 1982). Abed and Rehman (1980) have reported that they women in the past are considered economically unproductive, and they were left outside the purview of developmental processes.

This being the condition of women, in general, until recent years, the state of women who belong to the under privileged communities are much more grim and unrelenting. The scheduled castes have been a class who are socially deprived, of even the most fundamental rights of freedom of movement or even worship, over and above, the social and economic deprivation suffered by women in general. Super-imposed on this, the consumption of an ill-balanced diet, filthy habits, wretched conditions of life leading to unclean habits coupled with ignorance have made their life miserable (Vijayanath, 1982).

The condition of these deprived classes were no way better in the State of Kerala. As in other parts of India these women suffer from the double disability of being women and that too of Scheduled castes. The level of female literacy among all sections of the society including scheduled castes is higher in Kerala. However this has

brought in considerable reformation especially in their social status in recent years.

The opening of temples for common worship (Travancore 1940 or 42 and later Travancore Cochin Act <sup>1936</sup>) and the permission to wear blouses which was forbidden earlier for the women belonging to scheduled castes and tribes were significant social reforms <sup>which</sup> (as early as 1935) itself could be taken as the first stepping stone in the ladder of progress for the women of these under privileged sections of the community in Kerala.

With the objective of improving the overall conditions of the rural poor, several developmental plans have been envisaged since 1951, with the initiation of the first five year plan, but it was only in 1954-55, it was observed that lack of participation by women in the Community Development Programmes was to a considerable extent responsible for the programmes not making the necessary impact. (Development Commissioner's Conferance, 1954). Hence for the first time women were included in the programmes' target group (Varma, year unknown).

Since then, their social participation has been continuously on the increase. Women's programmes forming part of the community development programme recognised that the

home was the basic unit, and the women is the one who should contribute to build up a strong and healthy family. Recently, employment, health and education have been identified as major areas of concern warranting concerted action on the part of both the Central and State Governments in improving the status of women (Varma, yearunknown).

Though the role of women in the developmental activities have been approved and established, the extent of wilful participation by women belonging to the under privileged populations in such developmental programmes have been very meagre whenever such developmental programmes are evaluated little attention is seen to be paid to study the extent of participation by women.

Though there are generally studies on the scheduled caste population, specific studies focussing attention on the problems of women, belonging to these classes are rare. Researchers have shown an inclination to study the details pertaining to their social deprivation, or change in their cultural modes, as done by Alikhan (1979), Mathur (1984) or on the type of education or educational achievements as done by Pimpley (1980) or on employment as done by Royappa (1980). Studies centered around women alone belonging to the deprived sections of the population are insufficient

and those pertaining to women of scheduled caste communities in India and their role in developmental plans are still remote, meagre, and even negligible . Though there are studies on the scheduled castes of Kerala in general, and on Pulayas in particular, the studies do not focus their attention on the women in particular, with special reference to their participation in developmental programmes.

Seized of this research gap Government of India through the Department of Social Welfare convened the first meeting of its committee on the status of women in India on 3rd November 1971 and decided to support comprehensive studies on the existing status of women, in various spheres of Indian life. The idea was to find out the extent to which social changes have affected the status of Indian women since Independence and to what extent the ameliorative provisions have been helpful to percolate these changes in this field (Trivedi, 1977). In the same year, the All India Harijan Sevak Sangh also proposed to draw up a scheme to study "the special problems of women of scheduled castes and make research based suggestions to remedy the situation (Trivedi, 1977).

Though such studies have been initiated, in early seventees, in recent years, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) realised the importance of scientific



studies on women belonging to scheduled castes and tribes, and they have established research oriented programmes entitled "All India Co-ordinated Projects on Scheduled caste area Research" in selected centres, all over India. And these centres are mainly attached to various Agricultural Universities and Krishi Vignyan Kendras. Each of these centres have been provided with a home science component to initiate research and <sup>impart</sup> infant training.

The much praised developmental programmes of Kerala especially those with education component have been evaluated to some extent; but the evaluators appear to have paid no attention to study the participation of women belonging to scheduled castes or tribes in such programmes. For example in the evaluation of the Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP) in Kerala (State Planning Board of Kerala in 1978), though Scheduled caste families have been included in the target study group, no mention is made about their role in this programme, while drawing conclusions or while recommending suggestions for improving the scheme.

Similarly, the Report of the "Task Force on Nutrition" (State Planning Board, 1982) have openly declared that they have "not made any special enquiries into the harijan component in the different nutrition programmes in operation".

But they have put forth the idea that "a separate study on the harijan component of the nutrition programmes in operation is necessary to make the record straight" (State Planning Board 1982).

Over and above these facts, the Government of Kerala has declared the year 1984-85 as the "Harijan-Girijan Year" (Government of Kerala 1984).

In such a context it is but apt to take up a systematic study, though in a small way, to find out the extent of involvement of Scheduled Caste women in the education programmes conducted under the various development programmes.

The objectives of the present study were:

1. To find out the extent of participation by Scheduled castes in family education camps conducted by selected Blocks in Trivandrum district since 1976.
2. To study the Socio-economic background in which the participants exist;
3. To evaluate the extent of knowledge gained by the selected group of participants belonging to scheduled castes;
4. To find out the particular area of subject matter in which maximum knowledge was gained;

5. To correlate the gain in knowledge with socio-personal characteristics such as age, income, occupation and educational status of selected women participants belonging to scheduled castes.
6. To assess the extent to which the objectives and aspirations have been achieved.

The study was planned with the following hypotheses :

1. Participation in education programme would improve the extent of knowledge gained and retained by women.
2. Age and educational status would influence the extent of knowledge gained and retained by women.
3. There would be difference in the extent of knowledge gained and retained by women belonging to rural and urban areas.
4. The extent of knowledge gained and retained by the women will be equal in all the subject matter areas.
5. More the number of education programmes attended higher will be the knowledge gained and retained.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The Indian society was characterised by a caste system from the days of early Aryan settlers (Vidhyarthi, 1982). The word 'Caste' was said to be borrowed from the Portuguese word "Casta" which signifies "breed" (Ibbetsen, 1939). Sachdeva and Vidya Bhusan (1974) are of the opinion that the word "Casta" owes its origin to the Spanish word "Casta". It is still believed that, it was the Portuguese who brought this term to India.

The caste system was said to be based on the type of occupation followed by sections of people. Each caste had to fulfil a rigidly prescribed obligation, duty which was clearly prescribed within which people of that caste were to condition their existence (Vijayanath, 1982).

According to Dahma (1968) caste is a group of people having a common name and a membership which is based on birth alone, imposing restrictions on members in matters of social intercourse (eating, drinking, worship, marriage and occupation). The caste determines the style of life, belief system, instructions and also affects the treatment which an individual will receive from others (Kalla, 1985).

The backward classes constitute an important heterogenous section of Indian society and are for the most part officially listed and given special recognition in a variety of contexts as recommended by Andre (1969). Those social codes created, out-casts who were called "depressed classes", "unseeables" or "untouchables".

The earliest evidence of caste and untouchability is textual and dates back to more than two thousand years (Moffatt, 1979). "Varna" is a synonym for caste mentioned in the law book of Manu (Buhler, 1969). The 'untouchables' consists of three broad divisions each having its own characteristic features, distinctive background and particular procedures. These three broad divisions are the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward communities (Kumar, 1982). They together constitute 30% of the total population of India.

According to Manu (Buhler 1969) the most extreme of extra-varniac marriage produces the "Chandala" a being with many of the social attributes of Indian untouchables. According to Ambedkar (1948), untouchability sprang from two different attitude- opposition to a group of depressed people and secondly to their habits. From the pre-war

Indian Independence movement, a fundamental dispute was that concerning relation of 'caste' to 'untouchability'.

Vijayanath (1982) reports that untouchability was the measuring rod, <sup>by</sup> which the social status and position of the caste was measured by Hindus declaring them as upper castes or lower castes. Those who are in the lower strata were later categorised as "backward classes". It has been rightly pointed out by Moffatt (1979) that both caste and untouchability are deeply rooted in Indian history, in the agrarian social order that dominated the Indian economy until the advent of the British. The influence of caste in Indian society is still powerful.

It appears that the term 'untouchables' in common parlance, refers to those people whom Mahatma Gandhi identified as 'Harijans'. Gandhiji also felt that untouchability was an "excrecence" of Hinduism, an institution to be rooted out by reformist change "in the hearts" of high caste Indian so that the untouchables might be integrated into the Sudras in a reformed unranked Varna system. The term 'untouchable' and 'Scheduled caste' are mistakenly used to indicate the same class of people and it is clear from the discussions in the proceedings of Seminar-177 (1974) entitled 'The Untouchables' (Trivedi, 1977). But

Trivedi (1977) is of opinion that " all Harijans may be scheduled castes but all scheduled castes may not be Harijans or Untouchables" and his views are supported by Alikhan (1980). Blunt (1969) and Borale (1968) have both reported that all the depressed classes are not untouchables.

The term scheduled caste or Harijan does not stand for a particular caste but it is a group of such people from among the untouchables who have been declared as "Scheduled Caste by the President of India (Vidhyarthi and Mishra 1977). They have not had a history of isolation and have been segregated and scattered in every State particularly in every district (Beteille, 1969).

According to Kumar (1982) scheduled caste is both a legal and social concept. The term Scheduled caste connote depressed classes and was coined by Government of India (Government of India Act 1935). The Act defines the terms Scheduled Caste as follows:- "The Scheduled Caste means such castes, races and tribes corresponding to the classes of persons formerly known as the depressed classes as His Majesty in Council may specify". The Indian Independence Act (1947) defined the term "Scheduled caste" as such castes, races or tribes or part of groups which appear to the Governor General to correspond to the classes



of persons formerly known as the depressed classes as the Governor General may by order specify. Later in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, scheduled caste order was promulgated in August 1950 and later on amended in 1956. Thus the term Scheduled Caste may be defined as those groups which are named in the Scheduled Caste order in force for the time being (Ghurge, 1957).

According to the traditional theory of Varna, those who sprang from the mouth of Brahma were called Brahmins, from the arms were called Kshatriyas, from the thighs were called Vaishyas and from the feet were called Sudras. As the Sudras were supposed to have sprung from the lowest part of the body, they were relegated to the lowest position in the Varna hierarchy. The Scheduled caste today belong to Sudras (Vidyarthi and Mishra 1977).

In the book "Harijan today, sociological economic, political, religious and cultural analysis" Vidyarthi and Mishra (1977) reports that in the year 1901, Risley the then Census Commissioner of India had divided the population into the following seven categories; namely,

- (1) Brahmins
- (2) Castes other than Brahmins who rank above the clean Sudras
- (3) Clean sudras
- (4) Clean castes served

by the degraded Brahmins (5) Castes other than groups whose water is not taken (6) unclean castes and (7) unclean feeders. It was in 1911 that an enquiry was instituted to ascertain the caste and tribes which suffered specified religious and social disabilities and in the Census Report of 1921, the caste consisting of the "depressed classes" had been mentioned, but had not been properly defined. It was in the Government of India Act of 1935 that the depressed castes were consistently referred to as 'Scheduled castes'.

Issacs (1965) is of opinion that the term "Depressed classes" was introduced sometime late in the last century in the British official records. It was only in 1932 that the word was officially defined as only meaning 'untouchables' (Ali Khan, 1980). Mohatma Gnadhi (1933) was the one who identified the untouchables as Harijans to mean the "Children of God" in a bid to end the social stigma attached to them (Vidyarthi and Mishra 1977).

Finally, as recommended by the Simon Commission the term 'Scheduled Caste' was adopted by the Government. The Constituent Assembly used the word 'Scheduled Caste' while drafting the constitution (Ali Khan 1980). The Constitution of India in its Article 366(24) has clearly defined the

term 'Scheduled Caste' and the terminology refers to such castes, races or tribes or parts of groups within such castes, races or tribes as are deemed under Article 341 to be scheduled caste for the purpose of the constitution of India (India (1983), Vijayanath (1982), Ali Khan (1980)). Article 341 of Indian Constitution (1950) empowers:-

(1) The President to specify "the castes, races or tribes which shall for the purpose of the constitution be deemed to be scheduled castes and (2) Parliament may by law include or exclude from the list of scheduled caste specified in a notification any caste race or tribe". In addition some State Governments have also specified other categories of people known as the "Other backward classes " and denotified nomadic and semi- nomadic communities (India 1983).

According to 1981 Census, the Scheduled Caste constitute 15.75% of the country's population (Census, 1981). As reported by Dahma and Bhatnagar (1980) any group that is numerically less than 50% of the population could be taken as a minority group. Ali Khan (1980) has reported that the scheduled caste constitute a very important minority group of India, besides being members of backward classes.

Though a minority, according to Mathur (1984) the scheduled castes constitute the bed rock on which our society and our economy rests and he goes further to say that the Indian society owe the scheduled caste a heavy mental and moral debt.

The scheduled castes in India occupy the lower rungs of regional social hierarchy (Vidyarthi, 1982). They were socially educationally and economically backward, depressed (Dhama, 1968) and were not allowed to enjoy even the primary facilities of life (Vijayanath 1982). Vidyarthi and Mishra (1977) are of the opinion that heredity and environment alike keeps the scheduled castes backward.

According to Mathur (1984) scheduled caste and some of the backward castes not only suffer from the oppression of economic exploitation, but were also victims of social discrimination from the historical past. Ali Khan (1980) reports that most of the scheduled castes had been subjected to various social disabilities of extreme forms and were exploited and kept subservient mainly because they were illiterate. The mass illiteracy was in turn due to religious and social sanctions imposed on them by the caste Hindus (Lannoy, 1971).

The magnitude of the restrictions imposed by the operation of the caste may be observed from the disabilities under which the backward classes are debarred from public

utilities, such as the use of roads, tanks, temples and even burning ghats (Iyer, 1970). Untouchability was another major problem suffered by scheduled castes from time immemorial. Vijayanath (1982) reports that the entire social behaviour for activity of the caste oriented Indian society was driven by this discipline of pollution caused by physical nearness of human beings of certain other castes.

The common forms in which untouchability is manifested in the country are:- (a) drawing water from public well (b) entry into kitchen (c) service by barbers and dhobies (d) entry into temple (Dahma 1968). Though untouchability has been prohibited by law (Article 17 of the Constitution), the problems are still prevalent in some parts of the country (Vijayanath, 1982). Saradamoni (1981) reports that the fundamental weakness which stands in the way of the improvement of scheduled castes are illiteracy, poverty, environment and lack of health, hygiene, leisure and recreation.

As per the Census data of 1981 (Census of India 1981) the literacy rate of scheduled caste in India is 21.38% which reveals a poor state of affairs. The parents of the scheduled castes had expressed their views that economic handicap is the main obstacle in their not sending the children to School (Ali Khan, 1980). The education of parents plays an important role in shaping their children's lives- says, Ali Khan (1980). An illiterate parent can neither make future plans for their children nor can nourish them properly

(Vidyarthi & Mishra 1977).

Vidyarthi & Mishra (1977) also reports that poverty and unemployment are the two major problems faced by the scheduled caste communities. The report of the commission on the socio-economic conditions of SC/ST (1982) records that large per cent of the SC/ST belong to low income groups and this is due to the low educational status and consequent unemployment and low paying occupations. Studies on scheduled castes have indicated that the economic problem is mainly due to the fact that most of them are engaged in low paying occupations like agriculture labour or in their traditional unskilled jobs, resulting in insufficient income (Vijayanath<sup>ya</sup> 1982). Dahma and Bhatnagar (1980) had reported that out of the 824 lakhs of people of scheduled castes who are mostly engaged in agriculture, a good majority are landless labourers. Vijayanath (1982) reports that since they have no land and house of their own, they are at the mercy of the land owners who are their employees also for an abode. Their houses are small with no windows and therefore hardly had any proper ventilation (Vidyarthi and Mishra 1977).

Saradmoni (1981) reports that poverty has affected their dietary pattern which is very low in calories or in nutritional value. They cannot provide their children with balanced food, milk, fruits and fine cloths. Vidyarthi and Mishra (1977) are of opinion that due to poverty and other causes, the scheduled castes cannot help living amidst squalor and dirt. Dahma and Bhatnagar (1980) reports that due

to unhygienic conditions of living, lack of drinking water and bathing facilities, the backward classes suffer from many diseases. A study conducted by Saradamoni (1981) indicates that bronchial and respiratory diseases, fever, diarrhoea, malaria, abdominal pain, bowel complaints, diseases of liver, spleen etc. are very common diseases among the scheduled castes, while Dahma (1968) observed that the common diseases suffered by scheduled castes are malaria, leprosy, tuberculosis and venereal diseases. Nutritional deficiency is also found to be a major public health problem among backward classes.

Saradamoni (1981) is of the opinion that poverty and malnutrition make them fall an easy prey to various diseases with consequent heavy mortality. She states that lack of hygienic practices, poor food habits, lack of leisure and recreation are responsible for most of their health problems. Vidyarthi and Mishra (1977) also report that the scheduled castes do not have any well organised and formal institution for leisure and recreation. A very odd thing about them is that while they cannot afford a full and balanced diet, they are addicted to intoxicants (Vijayanath 1982). Most of the castes are non-vegetarians and are addicted to drinking (Iyer 1970). Religious prohibitions were imposed on scheduled caste even in ancient times. From the legends we could read that the laws of Brihaspathi prohibited any attempt on the part of the Sudras

to recite the Hindu religions slokas. It was ordained that the tongue of such a person should be cut off, if he ventured to do so. Manu's laws also prescribed such punishment.

The undernourished food, filthy habits, wretched conditions of life and ignorance as causative factors have made the life of scheduled castes miserable and they are kept aloof from the main stream of civilization for centuries together (Vijayanath 1982). To sum up, it could be said that as the Harijans are economically poor, educationally backward, politically disorganised and socially deprived, it is very difficult for them to compete with the persons of the so called clear castes (Vijayanath<sup>1982</sup>, Vidyarthi & Mishra 1977).

The Aryan settlers introduced the fourfold division of castes in Kerala (Vijayanath 1982). Vijayanath (1982) further reports that in course of time, the rigid rules separating the caste had disappeared, but the castes keep their identity.

The scheduled caste population in Kerala as per 1981 census is 25.50 lakhs (Census 1981). This section of population has increased by 33% over the decade from 1971 to 1981 (Government of Kerala, 1985). The reason for this increase in percentage of scheduled caste in Kerala is attributed as the fact that a number of forward or backward castes have



infiltrated into the field of scheduled caste and grabbed the benefits earmarked for the scheduled castes (Mathur 1984). Presently there are 68 scheduled castes in Kerala State as identified by Mathur (1984) and Vijayanath (1982) and Kerala State Development Corporation for Christian Converts from SC and recommended communities Ltd. (1983) and Government of Kerala (1984).

Pulayan and Cheruman are the two major castes among the scheduled castes in Kerala (Vijayanath 1982 and Saradamoni 1980). These two castes alone account for 51% of the scheduled caste population (Cheruman 40% and Pulayan 36%) (Vijayanath 1982).

It is believed that in Kerala the scheduled caste people had inhabited the plains first and some of them had migrated into the forest for various reasons (Vijayanath, 1982). The major occupations of scheduled castes in Kerala is agriculture (Govt. of Kerala 1983). According to Government of Kerala (1985) most of the scheduled caste who constitute agricultural labourers, either do not own land or possess only marginal holdings. According to Saradamoni (1981) the field labourers and untouchables constitute a big segment of agricultural labour in Kerala. Most of the scheduled castes who belong to agricultural labourers watch the crops, living on the bunds of fields. Castes like Parayan and Kavara are basket makers. Paravan and Thandan are tree climbers and most of the

pulayas are agricultural labourers (Vijayanath 1982). Mathur (1984) reports that scheduled castes do all the unclean occupations such as scavenging, sweeping and tanning. Most of them continue to pursue traditional occupations (Government of Kerala 1985). In the forest areas, the chief occupations of scheduled castes were collecting honey, forest produce and hunting (Vijayanath 1982).

Like in other places in Kerala also the scheduled castes suffered from social, religious economic and educational hardships in earlier days. They were debarred from the use of public utilities and they also suffered from the religious disabilities (Iyer 1970). The pulaya caste women were not allowed to cover the upper portions of their body and it was not considered proper for a pulaya women to wear clean and tidy cloths, or wear gold and silver ornaments or to carry an umbrella and to have tiled house (Alexander, 1968). As regards to the *civil* rather than religious disabilities, the extent to which the use of public roads was debarred may be gathered from the fact that the Harijan of Travancore made an organised effort in 1924 to obtain the use of roads which skirted the temple at Vaikom (Iyer 1970).

While the status of the scheduled castes, in general, are poor the condition of women belonging to these groups are most appalling. The degradation and differentiation between the male and female has been there in India, from ancient times. Thapar (1975) has rightly pointed out that within the Indian

sub continent, there have been infinite variations on the status of women diverging according to cultural milieu, family structure, class, caste, property rights and morals. She also reports that even the ancient erotic manuals of India have digressed at greater length on the capabilities and idiosyncrasies of Indian women. But we understand that during Vedic period (2500 to 1500 BC) women enjoyed a fair amount of personal freedom, and equality with men (Rudra, (1974); Das (1979). The position of women changed considerably in the period between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D. (Mohinuddin, 1985 and Das 1979). It was during this post vedic period that the "Brahmins realised that their greatest rivals in influence and spiritual power was women, especially so long as she remained surrounded by that double halo-the mystery of her own life bearing sex", and this was enhanced and sanctified by the ancient worship of the female aspect of diety (Das 1979). She also writes that "so began the slow, persistent and atleast completely successful effort of the priets to wrest from women her religious and cultural rights her social and domestic equality and power".

Later on it was Manu's Code that has had the most negative effects forging unbreakable shackles on Indian women for countless succeeding generations (Das, 1979, Buhler, 1969).

the law restricted the women to study the Vedas (though her own) which was said to be forbidden to "Sudras, women and servants" (Das, 1975) and Trivedi (1977) reports that, what did infinite harm to women was the theory that they were ineligible to participate in Vedic sacrifice because their status was equivalent to that of "Sundras". This was probably an easy way to disregard the status of women throughout the bygone ages of India. Thus in many contexts, women in general were found equated with Sudras (Tapar, 1975). Even the Bhagavat Gita places women, vaisyas and sudras in the same category and describes them all as being of sinful at birth. In the law text book of Parasara, the punishment for illing either a women or a Sundra is identical.

This throws light on the fact that until the recent years the women in general were equal to "Sundras" who are now popularly known as Scheduled castes.

Rudra (1975) stated that Indian society has all along been a male dominated society. Women today suffer dual opporession of sex and class within and outside the family. While women represent 50% of the World population, they perform nearly 2/3rd of all working hours, receive only 1/10th of the world income and own less than 1% of world property. (Horker, 1984). Her condition is worse when she belongs to an under privileged community.

It is rightly emphasised by Anand (1985) that anxiety depression, uncertainty plagued the women as a result of being treated as second class citizens). Women seem to have suffered similar problems, as an under privileged community suffers in the society. This might have been the reason for Mhatma Gandhiji, the father of the Nation to say that " he would like to be born as an untouchable or as a woman". These two symbolised for him the oppressed and suppressed sections of humanity (Gandhi Samarak Nidhi, 1976).

Women have known hardships in all society, in all civilizations. But surely nowhere else could be inequity of the treatment of women have surpassed that in India (Rudra, 1975). We have gone to such an extent that the birth of a female child is considered to be a misfortune, (Kalakdina, 1975) they are compelled to early marriage, and *polygamy* restricted to property rights (Mohinnuddin 1985). Even this life of torture and all these restrictions on actions and movements have often driven the women to gruesome modes of suicide. Rudra (1975) further reports that "far more terrible than these social practices has been, the environment of ideas in which women have had to live".

Over and above these miseries and restrictions suffered by women in general, the women of Scheduled Caste communities had the problem of untouchability in the sense that they are looked down as " defiling and polluting agents, in ritualistic

sense, and these practices are associated generally with women (Trivedi, 1977). More over the Scheduled caste women were associated with menial and unclean jobs, such as sweeping, and scavenging.

The Status of scheduled caste women in their families depends upon the kind of taboos associated with their roles and duties - within the family and outside- When they have to work outside they are expected to earn and add to the family income. They were exploited by their employers, being paid very low amounts and possibly they had to practice clandestine prostitution to satisfy the lust of their landlords (Trivedi 1976). One of the major social taboos associated with scheduled caste women is the "Devadasi" system or sacred prostitution, common in regions of Goa, Sholapur, Satara, Kolhapur, Bijapur, Belgaon and Dharwar (Trivedi 1976).

The goal of "integrating women in the development process as equal partners with men" has been accepted by member Governments of the United Nations and has affected the national policies of some of them. But the diagnosis of women's special needs and the design of policies to meet these needs have continued to face many obstacles (Papanek, 1979).

After reflecting and analysing the experiences and situations of women in the most oppressed and exploited groups of Society in Asia, Sudworth (1984) realised that these women suffer from triple oppressions - as citizens of third world

countires in an unjust world economic system, as workers and as women. She also reports that women are treated as inferior in society, denied their rights to participate in decision making and to develop as full human beings.

Mc Parland (1985) has announced that the UN's decade for women was celebrated from 1976 to 1985, yet in most of the world they still suffer higher unemployment and receive lower wages than men; are blocked from positions of authority; have less access to education and are expected to look after the home and children, while still contributing to family income.

However, when women work outside their homes all their responsibilities as housewives do not disappear, providing a double workday. (Leon, 1985). Critical issues on the status of women prepared by the Indian Council for Social Research reveals an alarming trend of continuing and accelerated deterioration in economic conditions and social status of Indian women in spite of constitutional and Legislative guarantees (Awasty, 1982). Cultural prejudices are hard to change as political ones are mainly responsible for this (Mc Parland, 1985).

With the constant warfare that devastated India, in the 17th and 18th centuries, women's interests and education fell into a depth of miserable neglect and suppression from which they are only recovering now. (Mitra 1984). The female members of tribal groups and ethnic minorities are especially affected by the

changes occurring as a result of their societies integration into larger economic and political system (Leon, 1985).

Statements like "the key to the upliftment of all backward classes largely lies in the field of education" or "education is the sheet anchor of any programme for the uplift of the backward classes" in documents connected with the welfare of the scheduled caste or backward classes reflect the official thinking on measures taken on this question. As far as women are concerned, lack of education or illiteracy is said to be a factor which has led them into a deplorable state of affairs. Mazumdar (1985) in her inaugural address at a seminar organised under the Ministry of Women and Social Welfare has said that "the women and children are voiceless, they do not know what their rights are, and what to expect from society. Mitra (1984) has stated that as long as the woman is ignorant, she will remain dejected, oppressed incapable of sharing man's pursuits and ideals. They further declare that education alone can give true freedom and enlightenment to women. Lannoy's observations is that the greatest source of hope to the Harijans is modern education which acts as a solvent of caste barriers .

According to Guha (1972-74) education is the most significant instrument for changing women's subjugated position in society. In order to awaken people, it is the woman who has be awakened. Once she is on the move, the household moves, the



village moves and through the women, the children are brought into the educational field and given opportunities of a healthier life and better training (Nehru, 1958). Radhakrishnan (1958) and Patel (1958) have stressed that unless women's education is developed and strengthened the Nation's future will be bleak. Therefore, education of girls is the most potent instrument to achieve progress in moral, material and spiritual spheres (Muthu, and Amirtha Gowri, 1975).

The greatest problem in the women's education in India today is the provision of some basic education to the overwhelming majority who have remained outside the reach of the formal system of education because of age, social disabilities or the literacy gap. In order to integrate women in the process of national development it is imperative to provide some education to the vast mass of illiterate and semi-literate women in the 15-25 age group (Guha 1962). What is necessary now is to design a nonformal system of education using all the available educational resources in the community (Guha 1962).

A study sponsored by UNESCO and the Council of Social Development, with an objective of developing an integrated programme through non-formal education for women, in the rural sector reveals that "nonformal education related to the problems of maternal and child health, nutrition and family penning was more effective in bringing about a change in knowledge and

attitude among the rural women". (Jesudasan, et al.1981). Kalakdina, (1975) points out that extra family institutions such as health care, increased knowledge in nutrition, and understanding of family planning and education, availability of more agricultural occupations have been empirically identified as modernising influences for women. She reiterates that without these means the hiatus between the mother's practices in child upbringing and the scientific practices of these modernising influences will perhaps increase. The urbanised are more exposed to these influences than those in the rural areas; the upperelite are more exposed than the underprivileged

It is in these circumstances that developmental programmes initiated since 1955 had programmes focussing attention on women (Varma), and they had an education component. Gopaldas (1980) specified that any programme to be self generating, should have an education component. Since more than economic poverty, poverty in knowledge, is the cause of poor nutrition in many people.

UNESCO (1975) reports that in the third World there are three constraints- lack of money, lack of time and lack of knowledge for the development of women. Pushpamma (1983) claims that more than time, lack of knowledge and socio-cultural beliefs of the mother which are affecting the food intake and child rearing practices are major detriments. Dharmalingam and Dutt (1983)

report that simultaneous sanitation, health and nutrition will produce synergetic effect over the health and nutritional status of the people, which works out cheaper and affordable for the poor countries.

Moreover, Leisinger (1985) has aptly pointed out that the ill nexus of ill health, insufficient nutrition, and inadequate sanitation and low levels of hygiene and education is so strong that changes in one condition is likely to lead to changes in all others.

It is in this context that, family education or welfare camps or training with infant nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, food production components were made part of the educational aspect of various developmental programmes. In Kerala, the Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP) and the Composite Programme for Women and <sup>Pre-School</sup> Children (CPWP) have a specific educational component. The objectives of the ANP, is to educate the people in Applied Nutrition Programme, with a view to improve the quality of the local diet especially of the pre-school children, pregnant, and lactating mothers- (State Planning Board, 1978). It clearly defines that the programme aims " to promote through demonstration, and education among the communities sound knowledge of production, hygiene, preservation and use of protective foods (Plan of operation of ANP<sup>1988</sup>). It also has another objective to trian

official and non-official functionaries of the programme - UNICEF (1975) records that the goal of ANP is to educate Village families about the benefits of nutritious food, good child feeding practices and preservation of foods.

Similarly the CPWP programme started in the State from 1975-76 has 3 objectives pertaining to education viz. - (i) to promote healthy living habits (ii) to create a desire among children to go to school and acquire knowledge and (iii) to impart nutrition and health education to mothers.

There is another programme entitled "Social Inputs and Area Development (SIAD) initiated by Government of India in 1978 with the assistance of UNICEF and implemented by the Development department of Kerala, the objective of which is to enrich the quality of life of the poor people particularly women and children of the backward areas. The project for social development that are taken up under this programme include provision of drinking water, primary and pre-primary education, sanitation, nutrition education nonformal education for women and income generating programmes. Thus, family education aspects such as sanitation, nutrition education, are the major components of this programme and it is implemented in 5 districts of Kerala including Trivandrum. In Trivandrum the programme is in operation at Parasala, Athiyannoor, Nemom, Trivandrum Rural, Kazhakuttom, Chirayinkil and Varkala (Govt

of Kerala (1981) which are the Blocks selected for conduct of the present study.

Apart from these the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and Integrated Health Package Programme (IHPP) implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Health respectively, in Kerala have nutrition education and health education components (CARE- Kerala 1975 and State Planning Board 1982).

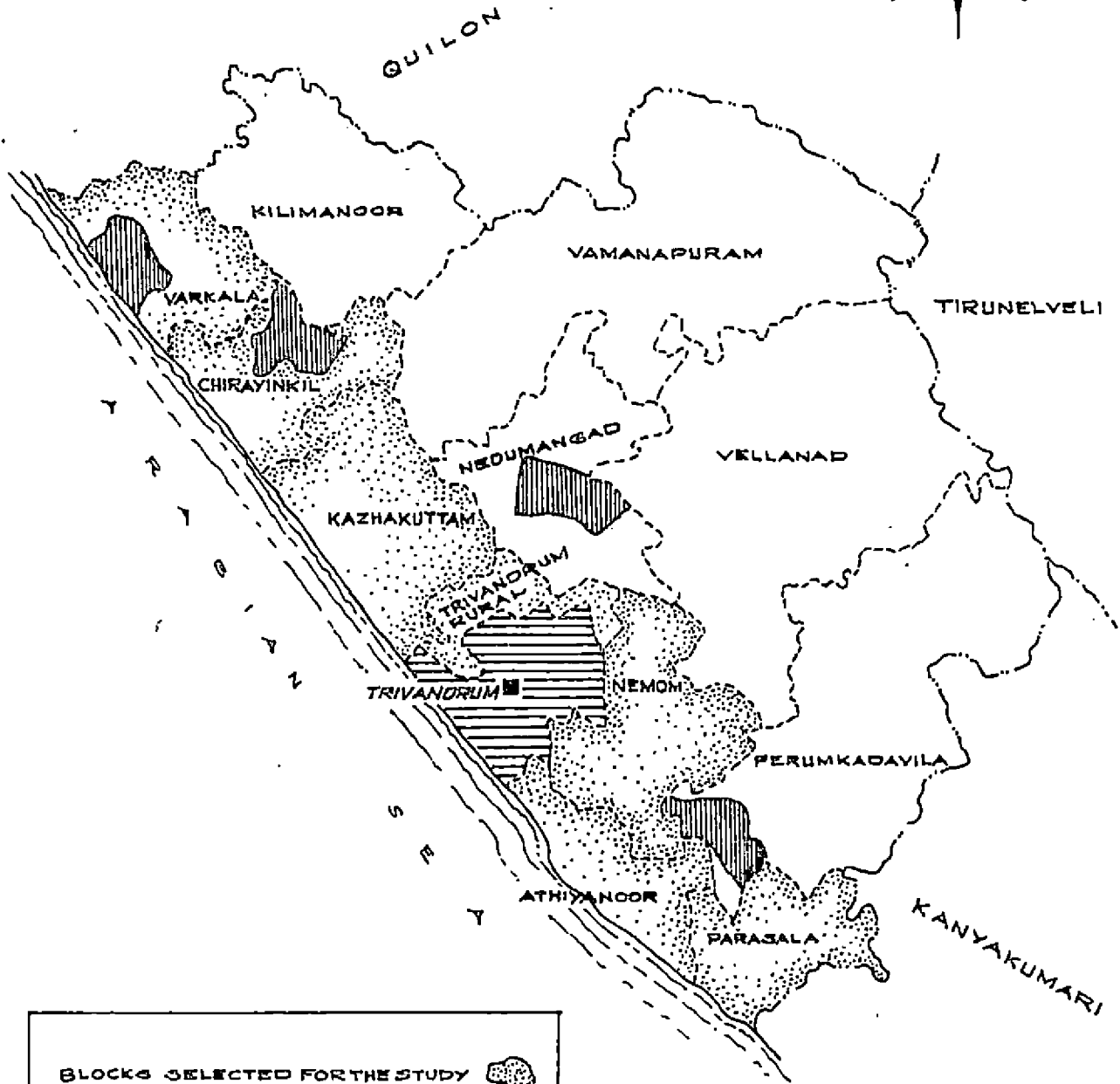
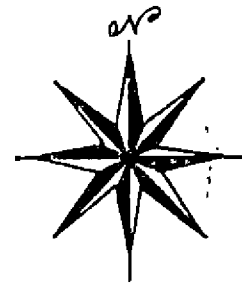
The developmental programmes with nutrition/health components such as ANP and ICDS have been evaluated independently by several workers Rao (1983), Srikantia (1980), Gambir (1980), Bhandari (1980), Kaul (1980) and the details of these programmes have been discussed at length by several experts in the field Mehta (1980), Tandon (1980), Bhut (1980), Devadas (1983), Pushpamma (1983), Planning Board (1978). As reported earlier in Kerala these programmes have been evaluated by the State Planning Board (State Planning Board 1978 and 1982). The evaluation studies seems to focus little attention on the aspect of education, and especially on the extent of knowledge gained by the beneficiaries of these programme and to what extent the knowledge gained is retained and is put into use at the family level, though it is unanimously agreed that education is an essential and important. Conquest of all Nutrition Intervention Programmes.

Prahlad Rao (1983) and State Planning Board (1978) have reported that any evaluation procedure will be effective only when all the components of the programmes are fully investigated.

Moreover, the evaluation studies have not paid any attention to study the impact of such programmes on the society deprived section of the population especially the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. It has been rightly pointed out that studies on scheduled castes are rare, and as Sachidananda (1971) puts it, it is only in the beginning of the 20th Century that we got more detailed studies on scheduled castes in the form of monographs. As Trivedi (1976) puts it the politicians, social reformers, social reformers, social scientists, historian etc. have had a tendency to focus attention on discriminating problems of scheduled castes in general and not on the women of these communities in particular. The literature is particularly devoid of enough substantiative information on the status of scheduled castes women. More over a Saradmoni (1981) has put it any student of the scheduled caste can be undertaken only in the context of country's efforts. A purposeful study has to include questions as to what extent the benefits of development have reached them.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

MAP OF TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT  
SHOWING N.E.6. BLOCKS.



BLOCKS SELECTED FOR THE STUDY	
CORPORATION AREA	
MUNICIPAL AREA	
DISTRICT BOUNDARY	
BLOCK BOUNDARY	



## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study entitled "Family education programmes implemented by the State Development Department for the uplift of Scheduled caste habitats of Trivandrum District" was conducted at two levels.

a) A macro-level study to assess the extent of participation in family education camps organised by the Development Department of Kerala State, by the women belonging to Scheduled Caste Communities.

b) A micro-level study aimed at evaluating the knowledge retained by selected groups of women belonging to scheduled caste communities, who have participated in the family education camps organised by the State Development Department from two N.E.S.Blocks selected for the purpose.

### Selection of sample for the Maco level study

Seven N.E.S.Blocks out of 12 N.E.S.Blocks in Trivandrum District were selected as the Unit for the macro-level study. They were identified for the following reasons.

(i) These blocks had the various development programmes, having a nutrition education component, along with

UNICEF assisted social Inputs and Area Development (SIAD) programme.

(ii) These blocks represented places encompassing both rural and sub-urban areas and communities therein.

(iii) All but one of these seven blocks are having Panchayats declared as " Harijan Concentrations" as per the recommendations of the Commission on the Socio-economic conditions of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Government of Kerala, 1983).

The Blocks selected for the base-line study were Trivandrum Rural (Vattiyoorkavu ), Nemom, Kazhakkattam Athiyanoor, Parasala, Varkala and Chirayinkil.

#### Conduct of the Base-line study

Baseline data regarding the various family education camps conducted from 1976 onwards in these areas were collected from the Block headquarters, by interviewing Block officials and verifying records available in the Block office.

The data thus collected consisted of details of the type and nature of camps conducted and socio-economic and personal characteristics of the participants. Data regarding all the camps could not be collected from all the Blocks in a chronological order from 1976 to 1984

for want of proper records about certain camps and for want of resources persons in the NES Blocks knowledgeable about these camps. The available data was collected and were categorically tabulated Block-wise. The study was restricted to scheduled caste participants only. Thus from the 7 NES Blocks details of 265 camps, 13446 participants including 3786 scheduled caste participants were examined.

#### Micro-level study

The sample for the micro-level study was derived from the macro sample of scheduled caste participants of 2 NES Blocks selected.

#### a) Selection of Sample for the micro-level study

Micro-level study was confined to the N.E.S.Blocks of Athiyannoor and Trivandrum Rural. These two Blocks were selected by judgement sampling procedure. According to Gupta (1977) in judgement sampling, the choice of the sample depends exclusively on the discretion of the investigator. In other words, the investigator exercises his judgement in the choics and includes those items in the sample which he thinks are most typical of the universe with regard to the characteristics under investigation.

Accordingly the Athiyannoor Block, which is the first to be established in the State, representing the typical rural areas of Neyyattinkara Taluk was included as sample for the study. The Trivandrum rural Block was selected because of its greater nearness to the urban areas of Trivandrum Corporation. The population in Trivandrum Rural Block is definitely semi-urban. Moreover these two are the adopted blocks or "Field laboratories" of the Kerala Agricultural University, and hence there was already a stable and established rapport between the Block officials and the University officials.

These two Blocks have a major difference in the sense that Trivandrum Rural Block is in the vicinity of Trivandrum City and it is more or less urbanised whereas the Athiyannoor Block is an area which has a typical rural setting. This contrasting feature also <sup>was</sup> influenced the judgement <sup>for</sup> their inclusion in this micro-level study.

#### Selection of sub sample for the study

Ten per cent of the total number of scheduled caste participants who had participated in Family education camps from each of the two Blocks, formed the sub sample for the study. Thus 100 women from Trivandrum Rural Block and 60 women from Athiyannoor block, selected at random constituted the sample for the study.

Selection of the method and preparation of the schedule for the micro-level study

The interview method was chosen as the method for collection of information as it is said to be the most accurate method for collecting information. According to Devadas and Kulandaivel (1975) interview method is defined as "Systematic method" by which a person enters more or less imaginatively into the inner life of a comparative stranger. Hence this method was used for collection of data.

To conduct the interview, an interview schedule was prepared. Care was taken to avoid any possible errors in the collected data. Easy and simple questions were included to make the respondents understand the theme of the research. The questions included in the schedule were such that it would bring forth the information regarding socio-economic status of the subjects as well as the extent of gain in knowledge and its retention by the participants by attending the family education camps. The interview schedule prepared emphasised 2 aspects. The first aspect relates to the socio-personal characteristics of the selected women. Care was taken to collect information such as age, educational level, occupation, marital status and family background.

The second aspect consisted of statements related to various subject matters covered in the family education camps conducted in the selected areas. These statements were categorised into 6 subject matter areas, viz. Infant nutrition, Personal hygiene, Environmental sanitation, Deficiency diseases, <sup>Home Production</sup> (Kitchen gardening, Goat rearing and Poultry keeping) and child care. The subject matter was based on the training sessions in one day camps.

The subject matter areas identified were refined through discussions, the investigator had with field staff of the Blocks. In preparing the statements, care was taken to cover the vital aspects of the subject matter, the knowledge of which is of importance to the women, to improve their personal or family life style. The statements were framed avoiding ambiguity and repetition of ideas.

A total number of 72 statements were framed. (12 statements were framed under each of the six subject matter areas). The statements thus formulated were sent to senior officials who were responsible for organising family education camps and then were pretested among 50 rural women and among selected field staff of the Block. Schedule thus prepared for the study is presented in Appendix -

The extent of knowledge retained by the respondents through their participation in family education camps was measured using a three point scale developed by the investigator for the purpose. Lickert's Technique (Edwards 1969) was followed in the development of the scale, though different techniques are available for the construction of scales, Thurstone's Equal Appearing Interval scale and Likert's summated Ratings scale are the most commonly employed ones. (Menon & Prema 1975). A comparison of these two techniques made through constructing scales from the same universe by Jha and Singh (1973) revealed that the two techniques are fairly comparable and that the Likert's technique obviates some of the difficulties experienced in the case of Thurston's techniques. Therefore, the Likert's Summated Ratings Scale Technique was adopted to develop the scale in the present study.

#### CONDUCT OF THE SURVEY

Perfect rapport between the investigator and the subjects were established. The aims and objectives of the interview were explained to the respondents. Data from the selected scheduled caste women of the two Blocks were collected by personal interview. The socio-economic details were first collected. The statements with the scale were

administered to the respondents one by one and they were asked to express their reaction in terms of their agreement or disagreement with each statement in the scale by selecting any one of the three response categories namely agree, disagree and do not know/undecided.

The data thus collected were given scores as detailed below.

The extent of knowledge retained by the selected women were arrived at by finding out the mean score. The scale on gain in knowledge retention through participation in camps had 72 statements (6 x 12). The highest possible score that any respondent can get on this scale is 72 where the respondent gives agree (right) to every positive statement and wrong or disagree to every negative statement in the scale indicating a maximum gain in knowledge. On the other hand the lowest individual score on the scale is zero where the respondent selects an "agree" or "right" response to a negative item and a "disagree" or "wrong" response to a positive item expressing a negative attitude. A neutral position or one of indecision also gets the score of zero on each item.

The data thus collected were consolidated, tabulated and were subjected to statistical analysis.



Details of Statistical Analysis

The data to be analysed were the scores given to each individual based on a set of statements. Hence non-parametric test, <sup>Siegel (1956)</sup> was applied to interpret the results. The observations were classified into 3 or more classes with respect to certain attributes and Kruskal-Wallis one-way analysis of variance was applied with the test statistic given by

$$H = \frac{12}{N(N+1)} \sum_{j=1}^K \frac{R_j^2}{n_j} - 3(N+1)$$

Where, K = sample size

$n_j$  = number of cases in  $j^{\text{th}}$  sample

$N = \sum n_j$ , the number of cases in all samples combined.

$R_j$  = sum of ranks for  $j^{\text{th}}$  sample

For large samples, H is distributed approximately as Chi-square with K-1 degrees of freedom.

'Students' 't' test was applied to test for the significance of the mean scores related to different subject matter areas such as infant nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, deficiency diseases, Kitchen gardening, Poultry rearing and child care, with respect to Athiyannoor and Trivandrum Rural Blocks. The test statistics was given by

$$K_{n_1+n_2-2} = \frac{|\bar{x}_1 - \bar{x}_2|}{\frac{n_1 s_1^2 + n_2 s_2^2}{n_1 + n_2 - 2} \times \frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}}$$

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study was undertaken to find out the extent of participation by women belonging to Scheduled caste families from selected NES Blocks of Trivandrum District and to find out the extent of knowledge gained by them through their participation in family education camps conducted by the State Development Department.

The study was conducted at two levels, one at Block level and another at participant level. The results of the study are detailed below.

As detailed in the previous Chapter, seven Blocks out of 12 in Trivandrum District were selected for the study.

### I. Macro Level Study

- a) Family education camps conducted in selected blocks during the period from 1976-1984 in Trivandrum District.

Verification of records available at the respective Block Headquarters in Trivandrum District indicate that during the period from 1976-77 to 1983-84, 265 family education camps were reported to be organised in the Seven Blocks in Trivandrum District. The details regarding the camps conducted in them are given in Table 1 and year-wise break-up of the details are indicated in Appendix-I.

Table 1

THE NUMBER OF FAMILY EDUCATION CAMPS CONDUCTED IN THE SELECTED SEVEN BLOCKS OF TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1976-1977 to 1983-84.

S1 No.	Name of Block	Total number of family education camps conducted
1.	Athiyannoor	49
2.	Nemom	31
3.	Kazhakkuttam	28
4.	Trivandrum Rural	71
5.	Parassala	30
6.	Varkala	22
7.	Chirayinkil	34
Total		265

b. Participants in the Family education camps:

As per the plan of operations of various developmental programmes implemented, the targetted <sup>number</sup> of participants for a family education camp is 50. The records available at the Block Headquarters indicate that <sup>here are</sup> wide variation in the number of women participated in the camps. The total number of women who attended the camps organised by the seven different Blocks for the period from 1976-77 to 1983-84 is given in Table 2.

Table 2

THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN THE FAMILY EDUCATION CAMPS CONDUCTED  
AT SELECTED BLOCKS DURING THE PERIOD FROM 1976-77 TO 1983-84

Year	Number of participants in Camps							Total
	Athiyannoor	Nemom	Kazhakuttam	Trivandrum Rural	Parasala	Varkala	Chirayinkil	
1976-77	*	*	*	*	150	*	*	150
1977-78	511	*	*	916	50	*	273	1750
1978-79	*	*	472	597	316	*	279	1664
1979-80	666	*	417	552	260	112	420	2427
1980-81	914	875	330	652	787	275	201	4034
1981-82	311	510	150	100	*	388	313	1772
1982-83	157	156	106	277	*	*	276	972
1983-84	-	41	-	264	*	372	*	677
Total	2559	1582	1475	3358	1563	1147	1762	13446

\* Data not available.

As indicated in Table 2, 13446 women had participated in the family education camps though the target fixed was 13250 (50 participants in 265 camps). This indicates 100 per cent participation. This may be due to the favourable attitude of women towards educational programmes. Possibly high literacy rate and eagerness to learn more when further education has been stopped may be responsible for this high participation. Earlier studies conducted in the same area have indicated that women have a favourable attitude towards the education component of the Applied Nutrition Programme (Prema and Menon, 1976).

However, compared to the total population of scheduled castes in Athiyannoor Block (21669) and in Trivandrum Rural (13627) (Government of Kerala 1985) the representation of scheduled caste women in these family education camps appear to be marginal. This may be due to lack of social participation and awareness about the developmental programmes. Similar findings are reported earlier (State Planning Board, 1978 and 1982). The extent to which, though emancipated, lingering fears of disabilities have played a role in decreasing their participation is itself a separate study that has to be attempted.

The details regarding the number of participants belonging to scheduled caste communities are given in Table 3.

Table 3

THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS OF FAMILY EDUCATION CAMPS WHO BELONG TO SCHEDULED CASTES

Sl. No.	Block	Total No. of participants	No. of participants belonging to scheduled caste.	Percentage of scheduled caste participants
1.	Athiyannoor	2559	682	26.65
2.	Nemom	1582	389	24.58
3.	Kazhakuttam	1475	537	36.41
4.	Trivandrum Rural	3358	1120	33.35
5.	Parasala	1563	405	25.91
6.	Varkala	1147	232	20.23
7.	Chirayinkil	1762	421	23.89
Total		13446	3786	191.02
Average		1920.86	540.86	27.29

As indicated in the table, on an average 27 per cent of women who participated in the family education camps belong to scheduled caste families. The data also indicate that women of these under privileged communities have made the transition from wives and mothers to participants with increasing opportunities in society.

c) Socio-personal characteristics of the participants belonging to scheduled caste communities.

The socio-personal characteristics are said to be import-



ant yardsticks that motive people to participate in social activities. Hence the details of socio-personal characteristics such as age, occupation, caste, religion and educational status of the women belonging to scheduled caste communities were collected from the records available at the Block Headquarters.

(i) Age of the participants

Table 4 shows the distribution of the participants according to age.

Table 4

THE AGE OF PARTICIPANTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED  
CASTE COMMUNITIES

Sl. No. of the block	Total No. of participants	Age of the participants belonging to scheduled caste			
		20 and below 20 (Percentage)	21-35 (Percentage)	36-50 (Percentage)	Above 50 (percentage)
1. Athiyannoor	682	16.00	64.80	15.40	3.80
2. Nemom	389	11.60	72.20	13.10	3.10
3. Kazhakuttam	537	18.25	61.83	18.06	1.86
4. Trivandrum Rural	1120	19.20	58.20	17.10	5.50
5. Parasala	405	14.50	61.50	22.50	1.50
6. Varkala	232	25.43	52.16	15.95	6.46
7. Chirayinkil	421	27.10	57.70	12.40	2.80
<b>Total</b>	<b>3786</b>	<b>132.08</b>	<b>428.39</b>	<b>114.51</b>	<b>25.02</b>
<b>Average</b>	<b>540.85</b>	<b>18.87</b>	<b>61.19</b>	<b>16.35</b>	<b>3.57</b>

From the above table, it is understood that 18.80 per cent of the women from the different Blocks were below the age of 20 and 61 per cent of the women were between the age of 21-35 whereas 16.35 per cent of the women were between the age of 36.50 and the rest were above the age of 50.

From this it is concluded that most of the participants of the family education camps were between the age of 21 to 35. This trend was observed uniformly in all the different Blocks. This indicates the interest taken by women of child bearing and child rearing age in camps where the topics dealt with for discussion and demonstrations mainly round nutrition of pregnant and lactating, mothers, infants and preschool children. Only very few women above the age of 50 were found to be interested in participating in such social activities. Even their interest could be to gain more knowledge for transmission and advice to their children or neighbours.

#### (ii) Occupation of the participants

The kind of occupation is a deciding factor in enabling women and motivating them to participate in the activities outside their own family circle; viz, the participation in camps organised by governmental agencies or

other organisations. From a study as a one man Commission conducted by ~~Dr~~ Vijayanath (1982) among the scheduled castes in Kerala it is evident<sup>that</sup> in general they participated in occupations such as agricultural labour, basket making etc. The data collected from the seven different Blocks in Trivandrum district in the present study indicates that on an average 18.50 per cent of the women who attended the camps were agricultural labourers, 6 per cent of the women were engaged in private occupations such as laundry work, tailoring, basket making etc. and 1 per cent were Government employees. The remaining 74 per cent of the women had no specific job other than household chores.

Table 5 gives the details of occupation followed by women belonging to scheduled caste who were participants of family education camps.

Table 5  
THE OCCUPATION OF PARTICIPANTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTE  
(BLOCK-WISE AND YEARWISE)

Sl. No.	Name of Block.	Total No. of SC participants	Cooly		Unemployed		Private Job		Govt. employment	
			No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
1.	Athiyannoor	682	78	11.44	604	88.56	-	-	-	-
2.	Nemom	389	123	31.62	180	46.27	68	17.48	18	4.63
3.	Kazhakkuttam	537	8	1.49	528	98.32	1	0.19	-	-
4.	Trivandrum Rural	1120	194	17.32	835	74.56	83	7.41	8	0.71
5.	Parasala	405	71	17.53	319	78.77	15	3.70	-	-
6.	Varkala	232	62	26.72	152	65.52	18	7.76	-	-
7.	Chirayinkil	421	100	23.75	287	68.17	25	5.94	9	2.14
Total		3786	636	129.87	2905	520.17	210	42.48	35	7.48
Average		540.86	90.85	18.55	415	74.31	30	6.06	5	1.06

From this, it is concluded that most of the participants had no specific occupation outside the home. Despite the occupations mentioned in the table, all the rural women were subjected to physical drudgery by the household activities listed below.

1. Domestic chores like cooking, collection of fuel.
2. Child rearing and home management.
3. Washing clothes
4. Drawing and fetching water.
5. Repair and maintenance of the home.
6. Sweeping and cleaning.
7. Shopping
8. Kitchen gardening
9. Looking after the domestic animals, if any.

Similar results are reported by Ojha and Saxena (1985) and Srivastava (1985) in North Indian situations.

As a consequence of the above mentioned factors coupled with the situation in which the women of scheduled caste communities live and work, they can hardly be expected to show any interest in social activities, like participation in education camps. In the case of employed women they are playing multiple roles as home maker, partner in food production efforts and as wage earners. This may be the reason for the employed women for not participating in greater numbers in such camps. More over the economic loss that

they might suffer from not going for jobs on a specific day of the camp, may also deter them from participating in such programmes. On the other hand, the unemployed home maker may seize such opportunity, to develop her social contacts and also utilise the opportunity as a change from the monotonous house hold duties and as a means to ensure social contacts.

(iii) Educational status of the participants

Education and level of literacy open the windows of wisdom and act as a channel which brings women to the external world with a quest to attain more wisdom. ~~Vadava (1982)~~ has reported that education is the basic instrument necessary for building information processing capacity among human beings and it is a major contributing factor in the way of progress. Hence the level of literacy or educational standard was taken as one of the parameters to find out the correlation between level of education and the extent of participation by women belonging to scheduled caste families in family education camps.

Table 6 shows distribution of education level of participants.

From the table it is clear that 21 per cent have studied upto High school level and an equal number have

Table 6

EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF PARTICIPANTS BELONGING TO SCHEDULED CASTE  
FAMILIES (BLOCK-WISE)

Sl. No.	Name of Block	No. of S.C. participants	Illiterate		Lower Primary		Upper Primary		High School		College	
			No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
1.	Athiyannoor	682	146	21.40	224	32.83	124	18.18	169	24.80	19	2.79
2.	Nemom	389	100	25.70	113	29.04	104	26.74	66	16.97	6	1.55
3.	Kazhakuttam	537	220	40.97	193	35.94	70	13.04	42	7.82	12	2.23
4.	Trivandrum Rural	1120	233	20.80	250	22.32	300	26.79	311	27.77	26	2.32
5.	Parasala	405	69	17.03	90	22.21	83	20.51	147	36.30	16	3.95
6.	Varkala	232	72	31.03	45	19.39	60	25.86	47	20.26	8	3.46
7.	Chirayinkil	421	149	35.39	113	26.84	83	19.73	65	15.43	11	2.61
Total		3786	989	192.32	1028	188.57	824	150.85	847	149.35	98	18.91
Average		540.85	141.29	27.47	146.86	26.94	117.71	21.55	121	21.34	14	2.70

studied upto Upper primary and lower primary level, whereas 27 per cent were found to be illiterate. From this, it is concluded that nearly one third of the participants are illiterate. Only very few participants have studied upto college level. Earlier reports indicate that women were found to constitute as much as 6.6 per cent of the literates among the scheduled castes in India (Singh & Rao 1985).

Anyhow, these camps will be a means of imparting non-formal education to the illiterate women, especially those from the under privileged communities.

## II. Micro level study

An indepth study was undertaken on a randomly selected population of scheduled caste women who have participated in the family education camps from the two NES Blocks of Trivandrum district viz, Trivandrum Rural and Athiyannoor Blocks. These two Blocks have a major difference in the sense that Trivandrum Rural Block is in the vicinity of Trivandrum City and it is more or less urbanised whereas the Athiyannoor Block is an area which has a typical rural setting. This contrast obviously was expected to bring out different types of results for the two Blocks.

From among the 682 respondent participants of family education camps belonging to Scheduled caste in NES Block

Athiyannoor, 60 women were selected for this study. In a similar manner out of 1120 participants of family education camps belonging to scheduled caste in NES Block Trivandrum Rural, 100 women were selected by random sampling.

A suitably structured questionnaire was developed and pre-tested (The questionnaire used is given in Appendix) The questionnaire had two parts. The former part pertaining to the socio-personal characteristics of the selected women and the latter comprising a series of statements, categorised into six subject matter areas on which knowledge had been imparted to women in the family education camps conducted by the Development Department.

The details of the socio-personal characteristics collected from 160 respondents selected for the study through the questionnaire by personal interview are discussed below.

#### Religion and Caste of the respondents

The details of the scheduled caste respondents pertaining to their religion and caste were collected. As far as the religion was concerned, all of the respondents belonged to Hindu religion, since they formed the major part of the Scheduled Caste population. Details regarding their caste are given in Table 7.



Table 7

CASTEWISE CATEGORISATION OF THE SCHEDULED CASTE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED FOR INDEPENDENT STUDY

Caste	Trivandrum Rural		Athiyannoor	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Hindu Pulayas	81	81	59	98.33
Kuravan	3	3	1	1.67
Parayan	9	9	-	-
Paravan	2	2	-	-
Velan	5	5	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It was found that 81 per cent of the women from Trivandrum Rural Block and 98 per cent of women from Athiyannoor Block belonged to Hindu Pulaya Community. This is mostly because the Pulayas form one of the major communities of scheduled castes in Kerala as reported by Babu, Vijayanath (1982) and Saradamoni (1981). Further they are fairly well dispersed through out the State.

#### Occupation

When the occupational pattern of the respondents were studied, it was found that 46 per cent of the women from both the Blocks were employed as agricultural labourers and only 4 per cent were Government employees. Saradamoni (1981) and Babu-Vijayanath (1984) have also reported that in Kerala

scheduled caste form the major part of the Agricultural labourers. In fact this is true of the all India situation.

It was also found that 39 per cent of the respondents from Trivandrum Rural Block and about 48 per cent from Athiyannoor Block were unemployed in the sense that they were housewives. This indicates that the women of scheduled caste families do suffer from the problem of unemployment and that the extent of unemployment is more in Trivandrum Rural Block (Semi-urban area) rather than in Athiyannoor Block, though the Vicinity of the former Block to the urban centre of Trivandrum City has not helped the women of these categories to get more employment even though the chances for employment are more in urban areas. This highlights the double disabilities of scheduled caste women; viz. their under privileged status as women and as *members* belonging to scheduled caste communities.

Another important paradox is also seen in the fact that 11 per cent of the respondents from Trivandrum Rural Block were engaged in their own traditional or skilled occupations such as laundering, tailoring, basket making etc. where as only 1.7 per cent from Athiyannoor Block were engaged in such traditional activities. The details of employment followed by the selected women are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

## EMPLOYMENT CATEGORISATION OF THE SELECTED RESPONDENTS

Sl. No.	Employment	Trivandrum Rural Block		Athiyannoor Block	
		No	Percentage	No	Percentage
1.	Agricultural labour	46	46	28	46.7
2.	Traditional occupations	11	11	1	1.7
3.	Government job	4	4	2	3.3
4.	Unemployment	39	39	29	48.3
Total		100	100	60	100.00

Similar results have been reported by the Commission on the Scheduled castes/ Scheduled tribes of 1982 which states that " A large percentage of the scheduled castes/ scheduled tribes are either agricultural labourers or unskilled workers except in the case of certain castes which follow traditional occupations like cloth washing, basket making, earthen ware making etc".

Lack of regular employment also would have helped these women to participate in the camps.

#### Educational status of the selected respondents

The data pertaining to the educational status of the respondents who participated in the camps are depicted in Table 9.

Table 9  
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF THE SELECTED RESPONDENTS

Educational status	Trivandrum Rural Block		Athiyannoor Block	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
Illiterate	26	26	8	13.33
Lower primary	15	15	14	23.33
Upper Primary	18	18	8	13.30
High School	35	35	22	36.71
College	6	6	8	13.33
Total	100	100	60	100.00

Table 9 gives us an idea of the literary level of the selected respondents from the 2 Blocks.

It was surprising to note that 35 per cent of the respondents had education upto High school level from Trivandrum Rural Block as well as from Athiyannoor Block. The nearness of Trivandrum Rural Block to the City and availability of educational facilities (access and number) in the urban area like Trivandrum Rural Block has not brought any increase in the educational level of the respondents. This is further illuminated by the fact that the rate of illiteracy is reported to be 13 per cent only in the rural area of Athiyannoor Block, whereas it is nearly double (26%) in the Trivandrum Rural Block area as far as the respondents of the study are taken into account.

This may also mean that the illiterate women from the urban areas found more time to participate in these family education camps.

In Kerala the literacy level of women is 64.48 per cent. While the all India literacy level is 24.9 per cent (Census Report 1981). As indicated in Table 9 women belonging to the under privileged communities continue to lag behind in education, the basic instrument, necessary for building information processing capacity among human beings. This also results even in a lack of interest in information.

#### Age of the selected respondents

The age level of the respondents from the two Blocks are given in Table 10. The results indicate that mostly women in the age group between 21 and 35 were the participants in these camps. This may be due to the fact that the participants of the camps generally are the mothers of the children of Balwadis under C.P.W.P. and the beneficiaries of the different feeding programmes undertaken by the Development Department.

Table 10

## AGE LEVEL OF THE SELECTED RESPONDENTS

Age	Trivandrum Rural Block		Athiyannoor Block	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
20	9	9	1	1.67
21-35	68	68	48	80.00
36-50	18	18	8	13.33
50	5	5	3	5.00
Total	100	100	60	100.00

As indicated in Table 10, about 68 per cent of young women in the age group of 21-35 attended the family education camps in Trivandrum Rural Block, while the percentage was 80 in Athiyannoor Block. From this it is revealed that rural young women are more interested in attending family education camps than urban women.

## Participation in Education Programme

The respondents were asked as to the number of camps in which they have participated. It was found that 30 per cent from Trivandrum Rural Block and 50 per cent from Athiyannoor Block participated in most of the Family Education camps organised in the respective areas. The responsibilities and the family background of the respondents are factors which deter-

mines the participation of the women in camps or in other social activities. Moreover, family size is one of such factors which determines the volume of responsibilities of the participant as a mother or as a housewife. Hence data on these lines were also collected and the results are presented in Table 11.

Table 11

## FAMILY SIZE OF THE SELECTED RESPONDENTS

Family Size	Trivandrum Rural Block		Athiyannoor Block	
	No.	Percentage	No.	Percentage
1-3 Members	41	41	14	23.33
4-6 "	46	46	41	68.34
7-9 "	11	11	5	8.33
10-12 "	2	2	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100.00</b>

It was found that only 41 per cent of the families of the respondents from Trivandrum Rural Block and 23 per cent from Athiyannoor Block had small families. This also indicates that the family size is not an indicator deciding the Social participation of women.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted of six groups of statements pertaining to six subject matter areas on which education had been imparted to women through Family

Education camps. The six subject matter areas identified are:-

1. Infant nutrition
2. Personal hygiene
3. Environmental sanitation
4. Deficiency diseases
5. Home production (Kitchen gardening, goat rearing  
Poultry keeping) and
6. Child care.

Under each of these subject matter areas, 12 statements were prepared by the investigator (Appendix III). The extent of knowledge retention by women because of their participation in Family Education camps was measured using a three point scale developed by the investigator. The mean score obtained by the respondents (from Trivandrum Rural Block and Athiyannoor Block) for different subject matter areas was calculated by adding the scores, obtained by each respondent, for each subject matter and dividing the total scores by the total number of respondents. Details of mean scores obtained in different subject matter areas and their ranking order in the two selected Blocks are given in Tables 12 and 13.



Table 12  
 MEAN SCORE OBTAINED FOR DIFFERENT SUBJECT  
 MATTER AREAS

Areas of subject matter covered during the camps	Trivandrum Rural Block Mean scores obtained	Athiyannoor Block Mean scores obtained
1. Infant nutrition	10.22	10.68
2. Personal hygiene	10.41	11.03
3. Environmental sanitation	9.10	11.21
4. Deficiency diseases	10.26	10.90
5. Kitchen gardening, Goat Rearing and Poultry keeping	10.09	10.21
6. Child care	9.58	9.91
Average	9.94	10.65

Table 13  
 RELATIVE RANKING OF DIFFERENT SUBJECT MATTER  
 AREAS BASED ON MEAN SCORES

Areas of subject matter covered during the camps	Trivandrum Rural Block	Athiyannoor Block
1. Infant nutrition	III	IV
2. Personal hygiene	I	II
3. Environmental sanitation	VI	I
4. Deficiency Diseases	II	III
5. Kitchen gardening, Goat Rearing Poultry keeping	IV	V
6. Child care	V	VI

Data given in Tables 12 and 13 indicates that the mean score obtained by the respondents with respect to each of the subject matter areas differed when compared between the blocks. The highest mean score was received for the subject matter on 'Personal hygiene' in Trivandrum Rural Block and 'Environmental sanitation' in Athiyannoor Block. This indicates that the retention of knowledge in different subject matter areas was not uniform, it may vary from person to person or from area to area. The difference in the scores may also be due to the variation in the extent of information in the respective subject matter as imparted to the women in a particular area by the organisers, as well as the technique employed and the variation in the socio-personal characteristics of the respondents.

Women of sub urban areas and rural areas of study were equally aware of the importance of infant nutrition. But Koshy and Bhagat (1980) in their study have reported that there is need for greater awareness among rural mothers about child feeding and nutrition education. As indicated in Table 13 the women from suburban areas were more conscious about personal hygiene than rural women. However, environmental sanitation, Home production (Kitchen gardening, goat rearing and poultry keeping) and child care were the areas in which the respondents from Athiyannoor Block had retained mere information. The respondents of the two Blocks were equally ignorant about the

significance of deficiency diseases. When the overall knowledge was examined, the respondents from NES Block Athiyannoor had better knowledge than the respondents from NES Block Trivandrum Rural.

The retention of knowledge in different subject matter areas by the respondents in the two Blocks were statistically tested and the results are presented in Table 14.

Among the various subject matter areas discussed in these family education camps, different aspects taught under Infant nutrition and deficiency diseases were not well retained by the respondents, probably because of the constant use of the scientific terms in the subject matter content and inability to realise the ill-effects of poor infant feeding practices and of deficiency diseases on the growth and development children. The rate of retention of knowledge was higher in the areas like personal hygiene, environmental sanitation and home production which has more practical application to their day to day life.

Effect of age of the respondents on the extent of knowledge retained

As detailed in Table 10 earlier, the respondents were classified into four groups according to their age level,

Table 14

RETENTION OF KNOWLEDGE IN DIFFERENT SUBJECT MATTER AREAS BY THE RESPONDENTS  
IN TWO BLOCKS

Sl. No.	Subject matter covered	Mean score		Analysis of variance		't' value
		Athiyannoor Block $M_1 = 60$	Trivandrum Rural Block $M_2 = 100$	Athiyannoor Block	Trivandrum Rural Block	
1.	Infant nutrition	9.87	9.77	1.015	0.6771	0.6564 **
2.	Personal hygiene	7.70	8.14	1.01	0.4804	3.249 **
3.	Environmental sanitation	7.28	6.41	1.2697	0.4819	6.028
4.	Deficiency diseases	11.55	11.76	0.8808	0.1824	1.917 **
5.	Home production (Kitchen gardening, goat rearing, Poultry keeping)	6.73	6.22	0.9622	0.4916	3.822 **
6.	Child care	7.35	6.81	1.2608	0.5144	3.687 **
	Overall knowledge	63.22	65.65	24.93	20.71	3.156 **

\*\* Significant at 1% level

and the scores obtained by the respondents (age-wise) from Athiyannoor and Trivandrum Rural are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Effect of age on the extent of retention of knowledge gained.

Sl. No.	Age groups	Average scores	
		Athiyannoor Block	Trivandrum Rural
1	Below 20	67.22	53.80
2	21 - 35	67.55	66.35
3	36 - 50	59.94	57.62
4	Above 50	53.60	51.66
"H" Statistics		29.19**	63.44@@

@@ Highly significant.

When statistically tested, the results indicate that the response scores were significantly different among the four groups of women, classified according to their age. This indicates that age of the participants is a factor that predetermines the extent of knowledge retained. It is also observed that the women between the age of 21 to 35 who formed the major part of the participants secured the maximum scores from both the Blocks.

Effect of Educational Status of the respondents on the extent of retention of knowledge

As discussed earlier in Table 9, the respondents in the two Blocks were classified into five groups on the basis of their educational status and the scores obtained by the respondents from the two Blocks are presented in Table 16.

Table 16

Effect of Educational status on the extent of retention of knowledge

Sl. No.	Level of Education	Average scores obtained by the participants of	
		Athiyannoor Block	Trivandrum Rural
1.	Illiterates	62.75	65.38
2.	Lower primary	63.80	62.30
3.	Upper primary	62.13	66.06
4.	High school	62.77	67.06
5.	College	65.38	67.50
'H' Statistics		4.299	11.696

The results indicate that educational level is not a factor that predetermines the extent of knowledge retained by the selected women, as evidenced by the scores obtained by women belonging to the two Blocks. It is also indicated that there is no significant difference between the two

groups of respondents belonging to NES Blocks Athiyannoor and Trivandrum Rural.

Effect of Occupation of the respondents on the extent of Knowledge retained by the respondents.

As detailed in table 8 earlier the respondents were classified into four groups according to their occupation. The scores obtained by the respondents from the Trivandrum Rural and Athiyannoor Blocks are tabulated respectively in Table 17.

Table 17

Effect of occupation on the extent of knowledge retained

Sl. No.	Type of occupation	Athiyannoor Block		Trivandrum Rural	
		Average score	H value	Mean score	H value
1.	Agricultural labourer	64.54	0.34208	63.70	9.3515
2.	Traditional occupation	69.09		70.00	
3.	Government job	66.50		44.00	
4.	Unemployment	66.18		62.21	

H Statistics - not significant

When statistically tested the results indicate that response scores were not significantly different among the four groups of women classified according to their occupation. This indicates that occupation also is not a factor that



predetermines the extent of knowledge retained by the selected women from the two blocks.

The above results throw light into the fact that neither the educational status nor occupation of women had any significant role in determining the knowledge retained.

Effect of repeated participation in camps by the respondents on the extent of knowledge retained by the participants

The respondents were classified into four groups according to the frequency of attendance in camps and the results are presented in Table 18.

Table 18  
Frequency of attendance in camps

Frequency of attendance	Athiyannor Block		Trivandrum Rural	
	Number	Per cent	Number	Per cent
1-3	10	16.60	36	36
4-6	30	50.00	30	30
7-9	7	11.70	19	19
10-12	13	21.70	15	15
Total	60	100.00	100	100

The impact of repeated participation in Family education camps, on the extent of knowledge retained by the respondents was statistically tested and the results are presented in Table 19.

Table 19

Impact of repeated participation in family education camps on the extent of knowledge retained

Sl. No.	No. of camps	Average scores obtained by the participants from	
		Athiyannoor Block	Trivandrum Rural
1	1-3	59.00	58.97
2	4-6	61.87	68.66
3	7-9	64.86	91.21
4	10-12	68.69	71.13
'H' Statistics		30.433	72.64

Results presented in the above table indicates that the repeated participation in family education camps have definite influence in the retention of knowledge by the participants.

This indicates that the camps have been very effective in imparting the knowledge with reference to the different subject matter areas. The results of Table 19

are thus in conformity with the hypothesis that more the number of camps a person attends, the higher will be the gain in knowledge.

The results also indicate that the methods used in imparting the knowledge have also been very effective and simple and might have contributed to the significant gain in knowledge in spite of the variations in the age, educational level and occupational status of the women. Das (1982) in his study has emphasised the need for choosing appropriate media and content of the course materials in the light of their study on the assumptions behind the Indian Adult Education Programmes and questions to examine the special programme of literacy among rural women. From the above it can be concluded that the Family Education Camps have been effective tools in the uplift of these selected women belonging to the scheduled caste population as far as their knowledge pertaining to the areas of personal hygiene, infant nutrition, environmental sanitation, child care, deficiency diseases, Home production (Kitchen gardening, goat rearing poultry keeping etc.) are concerned.

Similar results are reported earlier by the State Planning Board (1978).

The results indicated that the participants of the programme had genuine interest in the camps and this is reflected by the fact that large number of women attended these camps in masses, always exceeding the targets fixed. It is further realised that age, education or occupation of these participants had not functioned as motivating factors in enabling the women to attend these camps. Probably the popularity and rapport, established locally by the extension personnel, the wide publicity given for these education camps or the interest shown by the women to meet and interact with fellow beings or experts in the field and exploitation of an opportunity to break away from the monotonous daily house routines, might have acted as deciding factors for the greater participation of women in these camps. The community meal arranged with local contribution along with these education camps also might have functioned as an incentive for participation. However, the data available regarding the number of scheduled caste women in the education camps is not very encouraging, eventhough the seven blocks selected for the study had 27% of scheduled caste communities. It is suggested that more and more developmental programmes with educational component are to be introduced exclusively for the benefit of these underprivileged women.

The selection of participants for such education camps must also reflect a multi level approach, having a better mix of representatives of privileged as well as underprivileged communities. Special care must be taken to select, typical disadvantaged women belonging to scheduled caste communities, and those who fall below the poverty line.

The result of the indepth study undertaken on a randomly selected population of scheduled caste women who have participated in camps from the two NES Blocks, reveal that the family responsibilities and background of the women were the two major deciding factors in determining the participation of women in these camps. It is seen that women who were employed outside their homes were not actively involved in these camps. For example only one per cent of the participants had regular employment. This shows that their extent of participation was negligible. On the other hand by increasing <sup>their</sup> ~~thus~~ participation, these women can take full advantage of the newly won access to the formal labour market. Hence special attention is to be given to the problems of working women in these camps. Their participation in such educational camps are to be increased and this can be attained by conducting the camps only on days convenient to them.

The results also indicate that women in the age group between 21 to 35 are more interested in attending the family education camps and they secured maximum scores in retaining the knowledge thus gained, while the women of younger age groups seem to have been kept out of this programme as indicated by their presence in lower percentages. Since they are the future mothers and home makers and since they are already lending a hand in performing the household chores it is suggested that more women from these age group (16 to 20) must be persuaded to participate in these camps.

The detailed analysis of the educational level of the participants indicate that the women with lower educational status are not forthcoming to attend these camps, probably because of lack of confidence, coupled with an inferiority complex originated from a fear that they may not be able to follow the classes in the above camps. These women being illiterate or of lower educational status were devoid of the educational opportunities available from the formal educational system. They should make the best use of the non-formal education channels planned for their benefit since this alone can help them to uplift themselves.

The result of the study also indicate that the camps have been very effective in imparting the knowledge with reference to the different subject matter areas.

Differences in the rate of gain and retention of knowledge by the participants may be due to the variation in the extent of information imparted in the subject matter content as well as in the techniques employed.

Analysis of subject matter content and teaching techniques employed for these trainings indicate that the methodology of training is to be uniform. It is suggested that the nature <sup>and</sup> of the methodology of these trainings should include other techniques besides class-room lectures. It is also suggested that coordinators and local organisers of such trainings in turn are to be trained through periodical workshops which are to be proceeded and accompanied by the presentation, study and discussion of the training materials. More over the participatory workshops like the ones organised by the working women's Forum of Madras in Tamil Nadu, could be organised, which will serve dual purposes. First of all it will give the women a chance to air their own problems, and to seek advice and guidance in solving them. Secondly it gives an opportunity to the organisers to receive an insight into the problems of the community, as perceived by the women themselves. This goes a long way in chalking out effective future programmes for the community as an immediate goal, and for effective policy making at the nation level, as an ultimate goal.

As far as the subject matter is concerned it is observed that, it is in the field of 'infant nutrition' and 'deficiency diseases' the least information has been retained by the women. This shows that these two aspects are to be taught at length in the camps or educational/training programmes that are to be organised in future. Though Kerala has reached laudable heights in lowering the Infant Mortality Rate, it still remains that the morbidity rates are still higher. The deficiencies of vitamin A iron and iodine leading to blindness, anaemia among children and pregnant mothers, and goitre among the people living in the coastal areas of Kerala can be alleviated to a large extent through proper training, and motivation to realize the hazards of these deficiency conditions, and to act effectively at the home front in tackling these problems. This mobilization of women at the grassroot level will help Kerala to further brighten the future of its children, and would bring it to a further enviable position in the health picture of the World. In the health education camps to be planned, the world-wide accepted dictums prescribed by the UNICEF under their "Child Survival and Development issues" may be given the maximum weightage.

Through Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS) now widely implemented in the State, such education might be imparted. Presently, it gives health education only to mothers who send their children to Anganwadies. This



encampasses only a minority of the population. Therefore, it is suggested that a move on the part of the Government to stop these education camps should be given a rethinking or the ICDS programmes could spread their wings further to cover more population. In case if this effort seems to be a burden on the Government to shoulder the additional responsibility, voluntary organisations may be called upon and encouraged to take up the task. In Kerala, the Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad which has established a firm foundation in a novel way in imparting community education, could be used as a nodal agency for this purpose.

Similar voluntary organizations such as the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, Voluntary Health Association of India, Society for Prevention of Blindness and the Christian missionaries who run the Mother and Child Health programmes could be helped and further motivated to extend their help to a wider section of population, along with Governmental agencies, who are undertaking developmental programmes.

Moreover, while reviewing the subject matter areas, it is seen that ideas pertaining to Kitchen gardening and poultry keeping and goat rearing were taught in the camps. It is suggested that more stress is to be given on different aspects of agriculture, including animal husbandry. Since our economy is more of an agrarian nature and both men and women especially those belonging to low socio-economic groups

and other underprivileged communities, are engaged mainly in agriculture. Apart from the lessons on Kitchen gardening they may be taught simple facts about cultivation of paddy, tapioca, vegetables and fruits, pest control methods, application of manure and animal husbandry, which in turn will improve their skill in doing their own domestic work and would indirectly help them to enhance their family income. Ill effects of smoking and alcoholism may also be brought into the discussions since such practices indirectly drains the income and peaceful atmosphere of the family.

It is also suggested that not only women, but also men of the locality should be invited to participate in the camps. Without the consent and appreciation by the men folk of the family, it will be difficult for the women to usher in major changes in the family meal pattern or in any other sphere of family life. In this era, when the women have started to go out of their houses in great number, men have been forced to share some of the household responsibilities. In such circumstances it is only apt to give family education to men along with women, to improve the understanding between the man and his wife, which is the nucleus of peaceful family life. Only then these camps can be called as "family education camps" in a befitting manner.

It can be concluded that though these camps have doubtlessly been proved as effective media for creating an awareness among women including those belong to Scheduled caste communities, further research is essential to study how far this knowledge/awareness has been put into practical use in the real life of the participants. Without such a study it will be a wasteful exercise to conduct more camps. Such an evaluation study will help to assess the effectiveness of present schemes and will help to plan future programmes.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study entitled " Family education programmes implemented by the State Development Department for the uplift of scheduled caste habitats of Trivandrum district" was conducted to find out the knowledge retained by the scheduled caste women by attending the family education camps conducted by the State Development Department. The study was conducted at two levels, one at the block level and another at the participant level. Separate formats and schedules were prepared for this purpose and the data were collected at the block level by verification of records and at the participant level by interview method.

Preliminary data were collected from seven selected blocks in Trivandrum District who are having habitats of scheduled caste and where all the developmental programmes having a nutrition education component are implemented. Baseline survey conducted in these blocks indicated that in all the selected blocks, the number of women who participated in the camps exceeded the target fixed and 28 per cent of the participants of family education camps belonged to scheduled caste families. Majority of the scheduled caste participants were between the age of 21 to 35 years. Only very few women above the age of 50 were found to be interested in participating in such social activities.

Most of the participants had no specific job and they were mainly homemakers. It seems that the unemployed women

have taken the opportunity of participating in these camps to develop their social contacts and also to acquire new knowledge. As far as the educational level of the participants are concerned, most of the participants were illiterate.

As a next stage, an evaluation study was conducted on selected scheduled caste participants, to find out the knowledge retained by them after participating in the family education camps in the two blocks namely Trivandrum Rural and Athiyannoor blocks. The result of this study shows that different aspects of the various subject matter areas viz. infant nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation, deficiency diseases, home production ( kitchen gardening, goat rearing and poultry keeping) and child care<sup>use</sup> discussed in family education camps.

It is observed that the women between the age of 21 to 35 who formed the major part of the participants, gained and retained more knowledge than their older or younger counterparts. Though illiteracy is more among the scheduled caste women of Trivandrum Rural blocks, the result indicates that educational level is not a factor that predetermines the extent of knowledge retained by the selected women. Most of the participants had no specific job, as all of them were home makers. The result shows that there is no significant difference among the scores obtained by the women having different occupations.

The result shows that neither the educational level nor the occupation of women had any significant role in determining the knowledge retained but it was observed that increased frequency of participation in the family education camps helped the women to retain the knowledge gained to a greater extent. The results of the study indicates that the family education camps have been very effective in imparting the knowledge with reference to the various subject matter areas.

It can be concluded that the family education camps have been effective tools in the uplift of scheduled caste women of the selected areas, viewed from the angle of gain in knowledge in various aspects of better home making. It also shows that the women belonging to the scheduled caste should be motivated for the participation in the camps and more such camps are to be organised in future to enlighten these women further. These camps not only help them to gain knowledge but also to bring them out in to the main stream of social life.

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## **APPENDICES**

## APPENDIX I.

KERALA AGRICULTURAL UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF HOME SCIENCE  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE

Questionnaire to elicit the information on impact of the education component of developmental programmes implemented in the State on the women of scheduled caste communities

1. Serial Number
2. Date
3. Name of the respondent
4. Place (Name of Panchayat/Block)
5. Religion
6. Caste/ Sub Caste
7. Address
8. Monthly income
9. Occupation
10. Educational qualification.

## 11. Family pattern.

Sl. No.	Name	Relation to its Head of the family	Male or Female	Age	Educational qualification					Occupation	Income			
					Illiterates	L.P	U.P	H.S	College		Daily	Weekly	Monthly	

12. Have you participated in any family education camps conducted in your blocks.

Yes/ No

13. If Yes - Please furnish the following details.

Sl. No.	Nature of Camp.	Number of camps.	Year on which camp was conducted
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In family education camps, generally topics on maternal/infant nutrition, personal hygiene, environmental sanitation and nutritional deficiency diseases are dealt with. Please recall what you have learnt from these camps and try to answer the following statements.

I. Infant Nutrition

1. Breast milk is the best food for infants.
2. Breast milk must be given to infants as early as possible.
3. The yellowish liquid oozing out from the mother's breast at delivery should not be given to the infant.
4. Because the growth of the infants below 1 year are so fast that protein is needed during that age.
5. Breast milk alone is enough for infants upto two years to take care of their growth and development.
6. It is better to feed the infants with liquid foods initially.
7. Semisolids must be given to the infants by the 6th month.
8. By the time the child is one year old, all the foods that are included in the diets of adults can be given to them.

Right

Wrong

Do not know

Right

Wrong

Do not  
know

- 9) Juices of leafy vegetables, vegetables and <sup>fruits</sup> can be given to infants from the 3rd month onwards.
- 10) Carbohydrates, proteins, calories and calcium required for the infants can be got from the gruel prepared using cereals, pulses, jaggery and milk.
- 11) Different kinds of gruels and half boiled eggs can be used as semi-solid foods.
- 12) The yellowish liquid called 'Colostrum' is easily digestible and has anti-infective properties.

## II. PERSONAL HYGIENE

1. It is necessary to brush teeth daily in the morning.
2. It is necessary to brush the teeth after every meal.
3. Taking bath daily is not good for health.
4. It is not necessary to wash the hands and legs after visiting the toilet.
5. It is always better to have long nails.
6. It is essential to close the mouth with a handkerchief while sneezing or coughing.
7. It is necessary to clean the teeth mouth and hands before and after taking foods.
8. Use a foot-wear while going out of the house.
9. It is not necessary to change the underwears daily.
10. It is better to have separate comb, both towel and soap for each member of the family.

- |   | Right | Wrong | Do not know |
|---|-------|-------|-------------|
| 11. Lice that grow in the hair may cause diseases.  |       |       |             |
| 12. It is not good to spit in the open place.   |       |       |             |
| <b>III. <u>ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION</u></b>   |       |       |             |
| 1. In the development of the country and to protect the health of the countrymen environmental sanitation plays an important role.        |       |       |             |
| 2. Waste products from the Kitchen must be deposited in a compost pit.  |       |       |             |
| 3. From the waste products deposited in the compost pit, ideal manure required for our farms can be obtained.                             |       |       |             |
| 4. It is not necessary to use septic tanks for the disposal of human excreta.   |       |       |             |
| 5. It is better to allow the waste water from the house to stagnate outside the kitchen.  |       |       |             |
| 6. Houseflies help to spread diseases.  |       |       |             |
| 7. It is not necessary to keep the well closed with a net, without allowing the dirty substances such as dry leaves from falling into it. |       |       |             |
| 8. The house must be well ventilated.   |       |       |             |
| 9. By using smokeless choola the kitchen will be free from smoke and dust.  |       |       |             |
| 10. It is better to house domestic animals in the yard adjacent to the house.   |       |       |             |
| 11. It is necessary to keep the foods covered.  |       |       |             |
| 12. It is not essential to use, mosquito nets while sleeping.   |       |       |             |

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**III. ENVIRONMENTAL SANITATION**

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11. It is necessary to keep the foods covered.
12. It is not essential to use, mosquito nets while sleeping.

IV. DEFICIENCY DISEASES

1. Lack of adequate food paves way to deficiency diseases.
2. In India, growth retardation is one of the common symptoms found in the children below 5 years.
3. Vitamin A found in certain foods is essential for bright eyes and for clear vision.
4. If Vitamin A is deficient in the body night blindness and white patches in the eyes may develop.
5. Fish liver oil, papaya and leafy vegetable are rich sources of Vitamin A.
6. Anemia is the result of iron deficiency.
7. Growth retardation oedema all over the body and easy pluckability of hair are some of the symptoms seen in children below five years, who suffer from the deficiency of protein and calories.
8. The scalyness of skin may be seen in children and adults due to the deficiencies of fat.
9. Cracking of the lips, skin, leisions around nose and mouth will appear, if egg, milk and leafy vegetables are included in adequate amounts in the daily diet.
10. The swelling and bleeding gums may be prevented by consuming gooseberry and guava daily.
11. When pulses sprout, vitamin C is formed in them.
12. Consumption of leafy vegetables will help to cure iron deficiency anemia.

Right

Wrong

Do not  
know

V. KITCHEN GARDENING, GOAT REARING & POULTRY KEEPING

	Right	Wrong	Do
1. Vegetables like Amaranthus, Brinjal, Chilly, Bhindi, cow-pea etc. can be cultivated in all seasons.			
2. Trees like drumstick, papaya, curry leaf and agathi cannot be cultivated as fencing material.			
3. Climbers like littlegourd, bitter-gourd, Ashgourd etc. cannot be grown over the fence.			
4. Poultry keeping is unprofitable.			
5. Milk obtained from a goat of high yielding variety is enough for a family with four members.			
6. It is very difficult to protect goats from diseases.			
7. Cattle rearing is profitable.			
8. The requirements of a family for vegetables cannot be satisfied from a vegetable garden having an area of five cents.			
9. The garden, where leafy vegetables, other vegetables and fruits are cultivated is called a "Nutrition garden".			
10. Cross bred cows give more milk;			
11. The first milk produced by a cow after the delivery should not be used and hence it should be thrown up.			
12. It is not necessary to wash the cows and to clear the cattle shed every day.			

IV. CHILD CARE

1. Mother's care is essential for the all round development of the child.



- |  | Right | Wrong | Do not know |
|--|-------|-------|-------------|
| 2. Breast milk has immunological properties.   |       |       |             |
| 3. Immunisation against T.B. can be soon after birth.  |       |       |             |
| 4. The polio vaccine must be given to the child from the 3rd month onwards at specific intervals.                        |       |       |             |
| 5. It is enough to immunise the child against whooping cough, tetanus and Diptheria only once in a life time.            |       |       |             |
| 6. There is no preventive measure against measles.   |       |       |             |
| 7. Care must be taken not to frighten children by giving them unnecessary details.                                       |       |       |             |
| 8. If the child suffers from stammering, it can be stopped by making fun of the child or limitating the child's actions. |       |       |             |
| 9. If a second child is born, pay more attention to the first child.   |       |       |             |
| 10. Teach the child hygienic habits from early childhood.  |       |       |             |
| 11. Toys may cause accidents.  |       |       |             |
| 12. It is necessary to beat the child if he refuses to learn anything new.   |       |       |             |

APPENDIX II

DETAILS REGARDING THE NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO BELONGED TO SCHEDULED CASTE FAMILIES ( YEAR-WISE AND BLOCK-WISE)

Sl. No.	Name of Block	1976-77			1977-78			1978-79		
		No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.	No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.	No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.
1.	Athiyannoor	..	..	..	511	188	36.79	-	-	-
2.	Nemom	..	..	..	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Kazhakuttam	..	..	..	-	-	-	472	119	25.2
4.	Trivandrum Rural	..	..	..	916	334	36.46	597	150	25.13
5.	Parasala	150	24	16	50	10	20	316	80	25.32
6.	Varkala	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7.	Chirayinkil	-	-	-	273	53	19.4	279	109	39
Total		150	24	16	1750	585	112.65	1664	458	114.65

(contd...)

## APPENDIX II (CONTD.)

Sl. No.	Name of Block.	1979-80			1980-81			1981-82		
		No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.	No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.	No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.
1.	Athiyannoor	666	150	22.5	914	236	25.8	311	66	21.5
2.	Nemom	-	-	-	875	215	24.57	510	126	24.7
3.	Kazhakuttom	417	174	41.73	330	96	29.09	150	91	60.67
4.	Trivandrum Rural	552	183	33.15	652	235	36.04	100	36	36
5.	Parasala	260	38	14.62	787	253	32.15	-	-	-
6.	Varakala	112	17	15.17	275	44	16	388	61	15.7
7.	Chirayinkil.	420	129	30.7	201	31	15.4	313	40	12.78
Total		2427	691	157.87	4034	1110	179.05	1772	420	171.35

APPENDIX II ( CONTD. )

Sl. No.	Name of Block	1982-83			1983-84		
		No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.	No. of participants	No. of S.C.	Percentage of S.C.
1.	Athiyannoor	157	42	26.75	-	-	-
2.	Nemom	156	41	26.28	41	7	17.07
3.	Kazhakuttam	106	57	53.77	-	-	-
4.	Trivandrum Rural	277	85	30.6	264	97	36.74
5.	Parasala	-	-	-	-	-	-
6.	Varakala	272	107	28.7	-	-	-
7.	Chirayinkil	276	59	21.38	-	-	-
Total		1344	391	187.48	305	104	53.81

Appendix III

DETAILS REGARDING THE NUMBER OF FAMILY EDUCATION CAMPS CONDUCTED IN THE  
SELECTED SEVEN BLOCKS OF TRIVANDRUM DISTRICT

Sl. No.	Name of Blocks	No. of camps conducted during the years							Total No. of Camps	
		1976-77	1977-78	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83		1983-84
1.	Athiyannoor	-	10	-	13	17	6	3	-	49
2.	Nemom	-	-	-	-	17	10	3	1	31
3.	Kazhakuttom	-	-	9	8	6	3	2	-	28
4.	Trivandrum Rural	-	20	12	11	13	2	6	7	71
5.	Parasala	3	1	6	5	15	-	-	-	30
6.	Varkala	-	-	-	2	5	7	-	8	22
7.	Chirayinkil	-	6	5	8	4	6	5	-	34
Total number of camps conducted during each year.		3	36	32	47	77	34	19	16	265

Appendix IV

DETAILS REGARDING THE AGE OF THE PARTICIPANTS BELONG TO SCHEDULED CASTE COMMUNITIES

Sl. No.	Name of the Block	Total No. of S.C. participants	Age of the participants belonging to Schedule Caste							
			20 and   20		21-35		35-50		50	
			Nos	Percent- age	Nos.	Percent- age	Nos.	Percent- age	Nos.	Percent- age
1.	Athiyannoor	682	110	16.10	442	64.80	104	15.40	26	3.80
2.	Nemom	389	45	11.60	274	72.20	51	13.10	12	3.10
3.	Kazhakuttom	537	98	18.25	322	61.83	97	18.06	10	1.86
4.	Trivandrum Rural	1120	215	19.20	652	58.20	191	17.10	62	5.50
5.	Parasala	405	59	14.50	209	61.50	91	22.50	6	1.50
6.	Varakala	232	59	25.43	121	52.16	37	15.95	15	6.46
7.	Chirayainkil	421	114	27.10	243	57.70	52	12.40	12	2.80
Total		3786	700	132.08	2263	428.39	623	114.51	143	25.02
Average		540.85	100	18.87	323.28	61.19	89.0	16.35	20.43	3.57