CHAPTER IV
THE STUDY DESIGN AND TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

THE BACKGROUND:

Before embarking upon the present study, the researcher was closely associated with a Security Agency in Bihar which has been recruiting and placing the ex-servicemen of the region on a large scale. It is this association which provided the tentative hypothesis and rough framework for the present work besides injecting usual passion and commitment in the subject matter which is considered necessary for the selection of an appropriate research problem.

What was available in the form of secondary sources until August 1983 was *A Guide to Resettlement of Ex-Servicemen* of 1976 edition. A 1984 version of the same was procured subsequently by the end of that year, which gave a rough idea about the specific schemes of the government currently being followed for the resettlement of ex-servicemen. A monthly magazine called *The Indian Ex-Servicemen*, is another source which is published by the All-India Ex-Services League (AIXL) since 1964. The magazine mainly focusses on the League's perceptions of the ex-servicemen's problems.

*The High Level Committee Report on Problems of Ex-Servicemen*

It was only in April 1984 that the government constituted a High Level Committee (HLC) to look into the problems...
of ex-servicemen and suggest ways and means for their betterment. In September, 1984, this important report was submitted to the government and was made available to the general public a few months later in printed form.

The HLC report was a valuable outline of the problems of relating to ex-servicemen and had suggested a number of methods to mitigate their problems. It also had certain important statistical details.

The report, though a commendable exercise on the part of the government in appreciation of the ex-servicemen problems and suggest ways and means for their improvement, has following limitations:

1) Methodology adopted for getting at the root of the problem is not based on scientific principles. The Committee's "appropriate questionnaire to all States and Union Territories, Ex-Servicemen Leagues and Associations as also to individual ex-servicemen" are not reproduced any where in the report nor is there any information about the number of duly filled in questionnaire received by the (HLC, 1984, p.5). Committee. The report has simply reiterated the existing notions about the problems of ex-servicemen by adding up some of the points here and there on the suggestions of vested interests, such as the AIXL and other vocal elements among the ex-servicemen.
ii) The problems of the silent majority, i.e. those of the retired Other Ranks and Junior Commissioned Officers have been greatly neglected.

iii) No attempt whatsoever is made to analyse the nature of the problem. There are of course a few enumerations and illustrations but they are totally devoid of any analysis in depth. The problems have been put down hurriedly and haphazardly without any sensible classification. Further, there is practically no attempt to go into the reasons of a particular problem, the understanding of which may throw new light on the solution of many long-standing and pressing problems of the ex-servicemen.

iv) The HLC report views problems through the specific programmes of the DGR and other institutions officially entrusted to "resettle" the ex-servicemen. Accordingly, the contents of the report have also been chapterized. It would have been more appropriate to first examine the problems and then suggest specific solutions for it. Such an exercise would have also pointed out possible changes in the existing institutional arrangements entrusted with the responsibility to resettle ex-servicemen.

v) The recommendations have an elitist bias and caters only to the requirement of higher ranks among the army.

vi) Due to the inadequate sensitization to the problems of ex-servicemen the Committee has recommended a number
of measures which do not really cater to the needs of ex-servicemen and therefore are futile.

vii) The idea of finding an entrepreneur out of an ex-serviceman is erroneous. Their age, social background and prolonged professional socialization sharply go against the basic principles of entrepreneurship.

Despite the above mentioned limitations, the researcher found the Report of the Committee a great help to formulate his study design and hypotheses in the light of valuable statistical details and statements of facts contained in it.

Other source materials consulted

Apart from various issues of the Indian Ex-Servicemen, A Guide to Resettlement of Ex-Servicemen (1984) and Report of the High Level Committee on Problems of Ex-Servicemen (1984), the researcher was benefited by the following booklets/magazines:

2. Ex-Servicemen as entrepreneur, 1982, DGR, G.O.I.


7. SEMPEX SCHEME (Self-Employment for Ex-Servicemen), 1987, DGR, G.O.I.

8. Equation of Service Trades with Civil Trades, (Undated), DGR, G.O.I.

Magazines

1. Indian Ex-Servicemen (Monthly Publication of the Indian Ex-Services League), New Delhi, vols.I-XXV.

2. Sainik Prasarvas, DGR, G.O.I., New Delhi, vols.I-II.

The time frame

The study is limited to the period between 1981-85. This means that only those ex-servicemen who retired between 1981 and 1985, were interviewed in the study. Resettlement, as we have defined earlier is a typical synchronic problem therefore problem of high sociological importance. No doubt, all retired and living personnel of Indian Defence Forces are ex-servicemen and all may have problems of some kind or other. But the problem of "resettlement" is limited only to the currently retired ex-servicemen. It is only the currently retired ex-servicemen who face the shock and trauma of resettlement which tend to diminish with time.
Five years were considered a sufficient time slot for an individual ex-serviceman to find his socio-psychological and economic resettlement in civilian life.

Another reason for limiting the period was the employability of the ex-servicemen. A great number of organisations prefer to recruit the ex-servicemen within two years of their retirement.

In addition, with the passage of time, the ex-servicemen retired long before find their way out in the civilian life, their children grow up and get settled. The central focus of the study being on the resettlement of ex-servicemen in terms of their problems relating to the search of second career and issues associated with it. The time frame thus chosen was thought to be appropriate.

The Universe

Bihar and Haryana form the spatial universe of the present study. One of the major hypotheses is that the resettlement of ex-servicemen is better and quicker in developed regions than the underdeveloped ones. Keeping this in view Bihar, an underdeveloped region and Haryana as typical developed region were chosen. The connotations of development and underdevelopment vary contextually. Haryana peasantry has a continuous history of participation in the Indian Army since the early period of British rule.
Although the peasantry of Bihar also participated in the British Army, though for different reasons, their recruitment was deliberately discouraged after the Revolt of 1857. It is only after independence that the recruitment to military from Bihar got adequately restored. Therefore, continuous military tradition of a region along with a history of around 200 years is examined with a region with discontinuous but chequered military tradition. This was considered as a fact of high sociological importance which facilitates or hinders resettlement.

Another marked difference between the two regions is in terms of state action for the resettlement of ex-servicemen by way of reservation in State Government Departments, Undertaking, etc. It will be seen that whereas Haryana tops in terms of providing reservation of seats to the ex-servicemen in government services and other concessions, Bihar has no reservation whatsoever for their ex-servicemen. Concessions and benefits provided by Bihar Government are also superficial. The choice of the two states, therefore, has also facilitated the understanding on the impact of state patronage to ex-servicemen on their resettlement.

In a democratic set-up, numerical predominance of a group at least partly determines its place and approachability in the government. Haryana has a very high percentage of ex-servicemen. It is said that one out of every five is a "fauzi" in Haryana. Their numerical predominance has reflected itself
in the kind of concessions and benefits they received from the Haryana government. Seldom is there any Ministry in which one or two ex-servicemen are not included to satisfy this constituency. On the contrary, in Bihar they form a negligible minority in terms of the total population of the state and hence unable to exert as a pressure group on the Government. The importance of the size and proportion of ex-servicemen population in a given state can be understood and analysed through a comparison of Bihar and Haryana.

Bihar and Haryana, the two states selected for the present study, had the total population of 2.22 lakh and 2.18 lakh of ex-servicemen respectively which contributed to 1.6% and 8.5% of their state's population respectively in the year 1981. The HLC has considered the necessity of reliable data regarding the population of ex-servicemen in the country. It has been recommended that the ex-servicemen be considered as a separate category in 1991 census for the purpose of their enumeration.

Two districts each were selected from Bihar and Haryana for the present study. Districts Patna and Ranchi have been selected from Bihar and Gurgaon and Sonepat from Haryana. The rationale for the choice of the districts was the assumption that the ex-servicemen living in the vicinity of bigger cities have better employment opportunities than those living near smaller cities. Gurgaon and Sonepat are situated near
Delhi, a very big city. Patna and Ranchi are relatively smaller cities.

The selection of districts could have been done on the basis of the size of ex-servicemen population also but in absence of any reliable data regarding their population, especially of the period which we have selected for the purpose of the present study, made such exercise meaningless. Once it was decided that the study must explore the impact of metropolitan city of Delhi on the employment opportunity of ex-servicemen, selection of very small towns from Bihar would have been no match to Delhi for the purpose of comparison. Therefore, Patna and Ranchi were selected as districts to be studied in Bihar.

While defining the ex-serviceman for the purpose of present study we have sufficiently deliberated upon the reasons for excluding the commissioned officers of the Indian Army as well as both men and officers coming of the Indian Air Force and Indian Navy. To recapitulate it may be recalled here that our universe comprises of the ex-servicemen of the Indian Army from sepoy to Subedar Major rank retired between 1981 and 1985 and stationed at districts of Patna and Ranchi in Bihar and Gurgaon and Sonepat in Haryana. The field work was conducted between October 1985 and May 1986, i.e. in eight months time.
The Sample

Apart from the all-India statistics of ex-servicemen referred to earlier, no district level systematic data respective could be procured from the Zila Sainik Boards (henceforth referred to as ZSB) or Kendriya Sanik Board (henceforth referred to as KSB). The data reflecting the registration of ex-servicemen with ZSB Patna and Ranchi could, however, be procured from the RSB, Patna for the period 1984-1987. An amalgamated statement of the same is placed at Appendix 'C'. The difficulty with this data is that they represent the ex-servicemen of two or more districts on the basis of jurisdiction of respective ZSBs. Therefore, the figures of district Patna also includes ex-servicemen of newly created Nalanda district and figures of Ranchi include Palamau, Lohardagga and Gumla districts. Thus conceived, therefore, the ex-servicemen who got registered with ZSB Patna in the year 1984, 1985, 1986 and 1987 are 162, 181, 248 and 361 respectively. The corresponding figure of Ranchi are 316, 255, 553 and 489. Considering the fluctuations in the annual return of the ex-servicemen in the districts and non-availability of precise and complete data, statistical interpretation and analysis of the secondary data was ruled out in the very beginning. The task now was how to generate information and create data.

In the absence of complete and reliable district-wise data sampling had to be done rather intuitively, depending
upon the time and resources available. However, before proceeding to the field, it was resolved to interview 50 ex-servicemen from each district and as far as it was practicable, cover 10 ex-servicemen retired each year during the period 1981-85. A control card was maintained by the researcher so that the ex-servicemen retired during the period are interviewed proportionately. Districtwise distribution of ex-servicemen interviewed and by year is given below:

Table 4.1: Statewise Distribution of Ex-Servicemen by Year of Retirement and by District (percentage frequency)

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<td>44.4</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
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<td>55.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gurgaon</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
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<td>47.4</td>
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<td>(9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sonepat</td>
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<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>52.6</td>
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It can be seen, therefore, that a fairly even distribution of ex-servicemen for the each year was maintained in each district of the two states.

Akin to the year-wise control-card, rankwise control card was also maintained for each district in order to keep balance of the ex-servicemen in terms of rank. Army has pyramidal structure, therefore, the possibility of finding lower ranks on random visits to Pension/Treasury Officers are greater than those of the higher ranks. Thus, the main function of the rankwise control card was to see that the sepoys, lance naik/naik do not consume the whole quota of questionnaire set for a district. Statewise distribution of ex-servicemen interviewed in districts by rank is given below:

Table 4.2: Statewise Distribution of the Ex-Servicemen by District and by Rank (Percentage of frequency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank at which retired</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Sepoys</th>
<th>LNK/NK</th>
<th>Hav.</th>
<th>NB</th>
<th>SUBDR</th>
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<th>SUBDR</th>
<th>MAJ.</th>
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<td>Bihar:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<td>(100)</td>
<td>(41)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patna</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>66.7</td>
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<td>(17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ranchi</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>51.2</td>
<td>56.7</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>50.4</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>Gurgaon</td>
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<td>Sonepat</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>48.2</td>
<td>51.5</td>
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The researcher tried to know the exact number of ex-servicemen belonging to different ranks in a given district for the years 1981-85. But it was not available either with the DGR or RSB and the respective ZSBS did not cooperate in providing the figure. Subsequently, the researcher tried to ascertain the normally maintained ratio of one rank as against another in the Indian Army, but even this was not made available in any definitive terms except that it has a "pyramidal" organisational structure.

Officers of Subedar ranks were few in all the four districts where the study was conducted. In a number of cases the researcher had to gather their names and addresses from different sources and had to visit their residence or place of work for interview. Even though there was no precise basis on which the ex-servicemen of different ranks could be stratified on any definitive basis, Table 4.1 shows a pyramidal structure of ranks that has emerged after the conclusion of the field-work.

Major Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the present research work have been formulated out of the classification in which we have tried to conceptually place the ex-servicemen as a significant social category. The ex-servicemen, therefore, are being viewed in the following manner for the purpose of working out a study on the patterns and problems relating to their resettlement. Each classification, thus, has given birth
to one major hypotheses to be tested in the present work.

Army being highly stratified and structured organisation, each rank is endowed with well defined status, rights and duties, and, perks and privileges. The occupants of each rank has a defined retirement age, pensions and gratuity, etc. associated with it. Therefore, it is quite natural to expect commonality of problems relating to the ex-servicemen of each rank throughout the country as all armymen are governed by the same service conditions of the Indian army. Since higher the rank at which one retires, better the post retirement pensions and perks and longer the age of retirement, the first hypothesis being formulated is as follows:

1) Higher the rank of retirement better the prospects of resettlement.

Any process requires time for its completion and resettlement is no exception to this rule. Five years time have been assumed as maximum time period in which one should feel "resettled" or compromise with the type of living he has been able to provide for himself during that period. In other words, urge for a professional or occupational change after five years of one's retirement was considered as a remote possibility. Consequently, for the purpose of analysis, ex-servicemen, retired in each year during the period 1981-85 have been considered as a distinct class irrespective of their rank or place of retirement. Hypothesis
which is to be tested therefore is this:

ii) Longer the period from the date of retirement, better the resettlement.

The traditional Indian society was stratified on the principles of Varna and Caste. Higher position in caste hierarchy not only means superiority in terms of attitudes and behaviour but generally also better material conditions. And, this persists particularly in rural India. An ex-serviceman returning to his village, not only returns to his family but also to a caste to which the family belongs. For an ex-serviceman, therefore, the position of his caste vis-a-vis others determines how soon and how well he will be resettled in his society. Therefore, hypothesis emerging out of the classification based on caste can be formulated like this:

iii) Higher the caste, better the prospects of resettlement.

For a variety of reasons India does not have a uniform regional development. Regional inequality in terms of development has long historical roots. But in effect it means better living conditions and job-opportunity to those, living in developed areas than the underdeveloped ones. Thus, the developed regions have better infrastructure for the absorption of ex-servicemen returning to these areas than the underdeveloped ones. The very purpose of selecting
two regions - one developed and the other underdeveloped - was to see the impact of regional development on the resettlement of ex-servicemen. Thus, the fourth hypothesis which emerges out of classification based on the state of domicile is this;

iv) The ex-servicemen are better settled in developed regions (e.g. Haryana) than in underdeveloped regions (e.g. Bihar).

In tune with the above mentioned classification and the four major hypotheses, there were a large number of minor hypotheses which were formed on the basis of the instrument which was gradually developed for the purpose of final round of field-work on which the findings of the present work are based. Instead of giving a long list of hypotheses, we find it more appropriate to give elsewhere in the present chapter a brief description of the instrument placed at Appendix 'E' which implicitly incorporates all the hypotheses we intended to test in the present study.

TECHNIQUES OF RESEARCH

In the beginning of 1984, a cyclostyle questionnaire in Hindi was circulated among the ex-servicemen for pre-testing in Patna, Ranchi, Gurgaon and Sonepat. Around 40 questionnaires were thus filled in each containing 34 questions. By then, it was known that the best method of approaching ex-serviceman was to catch them at District Treasury/Pension Offices on the dates specified for the
disbursement of pensions. The researcher had also come to know the functions of institutions like Zila Sainik Board, Rajya Sainik Board, Directorate of Resettlement, Ex-Services League and other similar organisations. Contacts with the functionaries of these organisations and also with the knowledgable ex-servicemen of different ranks settled in the respective districts gradually developed.

The pretesting Interview Schedule of early 1984 was to be thoroughly revised in the beginning of 1985 for the following reasons:

1) The questionnaires used for pretesting were filled in by the ex-servicemen themselves. But it was found that most of them could not fill in the questionnaire without the help of the researcher. Therefore, it was decided to the researcher an interview schedule instead of a questionnaire.

2) All the open-ended questions included in the pretesting questionnaire were to be dropped and if necessary were to be substituted by limited choice questions.

3) For the purpose of clarity and quantification, it was now possible to have closed questions with limited choices in the range of two to nine options against each question. One of such options was to be ticked by the researcher himself after orally obtaining and assessing the correct choice of the respondents.
4) In light of the responses gathered from the pre-testing as well as on the basis of the findings of HLC report, quite a number of the questions of the first (pre-testing) questionnaire was considered redundant and many more were considered necessary to be added in the interview schedule.

**Description of the instrument**

The first (pretesting) and the second (final) interview schedules are placed at Appendix 'D' and 'E' respectively. In addition, another interview schedule was formulated to assess the immediate resettlement plans of the currently retiring JOOs and ORs (Appendix 'F'). A few such questionnaires were filled in at Bihar Regimental Centre with the permission of the then Commanding Officer, Brig. Ravi Kumar. Subsequently, it was found not worthwhile to be included that aspect of the resettlement due to its methodological limitations.

The findings of the present work, however, refer only to the interview schedule placed at Appendix 'E'. The schedule has 77 questions in all which is divided into seven parts.

**Methods of Eliciting Information**

It usually took 45-60 minutes to fill in an interview schedule form excluding the time spent on reaching the respondents and also excluding time taken in rapport making. Since the researcher met the ex-servicemen in group, rapport
making with all the respondents was not necessary. Once
rapport was established with one of the ex-servicemen wait-
ing to get their pension in front of Treasury/Pension Office,
on any pension day, rest of the work was easy. Normally,
it is the first respondent who became contact man for the
day and introduced the researcher with others. Interview
with the first respondent also generated interest among the
surrounding ex-servicemen waiting for payment. On any inter-
view day, the researcher could interview roughly between
4 and 8 ex-servicemen. The ex-servicemen of higher ranks
responded faster to the questions put than those of the
lower ranks. Similarly, difficulties in explaining the
questions to the lower ranks was more and questions were
often repeated or put in different words in order to obtain
information.

The encounter with the first ex-serviceman on any of
the interview day was quite difficult. In order to prepare
the first respondent the researcher almost invariably
began with the purpose of the work. In Bihar, especially
in Ranchi district, the researcher found it pretty difficult
to get cooperation from his respondents. The first reaction
was hesitation, coupled with suspicion. In both the
districts of Haryana, i.e. Gurgaon and Sonepat, ex-service-
men were quite cooperative and invariably they took great
interest in the interview. Usually the tea stall/dhaba
near the Treasury/Pension Office became the place of inter-

view. Interestingly, in Bihar it is the respondent who normally paid for the tea/refreshment, etc. but in Haryana it was reverse. In Haryana, the researcher seldom sat with just one respondent, the second and the third were always ready in queue to be interviewed and they shared the bills of tea/cigarettes/refreshments, etc., on collective basis. In Haryana again, at least on three to four occasions, the researcher was almost "gheraoed" by the ex-servicemen who showered him with a number of grievances and unfulfilled promises of the Government. On hearing the real purpose of research the respondents invariably asked how the exercise by the researcher was going to improve their lot and mitigate their immediate complaints. It was hard and often embarrassing to reply such questions but the every occasion of embarrassment, strengthened the researcher's conviction to make an honest and incisive study on their problems. While the researcher was impressed and sometimes embarrassed by the active participation of ex-serviceman in his fieldwork, he was often moved by the ignorance, silence and wretched lot of his respondents particularly in Bihar. They had much poorer conditions of living and much greater problems than their Haryanvi counterparts. And, yet they were not as vociferous and complaining as were the ex-servicemen in Haryana.

At Treasury/Pension Offices majority of the persons waiting for pension belonged to the pre-1981 group. The
ex-servicemen retired between 1981 and 1985 were a few on any day of the researcher's visit to the Pension/Treasury Office looking for his respondents. Therefore, the first sorting was done by the initial glance at the waiting pensioners. The elderly persons were just avoided and avid overtures were shown to the younger ones. Thereafter two questions were asked to ascertain whether the respondent comes within the purview of the present study. These were:

1. When did you retire?
2. Have you served the Indian Army?

If the answer to question one was, "between 1981 and 1985" that of question number two was in the affirmative, then it was settled that the person so answering should be invited for an interview.

Apart from eliciting information through interview schedule with an eye to arrive at some quantitative date, qualitative data was never ignored. The respondents who showed more interest in the subject matter and were ready to inform more than what was being sought in the interview schedule were always encouraged. A number of respondents invited the researcher to their respective homes (in village) in each of the four districts covered for the purpose of fieldwork. It was one of the strategies of the fieldwork to visit at least one ex-serviceman of each rank in every district and observe him at home as well as at work.
at least for a day or two. While invitation from the ex-servicemen of Haryana was usual and natural, in the case of Bihar the researcher had to take initiative. Majority of respondents from Bihar also asked reasons for the respondents' visit to their houses and places of work.

The qualitative data also got enriched by indepth interview with some knowledgable persons and senior army officials of the area where the fieldwork was conducted. The Director General of Resettlement, Gen. V.K. Avasthy, and a number of officials of the DGR gave valuable information and literature to the researcher from time to time. Similarly, Brig. Ram Singh and others of the All-India Ex-Services League and Brig. B.N. Upadhyay of Bihar unit of the AIXL appraised of the problems of ex-servicemen at national and regional level.

The researcher also participated in the rallies and dharnas organised by the AIXL and parallel organisations from time to time during the course of his field work. The researcher used camera and a tape recorder during appropriate occasions in the course of his field work. The researcher's reflections on the rallies and meetings of ex-servicemen and their political efficacy is dealt with in subsequent chapters.
1. In the XI World Sociological Congress, New Delhi, 1986, the researcher met Dr. (Mrs.) M.K. Singh, Reader, Department of Sociology, Poona University. Subsequently, at Nehru Museum Library, New Delhi he studied her book entitled "Resettlement Problems of Retired Army Officers", New Delhi, 1985. This is a study of 140 retired army officers ranging from Captain to Brigadier of Poona and the areas surrounding it. This is a discrete study on identical problem from every angle of research. For the benefit those pursuing serious research on "the resettlement of ex-servicemen in India" the contents of her work, however, are being produced below:


   (xi+126 pages: Text-1-94 pages; Appendices-95-126 pages)

2. An all-India statement of the state is placed at Appendix 'B' pp.242-6.

3. The data were taken down at DGR Office, New Delhi, which is based on the statements sent to the DGR Office by respective Rajya Sainik Boards.