CHAPTER V

SAMPLING AND FIELD STUDY

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CHAPTER - V

SAMPLING AND FIELD STUDY

5.1 SAMPLE SELECTION

Widowhood is a widely known feature of the society. Widows are found everywhere, in most families, in every village, in every city, big or small. In Greater Guwahati also there are widows in most families, in most buildings in every street and all over. Widows are culturally significant and hence were purposely selected for the present study.

Widows both educated and uneducated living in Greater Guwahati form the universe of the study. The population of the investigation included a total of 200 widows, 100 educated and 100 uneducated in the age range from 15 years to 65 years. Most of the widows had children of varying ages. The sample consisted of widows whose span of widowhood ranged from less than one year to more than twenty years. The sample included widows from urban nuclear families, urban joint families, educated widows, uneducated widows, employed widows, unemployed widows, economically independent widows and economically dependent widows.
TABLE VI

Representation of the widow sample.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educated Widows</th>
<th>Uneducated Widows</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE VII

Sample - Frequency and percentage of age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edu</td>
<td>Unedu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56-65</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. B.1 & Fig. B.2 shows the distribution & total percentage of widows (educated and uneducated) according to different age levels in page no. 61 & 62.

5.1 (a) SAMPLING PROCEDURE

Purposive sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the study. Purposive sampling can be considered a form of stratified sampling in that the selection of the cases is governed by some criterion acting as a secondary control.

In purposive sampling the investigator selects a particular group or category from the sample because this category is considered to mirror the whole with reference to the characteristic in question.
DISTRIBUTION OF WIDOWS (EDU & UNEDU) 
ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT AGE-LEVELS

Fig. B. 1
TOTAL PERCENTAGE OF WIDOWS (EDU & UNEDU) ACCORDING TO DIFFERENT AGE LEVELS

Fig. B. 2
In purposive sampling the units are chosen purposely. If this method is properly followed a small sample can be representative.

The problem of locating widows was difficult because they are not easily identifiable. They have no institutional affiliation. So the only option was door to door survey, which again was neither easy nor feasible. After coming in contact with a few widows the researcher could collect a list of widows. Contact through relatives and friends also helped the researcher to meet many widows. Twenty five local students studying for the M.A. Degree at the Gauhati University, Guwahati, were asked to bring two addresses each of the widows living in their neighbourhood. Some of the students brought more than two addresses. A total of 126 addresses from many different places of Guwahati was obtained out of which 96 could be contacted.

The State Treasury was also visited in order to get a list of widows drawing a pension from the State Government. A number of State Bank of India branches were also visited by the researcher on the first week of the month to personally meet the widows and collect their addresses, who came to collect

their pensions.

To draw educated working respondents a number of establishments both public and private were also visited. The representative sample of the establishment included Central, State, Semi-Government and Private establishments. To draw uneducated widows the absence of data base led the researcher to meet them on a purposive basis.

A majority of both Government and private establishments showed a definite reluctance to furnish a list of widows, because the authorities felt that such information was highly sensitive and would encroach upon their personal and private life.

After a lot of persuasion and clarifying on the need for such data in bringing about socio-economic legislative measures to alleviate the suffering and exploitation of widows and to create a public opinion against such suffering the researcher was allowed to interview them.

At the respondents level again they were assured that the information collected from them would be treated as strictly confidential and used only for the purpose of research.

Being a delicate subject, the time taken for filling up the forms ranged from 45 minutes to more than an hour. In certain cases several visits were necessary to induce respondents to give information. This necessitated the researcher building a good rapport so as to draw the
respondent into a mood to talk freely and truthfully.

Some establishments were cooperative, some respondents evaded interviews, while some found an opportunity to reduce their own tensions by talking to the researcher, they broke down and wept uncontrollably.

Lawyers dealing with issue of Succession Certificate for grant of husbands pension and property were contacted and records of Courts were looked into to get a list of widows.

To get adequate representation of widows from the various socio-economic background the different zones in the city as classified by the Guwahati Municipal Corporation were visited. This helped in getting a better perspective of the problems faced by widows.

Data collection for this research work was very difficult. The points highlighted above explain the problems faced by the researcher, and the inability to follow a strict sampling procedure.

5.2 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF GREATER GUWAHATI

Guwahati is situated on the south bank of the mighty river Brahmaputra at an altitude of 55 metres from the sea level, the latitude and longitude being 26° 10′ 45” (N) and 91° 45′ (E) respectively.

Guwahati is a recently modified term from the original ‘Gauhati’. It is an anglicised form of the Assamese word
Gua-hat meaning the village of areca nut. Guwahti was formerly known as 'Pragjyotispura'.

Guwahati is the gateway to the other North Eastern Region and is connected by road, rail and air with the rest of India.

Guwahati has been a centre of formal education and has assumed considerable importance for the existence of various administrative and cultural institution. An important industry in Guwahati is public sector oil refinery set up by the Government of India and commissioned in 1960. The area of Guwahati has increased to 216.19 Sq Kms in 1981.

Till 1951 census Guwahati was a class III town and in 1961 was regulated as a class I town. No census was undertaken in Assam in 1981 but according to an estimate the city population stands at 4.5 lakh in 1981. On the strength of which it has been declared as a B-2 city (Fig.B.2-a & Fig. B.2-b).

5.3 TEST ADMINISTRATION

The investigator personally administered the tests - Personal Data Sheet, Questionnaire on problems of widows and

Socio-Economic Status Scale for widows and the educated respondents were requested to fill it up. Explanations were afforded if the respondent encountered any problem in answering the questions. Since the sample consisted of uneducated widows, the tests were orally asked and answers were tick marked by the investigator.

In case of educated widows the Personal Data Sheet and the Socio Economic Status Scale for widows was filled up in the researchers presence. The Questionnaire on problems of widows were personally delivered by the investigator and they were requested to fill in their answers. Two weeks time was given to fill up the questionnaire. They were collected after suitable interval. Utmost care was taken to make the respondent work at ease. In order to avoid "cold" participation and elusion on the part of the subject it was made clear to them that strict secrecy would be maintained as regard their responses.

5.3 (a) ADMINISTRATION OF THE PERSONAL DATA SHEET

While administering the Personal Data Sheet the following instructions were given

"Various possible alternatives are given in this Questionnaire. Select only one alternative which suits you and put a sign of tick mark (✓) in the bracket ( ) given
against it. You may express your—self frankly, and your views will be kept confidential".

The P.D.S. is appended in Appendix A.

5.3 (b) ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE ON PROBLEMS OF WIDOWS

To investigate the social, economic and personal problems the Questionnaire on problems of widows was administered with the following instructions.

"To investigate your socio-economic and personal problems and with the hope that this investigation will be beneficial to you, this series of questions has been constructed. Read carefully each statement given here one by one. After that indicate your answer by drawing a circle around yes, No, ? given in the opposite of each statement as shown in the example given below.

Think each question carefully, whether it is really your problem or not and then you give the exact answer. Your answers will not be shown to anybody, so answer each question without fear."

The test and the instruction sheet are appended in Appendix B.

5.3 (c) ADMINISTRATION OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS SCALE FOR WIDOWS

The administration of the socio-economic status Scale was similar to that of the Personal Data Sheet. The following instructions were given "Various possible
alternatives of each question are given in this questionnaire. Select only one alternative which suits you and put sign of multiplication \( \times \) in the bracket given against it."

The test with the instructions and scorecard are appended in Appendix D.

With the administration of the three tests the field study was complete. The entire test administration took nine months.

5.4 SCORING OF THE TESTS

The Scoring methods of all the tests are cited in Chapter IV (pp 39, 43, and 58).