CHAPTER: 2
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research is a systematic way to find the answer of a problem by applying appropriate scientific method. "To gain a new knowledge through search for new facts in any specific branch, a careful investigation or inquiry is indispensable. In this context, 'the manipulation of things, concepts or symbols for the purpose of generalizing to extent, correct or verify knowledge, whether that knowledge aid in construction of theory or in the practice, appears to be more comprehensive in the way of research. In fact, research is simply a systematic and refined technique for thinking and reorganizing, utilizing suitable tools, procedure and statistical analysis in order to obtain fruitful, productive and significant results of the problem."(Mishra, 2007, pg. 60) Discovering the truth is primary objective of any research. In the way of statement of the problem to report writing, it demands a careful critical inquiry in a specific direction. Research may be defined as a "careful critical enquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles; diligent investigation in order to ascertain something." (Ghosh, 1995, pg. 304)

Research is necessary to examine the extent of the validity of the old conclusions or to find out some new facts and generalization in connection with the existing ones.

The research process cycle model (Frey et. al., 1991, pg. 16) shows how researcher establishes a field of inquiry by narrowing their focus to a particular topic worth studying. That topic may result from a practical problem that needs solving, an experience that needs explaining, or a theoretical proposition that needs testing.
Phase 1: Conceptualization

Phase 2: Planning and designing research

Phase 3: Methodologies for conducting research

Phase 4: Analysing and interpreting data

Phase 5: Reconceptualization

2.1 THE RESEARCH PROCESS CYCLE MODEL

The purpose of research is to unfold the truth by systematic methods. It may involve the manipulation of concepts or symbols in order to correct or verify the existing knowledge or ideas so that an operational generalization may be made in the shape of a theory. A research may aim at the following things:

1. To find new generalization with old data.
2. To know old conclusions with new data.
3. To attempt to reach more conclusions from the same set of data.
4. To put forward an entirely original idea or theory or to discover an explored horizon of knowledge.
5. To find or to resolve contradictions existing in the area of study.

The present study is empirical in nature and has drawn results from the analysis of primary data. To meet the objectives of the analysis normative survey research has been performed. Through the help of specific tool, developed by the researcher, primary data are collected and analysed. Since the need of the study is specific thus purposive sampling technique has been used.

2.2 COLLECTION OF PRIMARY DATA- The primary data are collected with the help of the tool prepared by the researcher himself. To collect the data purposive sampling is adopted as the best suitable way because the target samples of the study are specific and could be identified through this option more conveniently. PIO working under the universe or in the Cachar district are taken for the purpose and apart from, with the help of concerned official records researcher have selected the persons from Cachar district as sample who have been recipient or applicant of information under the act.

2.3 TOOL OF THE DATA COLLECTION- The questionnaire schedule developed by the researcher himself has used as the tool of primary data collection. Two questionnaire schedules were prepared by the researcher out of which one had targeted the PIO’s while other had been used in collecting information from the information seekers.

2.4 UNIVERSE OF THE STUDY- The PIO functioning under the administrative boundaries of Cachar district of the Assam (Central and State govt. officials, Officials come under the act) as well as the information applicant under the same area have consisted the universe of the study.

2.5 SAMPLING UNIT- Sampling units of the present study are divided into two categories. The first category consists of information seekers, the people who have applied for or received any information under the RTI act. The second category covers the people who have taken responsibilities and acting as Public Information Officers. All the respondents are residents of the district Cachar and this is a common uniformity among all the respondent
2.5.1 SAMPLE SIZE- Sample size must represent the population and be big enough to permit reasonable analysis of data. It must have quality to explore all the characteristics of whole population “the fundamental test of whether a sample is good is the degree to which it is representative. A representative sample is one that accurately reflects characteristics of the population from which it is drawn and collecting a representative sample involves having one large enough to make reasonable interpretations.”( Reinard, 2001, pg. 281) The size of sample plays an important role in sampling, the size should be representative “an optimum sample in survey is one which fulfils the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility.”( Ghosh, 1995, pg. 293) For the present study no pre-selection was assumed and Sample size is fixed on the counting based on randomisation followed on given list provided by the concerned offices or authorities. Thus a total of 100 samples out of PIOs and 150 out of Information seekers were selected to arrange data for the study.

2.5.2 TOOL FOR DATA COLLECTION

An interview schedule was structured to seek information from the respondents. It included closed as well as open-ended questions. To make the data collection convenient an interview schedule was preferred. It was formulated in order to elicit detailed information. The questions were structured in such way that information could be gathered regarding the subject of the study.

Interview schedule was preferred because it provided the opportunity to keenly observe the respondents while interacting with them. It was useful to reduce the non-response rate and ensure that the researcher collected first hand information from them.

2.5.3 USE OF SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data is also used by researcher. Relevant published and unpublished literature, articles from the journals, different govt. reports related to Right to Information and materials published in newspapers and magazines were used. Official websites of Assam government, Got. of India and information commission’s portals are visited by researcher for research purposes.
2.5.4 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study ‘Analysis of Awareness of RTI among PIOs and Information Seekers in Cachar’ has restricted to the following limitations-

1. This study is based on information seekers and PIOs of Cachar district of Assam only.
2. The present study is based on primary data collected by the researcher through the interview schedule, developed by him only.

2.5.5 DIFFICULTIES FACED DURING THE STUDY

The following difficulties were faced while conducting the study:

1. Lack of co-operation by some respondents.
2. It was quite difficult to get information from illiterate/ less educated respondents.
3. It was difficult to find respondents at home as well as at offices often due to mismatch of timing.
4. Some PIO found reluctant while responding to the researcher regarding the objective of research and privacy of opinion.