CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

Scope of the Study

As spelled out in Chapter 1 the present study primarily focuses on two aspects (i) the cinema industry, that is, people who are connected with cinema in one way or the other, be it production, distribution and exhibition, and (ii) the respondents, that is, people who see films. This is because cinema is not only an art but also a business and an industry. As sociology of cinema implies the relationship between cinema and society, the study delves into the nature of interactional process between the two and the manner in which these two affect each other. As such it treats cinema as an institutional system and thereby deals with the whole gamut of production, distribution and exhibition and how this is reflected on the people who see cinema and overall what impact does it have on the society.

Locale of the Study

As is evident from the title of the thesis, the present study has been conducted in the city of Delhi. This is because Delhi being the capital and centre of power, most of the offices related to film making are located here such as the office of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, office of the Directorate of Film Festival, office of the Films Division et cetera. These are visited by film people now and then with regard to their projects. Infact many of them are gradually trying to settle here because of the above reasons and also because of the sprawling film centre coming up at the outskirts
of Delhi at NOIDA. As such, the researcher thought that access to film people who make films would be easier in Delhi. Further, there exists a large network of cinema houses in Delhi which are visited by all segments of society i.e., the upper class, the middle class and the lower class, literate, illiterate etc. Being a lone investigator residing and serving in Delhi, the researcher thought that the above factors would make the task of data collection easier for her.

Tools for Data Collection

The following tools were used for data collection:

(i) Sampling;

(ii) Interview schedule for the respondents; and

(iii) Interview guide for persons connected with cinema.

The scope of the study being confined to two categories of people, namely, (i) those directly connected with cinema, i.e. cinema owners, producers, directors, distributors, exhibitors, technicians, etc, and (ii) those indirectly connected with cinema, i.e. the cinema-goers; indepth interviews were conducted with 20 experts and quota sample survey of 300 respondents (cinema-goers) was carried out to get indepth information on the state of affairs of the cinema industry in Delhi. While selecting persons from these two categories due care has been taken to have equal representation of both the sexes, various age-groups and socio-economic strata. In terms of age-groups, the following three age-groups — 21-35 years, 36-50 years and 51 plus, were taken to have a representation of the entire life span, that is, young middle age and old age. In terms of socio-economic strata, three broad categories of occupations were selected, namely, the
professional class, the business class and the working class. From each of them 100 respondents (50 males and 50 females) were selected in the age group of 21-35 years, 36-50 years and 51 plus.

Occupations like doctors, engineers, scientists, academicians, bureaucrats, teachers, etcetera were grouped under the category of the professional class. Business tycoons, traders, shopkeepers and the like were grouped under the business class. The working class included babus, peons and other menial workers in offices, labourers, vendors, taxi drivers, autorickshaw drivers, bus drivers, conductors etcetera.

For eliciting information from the professional class, the researcher visited offices, clinics, chambers, hospitals, schools etcetera. For business class the researcher went to shops and business houses and for working class, she again visited offices, residential colonies, went to construction sites, pavement dwellers, vegetable and fruit markets, street hawkers, taxi stands, autorickshaw stands, bus depots etcetera.

In the above mentioned places, whosoever was available in the three categories identified for the study were interviewed.

The interview schedule for the respondents comprised questions relating to their personal background and important variables about their social life as to how they spend their leisure time; frequency of cinema going; frequency of watching films on the video; extent of entertainment, information and education derived while watching a film; type of films they like watching; language in which they prefer to watch a film; criteria for
selecting a film for viewing; to what extent cinema plays a positive and negative role in society; to what extent cinema strengthens different type of relationships within a family; whether cinema helps in promoting the joint family or the nuclear family system; to what extent cinema promotes other social values; the manner in which cinema affects people's attitude towards women and men in society; what should be the probable role of cinema in society; is cinema fulfilling that role; is Indian culture being amply portrayed in cinema; of late has there been a change in the trend of film making; is cinema a medium of political education; has there been a general decline in the quality of cinema halls; if yes, how could this be improved; what role the film makers could play in improving the quality of cinema; what role does one envisage for the Government in improving the quality of cinema and what role could the public play in improving the overall quality of cinema. The detailed interview schedule is given at Annexure I.

However, before the interview schedule was finalised, it was pretested among 20 persons. In the light of pretesting done the final schedule was designed and formatted in such a way that the filled in schedules were given directly to the computer centre for analysis. This avoided error prone coding on separate coding sheets.

The interview guide for the persons connected with films comprised aspects like what is cinema; what is the role of cinema in society; what is the relationship between cinema and society; origin and growth of cinema in Delhi; what has been the nature of cinema in Delhi; what has been the social background of the creators of cinema in Delhi;
what changes have been there in the cinema over the years in the wake of changing communications systems; what changes does one perceive in the objectives of cinema; what do you anticipate is the future of cinema; what societal considerations are taken into account while making a film; who plays the most prominent role in the production, distribution and exhibition of a film; on the social values/messages being conveyed through cinema; what has been the role of Government in promoting cinema; what has been the role of various film bodies in promoting cinema, on the laws by which cinema is governed and problems faced in general. The detailed interview guide is given at Annexure II.

Data Analysis

Data entry and verification for the study has been done on PC (Personal Computer) at the Council for Social Development, 53, Lodi Estate, New Delhi 110 003.

However, before giving the interview schedules for data entry, manual cross checking was done. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to do the computer analysis. Simple frequencies, cross tabulations and correlation coefficient between background variables and indices has been found out and have been given in the form of tables.