CHAPTER – III

SOURCES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology is the way that one adopts to interpret his feelings, experiences and facts all around him. The method is the way of observing, classifying and interpreting facts. The knowledge derived through the application of scientific methods constitutes natural sciences like physics, chemistry, biology, etc., the knowledge gained through the application of logical and to some extent scientific methods constitute social sciences like sociology, economics, political science, etc.

Methods are specific to the subject. The nature of methods is decided by the fields in which they are applied. Therefore, at large, the methods of natural sciences are different from those of the social sciences. It does not mean that the methods of both natural and social sciences could not be exchanged for academic purposes. We are passing through the age of science and technology. Each subject claims to be a science. The current trend is that social sciences are also borrowing and utilizing the concepts, tools and methods of natural sciences to gain greater objectivity and empiricism.

Sociology is mother of all social science subjects. It is a science of social relations found among the individual and group of society. It is a science of reference of one to other, be it individual or group. Whether sociology applied pure scientific method or not, is a matter of controversy even among the sociologists of today. Some stands for scientific methods and while other argue for logical or philosophical methods. However, when we concede the claim that sociology to be a science, all controversies in this connection are of no significance.

The present research study is related to analyze the problems and challenges faced by Scheduled Caste women in families and society. Here the natures of the variables include social culture, employment, knowledge, social status, customs and traditions, etc. Keeping in view the diverse objectives
framed for studying the status and conditions of Scheduled Caste women, a variety of tools and techniques that suit best the requirement of the present study are adopted.

3.1. Sources of Data:

The present study is both theoretical and empirical. Hence, different sources of data are used for the present study. The sources of data are as under.

Secondary Sources:

It is essential to know about the different problems and challenges faced by Scheduled Caste women at different parts of India. For this purpose, the researcher was searched secondary literature published in books, research journals, journal articles, news papers, magazines, web based sources, etc. These secondary sources helped researcher to provide a theoretical background to the research topic.

Statistical Sources:

It is essential to know about the extent of problems faced by numbers of Scheduled Caste women at the national or state or regional level. For this purpose, the researcher was collected statistical data from different statistical sources. The statistical data collected reveals the population of Scheduled Caste women in India and Karnataka, educational statistics, employment statistics, reported cases of violence against Scheduled Caste women, etc., are collected from statistical reports such as Annual Reports of different government departments, news papers, web sites like Indiastat, etc.

Primary Sources:

The present study is mainly based on primary data collected from the Scheduled Caste women surveyed in Gulbarga district. Hence, the interview schedules collected from Scheduled Caste women in Gulbarga district are primary sources for the present study.
3.2. Research Methodology:

Research is a systematic process and it needs to follow step-by-step procedure to collect different types of data and analyze the same so as to derive findings and conclusion. Hence, the methodology followed is described as under.

1. Meaning of Concepts and Terms:

A few of the terms and concepts used in the present study are defined as under.

**Problem**

: 1. A question proposed for solution or consideration;
   2. A question, matter, situation or person that is perplexing or difficult;
   3. Presenting a problem of human conduct or social relationships

**Scheduled Caste:**

1. The castes, races or tribes which shall for the purpose of the constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Caste in relation to that state (The Indian Constitution);
   2. Dalits; Depressed Classes; formerly Untouchables;

**Sociological/Social**

: 1. Of, or having to do with human society, its organization, needs, development, etc.
   2. Of sociology.

2. Variables Studied:

Keeping the objectives in mind, it was decided to have vast information on various background characteristics such as socio-economic, demographic, cultural, attitudinal, behavioural, etc., of the respondents was collected. However, the variables which have been taken into account in this study are based on relevant theoretical and logical grounds. Moreover, for a clear understanding of the nature of these variables further, classification or different grouping of variables on the basis of sociological characteristics, location and nature of economic status was done. In the justification for the selection of the determinants variables and their hypothesized relationship is well presented.
In order to test the hypotheses mentioned in the first chapter, a few social variables were listed for the cross verification analysis and these variables are as follows.

**Demographic Variables:**

The major demographic characteristics of the respondents which are included in the present study are the age of the respondents, particular caste or community, residential status, etc. These characteristics were considered to be important to evaluate the qualitative aspects of the study.

**Economic Characteristics:**

The significant economic characteristics of the respondents were undertaken for the study economic conditions of the family, source for income, worth of properties owned by respondents and their families, etc.

**Social Characteristics:**

The major social characteristics of the respondents studied here are: place of residence, type of family, education, location background, customs followed, rituals followed, etc., was also gathered.

**Behavioural Variables:**

The important behavioural characteristics of the respondents considered to be like making discussions and sharing interests with the family members, social contacts, whether free to mingle with outside people, restrictions faced due to caste and gender, nature of relationship with employers, authorities and colleagues if the Scheduled Caste women are employed, etc.

**3. Samples:**

Sample procedure can be compared to a mirror, which gives reflection true to the original. Goode and Hatt defined ‘Sample as a small representation of the larger whole’.

Nanline defined it as ‘a subset of cases from the population chosen to represent it. By using the characteristic and the subset, we can infer the characteristics of the populations’.

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Hence, the use of sampling allows for more adequate scientific work by making the time of the scientific method worked count. Instead of working many hours over the analysis of a mass of material from one point of view, it is suggested to use that time to examine a smaller amount of material from many points of view. In others words, to do a more intensive analysis of fewer cases were done. Another obvious value of sampling is that it also saves time and money and thus makes investigations possible, which could not otherwise be undertaken.

4. Sample Size:

As the geographical area of the Gulbarga district is vast and Scheduled Caste population is also large, it is not possible to interview and collect the primary data from all the Scheduled Caste women. Having identified the different castes and communities grouped under Scheduled Castes, a question was arised that how many Scheduled Caste women and from which communities should be interviewed. Keeping in view time and money constraints the approach was that the number should neither be so large that it becomes unmanageable for a single researcher nor it should be so small that any meaningful analysis becomes difficult. Due to educational development and employment or self-employment among Scheduled Caste women, there is change among Scheduled Caste women. As such, it was decided to collect primary data from both self-employed or employed Scheduled Caste women and unemployed housewives from Scheduled Castes. To stake a balance it was decided that the study would cover a selected samples limiting to 400 Scheduled Caste women, which include 200 samples working, that is employed or self-employed Scheduled Caste women and 200 samples unemployed housewives among Scheduled Castes in Gulbarga district.

5. Sampling Procedure:

Having decided the size of sample it was considered to select the sample units from among those representing different socio-economic and educational
strata, rather than having a random sample, it was decided to survey respondents through purposive sampling taking care of individual community, culture, occupations, income of family, etc representation in the sample. Thus, the distribution of the respondents selected is shown in the following table.

Table No. 3.1. Selection of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Talukas</th>
<th>Employed/ Self-employed SC Women</th>
<th>Unemployed Housewives</th>
<th>Total Number of Samples Interviewed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Afzalpur</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aland</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chittapur</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chincholi</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewargi</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulbarga</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedam</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Samples</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the pilot study, opinions were sought from 25 respondents on their experiences and opinions on the different aspects mentioned in interview schedule. The pilot study revealed that there is no ambiguity or confusion in questions stated in interview schedule and the interview schedule has made final to conduct final survey.

6. Tools and Techniques for Data Collection:

After conferring the study to the selected number of respondents and sample size, the problem of collecting information appears. Focused interviews with interview schedules gave an insight into a number of relevant problems, provided valuable information and acquaintance with major current trends and developments of opinion. All these could not be subjected to statistical analysis and interpretation.

For the purpose of the study, the researcher preferred to adopt the method of interview schedule with structured questions which consists both fixed alternative question (closed questions and open ended questions). Such interview schedule set to ensure that answers are given in a frame of
reference that is relevant to the purpose of inquiry and in a form that is usable in the analysis. Some of the open ended questions were also set to permit a free response from the subject rather than limited. The respondents were interviewed with help of interview schedule. It is a method, which reveals relevant data through a set of stimulus questions. Before to start the data collection a few free group interviews were conducted through interview schedules with a view to eliminated and minimize the ambiguity. Thus, ambiguous words, phrases and emotional questions are deleted and leading questions were included. In this way, the final interview schedule was prepared and the social culture of different castes and communities grouped under Scheduled Castes were analyzed, so as to assess the facilities that are available for Scheduled Castes in general and Scheduled Caste women in particular.

The objectivity of the research depends much more upon the way of approaching and establishing rapport with the respondents for purposeful information. Besides sampling, interview schedules are the great tools by which the researcher enters into the inner life of respondents to analytical and critical information. In some cases, even the researcher worked as observer. As Webs puts it, “deliberate and sustained personal observation is an indispensable part of the study of any social institution. Even if the social institution itself is invisible and intangible in its wholeness”.

The units, items, parts are particular manifestation of the institution are often open to observation. This method has been in vogue even before the emergence of organized research in the social sciences. Young has defined it as “deliberate study through the eye; which may be used as one of the method for scrutinizing the totality”. The researcher is observed many of the Scheduled Caste women on their daily life so as to analyze their socio-economic conditions and problems and challenges derived due to their caste and gender and also social culture associated with their individual caste/community. When asked with few of such Scheduled Caste women, they have helped the researcher to give different aspects related to their status, problems in faced in society as well as their family life. The researcher personally studied the
information collected from these selected Scheduled Caste women on different aspects.

The objectivity of the study is further strengthened by the adequate secondary data. In this regard relevant and required information for the present study are gathered through documentary sources such as books, research journals, news papers, magazines, annual reports, gazetteer, web pages in internet, etc., have helped much to know about the facts. Some of the Government web sites also helped to collect the statistical information on the Scheduled Caste women, living standards, social welfare schemes for Scheduled Caste women, etc. in different states and national level.

7. Analysis and Discussion of Primary Data:

A large volume of data collected, manual handling of such voluminous data was quite cumbersome and unmanageable, besides sophisticated statistical analysis of data was also very difficult to handle manually. Therefore, it was guided to handle the entire data through computer. The data was primarily analyzed in terms of variables and multivariable analysis. Thus, the data are statistically analyzed and statistical co-relations between different variables are established. Thus, the work is done in framework of these methodological dimensions.

8. Challenges Encountered:

All the research conducted in social sciences give due importance to objectivity and correctness of the information gathered through techniques available, every man or woman doing his or her research has to face a lot of difficulties in course of field work. However, it is expected that the researcher would face them all and would create a favourable atmosphere to secure relevant information.

A researcher is always treated as a stranger. Being Scheduled Caste male, it was become a difficult problem for the researcher to collect the primary data from Scheduled Caste women of different communities and even living in different areas and restrictions faced by these women by their family
members. As such, the Scheduled Caste women were hesitant to provide information on their problems and challenges related to caste, gender and poverty in family and society. Hence, the researcher faced much difficulty to convince and oblige these women to provide the information correctly. Further in few of the areas and among few communities, the family members of Scheduled Caste women were also suspicious on the researcher and it was assured to these family members and Scheduled Caste women to keep the information given by them should be kept confidential and the purpose of the study is academic and not for any other purpose.

Park and Burgess (1924) aptly described the coordination aspect of rapport. “Rapport implies the existence of a natural responsiveness, such that every member of the group reacts immediately, spontaneously and sympathetically to the sentiments and attitudes of every other member”.

The researcher started establishing rapport with Scheduled Caste women living in different villages and areas of towns and Gulbarga city. In about three to four months time with a special effort to focus the problems and challenges faced by Scheduled Caste women in family and society, the researcher won the sentiments of these respondents. With the discussion about their problems, the respondents responded positively to the researcher. As such, with the help of few of these respondents, the researcher gained the contacts of other respondents, who are living at different places or areas in village or town. The group discussions to analyze the social customs, traditions and rituals followed by different communities and castes grouped under Scheduled Castes were also undertaken during the field work. The participatory observation was also become one of the tools of data collection.

The researcher started the field work in March 2015 and problems multiplied as field work progressed; once initial rapport was established and association with Scheduled Caste women living at different areas, villages and towns were recognized by different sets of informants, even few of them checked my identity card and letter from the Department of the University especially the Scheduled Caste women living in villages. Their doubt is
dispelled by verifying these proofs and they fostered confidence and responded positively to my study. Even few of their social and economic problems were clarified and solved by me during the field work.

Most of the respondents were responded to interviews in their houses either in the morning or in evening, when they will be free. Even few of the respondents were shared their personal and family problems with the researcher.

Hence, the collection of primary data from each of respondents was completed in two to three sittings and each interview on an average took one to two hours and at times more depending upon the willingness of the respondents to convey the information. That is how the collection of desired sample of 400 interview schedules was completed in about three months.