CHAPTER 2

OBJECTIVES, HYPOTHESIS, RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
2. OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

2.1 Prior to a detailed insight about the objectives of this treatise it is first vital to understand the meaning of the term ‘objectives’. American Heritage dictionary of English defines objective as “something worked towards or striven for; maybe towards a goal”. While another dictionary defines the term as “something which you plan to do or achieve”. Wordsmith dictionary defines this term as “a goal or purpose towards which one’s efforts are directed”. Having seen what the dictionaries have to say about the term, objectives as laid down for this study are given in the next paragraphs.

2.2 Ethics essentially involves moral values, issues and choices which deal with right and wrong behaviour. Ethical behaviour varies from individual to individual and from group to group. A number of factors both internal and external shape the pattern of ethical behaviour. The external environment which affects the behavioural patterns includes the cultural influences (such as a family, friends, neighbours, religion, etc), political, legal and economic environment. The effects of the internal environment are all pervasive. These primarily include the organisational structure and the internal environment. The organisational influences emanate from ethical codes, role model, policies and practices, reward and punishment system. All the aforesaid factors often work interdependently in shaping ethical behaviour of individuals and groups in organisations.

2.3 It is well recognised that ethics is important to the study of organisational behaviour as it affects the well being of soldiers and their performance. This is besides the obvious ethical concerns relating to zero error syndrome, dichotomy of approach and related activities. The challenges today in the Army are enormous. The issue of management of the most important resource that is the human being and the progress associated with it has not kept pace with the progress elsewhere in the environment. As stated earlier the complex mix of forces at play both internal and external to the Army as an organisation, are exercising considerable influence on the code of ethics being followed in the Army. A critical appraisal of the present environment in which the soldier is expected to uphold the highest traditions of the Army is the need of the hour. These are those traditions which have been handed over to the organisation by its forefathers with foundation which are deep and strong. The treatise fundamentally is aimed at gaining a detailed insight into the multifaceted mix of forces which form an intricate web exerting extensive influence on the
behavioural patterns of the members of the Army thereby casting its influence on the code of ethics in the Army. The primary endeavour of the study was to critically analyse the prevailing environment in which the rank and file of the Army is expected to uphold the value systems which are so synonymous with the Army. In more specific terms the objectives of the study are as follows:

2.3.1 To stir up thought processes for a frank and purposeful introspection by anyone connected with the well being of the Army.

2.3.2 To analyse threadbare the realities as they exist with a soldier today who forms part of the lowest echelon in the Army.

2.3.3 To attempt a diagnostic analysis of the unwanted changes in the individual and group behavioural patterns in the Army.

2.3.4 To initiate a meaningful debate on the causes of the steady erosion of ethics in the Army.

2.3.5 To suggest priorities for action and evolve coping strategies to overcome the disturbing trends in the code of ethics that have set in the Army.

Hypothesis

2.4 Let us first analyse the different hues and colours of the word “Hypothesis”. The Oxford dictionary defines hypothesis as; proposition or supposition made from known facts as basis for reasoning or investigation. Another definition as given out by thinkertools.soe.berkeley.edu states; ‘hypothesis is a tentative explanation that accounts for a set of facts and can be tested by other investigation’. In simple words, hypothesis is a conjecture or an unproved model. It often includes a prediction about what will happen and possible explanation for why it will happen. By making observations and by reasonable deductions the hypothesis are tested. The hypothesis for this research work are given as follows:

2.4.1 Are the core values of the Army being diluted?

2.4.2 In the present day as also in the future scenario is there a need to suitably modify the code of ethics in the Army.
2.4.3 Changed beliefs and values are the order of the day. The character and ethics in military leadership is under serious threat and needs review.

Research Methodology

2.5 Research can be defined as the systematic design, collection, analysis and reporting of data and findings relevant to specific situation. Again referring to the Oxford dictionary research is defined as, ‘systematic investigation into study of materials and sources, etc in order to establish facts and reaching new conclusions’. Effective research involves five steps as shown in the following chart:

**Chart No 2.5 - Steps in Research**

2.6 **Defining the Problem and the Research Objective.** An old adage says, “A problem well-defined is half solved”. The problem and the objectives have been enumerated earlier. The researcher has adopted different types of applied research to arrive at logical conclusions. Qualitative research methodology has primarily been used to discover underlying motives of the human behaviour in the Army. This is based on empirical data wherein facts are utilised to test the hypothesis. The research is also exploratory in nature with the primary aim of treading on areas hitherto fore not formally explored.
Developing the Research Plan

2.7 The second stage of the research was developing the most efficacious plan for gathering needed information. Designing a comprehensive research plan entails decisions on aspects such as sources for data collection, approaches for research, research instruments, sampling plan and contact methods. The approaches for research include observation, surveys of the focus groups and experiments. The broad elements of the research plan of the researcher were as follows:

2.7.1 Earmarking sources of data collection.

2.7.2 Sampling design.

2.7.3 Collection of data.

2.7.4 Analysis of data.

2.7.5 Presentation of the findings.

2.8 Sources of Data. A major emphasis was laid towards collection of primary data to include observational and questionnaire method. It was important to obtain firsthand information to present a realistic appraisal of the situation. The following sources of data were explored:

2.8.1 Primary Data. The primary data was collected primarily by the following means:

   (i) By observation.
   (ii) Administration of questionnaire to the respondents.
   (iii) Experience survey that is, personal interviews.
   (iv) Mailing of questionnaires.
   (v) Personal noting of the researcher during service.

2.8.2 Secondary Data.

   (i) Reference books.
   (ii) Journals, periodicals and newspapers.
   (iii) Internet.

2.9 Sampling Design. Under the Non Probability Sampling Procedure, Convenience Sampling was adopted during this research. Due care was taken that they were truly
representative of the judgement. The following procedure was adopted:

2.9.1 **Stratification.** The population was divided into sub samples which were homogeneous in nature in relation to their experience in service and background wherever applicable. The following strata were formed:

(i) **Strata I - Officers.** Amongst the officer cadre the following substrata were formed:

- **Substrata I - Senior officers.** (Colonels and above sample size-35).
- **Substrata II - MLO.** (Majors and Lieutenants Colonels sample size – 130).
- **Substrata III - YO.** (Lieutenants and Captains sample size - 85).

(ii) **Strata II. JCO and OR.** The OR included NCO and soldiers. The basis of forming this category was primarily the background of these personnel prior to joining the Army. Amongst this category the following substrata were formed:

- **Substrata I.** Serving JCO and OR (Sample size – 200).
- **Substrata II.** Serving Services JCO and OR(Sample size – 50).
- **Substrata III.** Retiring JCO and OR (Sample size – 350).

2.9.2 Items were selected from each stratum to constitute a sample. The number of items from each stratum or substrata was commensurate with their rank, size as per the hierarchy in the Army and availability in the station in which the questionnaires were administered. Proportional allocation between the strata and within strata was done. It is pertinent to mention here that the station in which the questionnaires were administered had a floating target population. This gave to the researcher advantage of wider choice to obtain data from cross-section of the population. Large samples were taken from more variable data and smaller samples from less variable data. Of course this was dictated by the size and quantum of each stratum and substrata within the hierarchical structure of the Army.
2.10 **Collection of Data.** Highlights of the methodology adopted in collection of data for the research work is given as follows:

2.10.1 **Observation and Noting.** The researcher effectively utilised his experience of 25 years of service in the Army. Being deeply interested in the subject right from commission the researcher has been keenly observing behavioural patterns in service and all along making valuable notes gaining an insight into the changes which have taken place during his service. During the course of this research proper and being based in a station which had a large floating population, the researcher strengthened his observation techniques keeping into view well laid out objectives of the research with clear-cut parameters.

2.10.2 **Administration of Questionnaire.** The following aspects were essential elements of the administration of questionnaire on the target population:

(i) **Pilot Survey.** Prior to administering the questionnaire a pilot survey was conducted with the sample questionnaire. Keeping into view the response pattern and the difficulties faced by the sample respondents the questionnaire was suitably modified.

(ii) **Preparation of the Questionnaire.** Three questionnaires were prepared details of which are given in Chapter 17 titled ‘Analysis of the Research Data’. Questionnaires 1 and 2 were administered to all the members of stratum and substrata. Questionnaire 3 was only aimed at gaining an insight into the mind of the YO and MLO who are the backbone of the fighting force of the Army. The questionnaire were simple wherein 95% of the questionnaire was so structured so as to elicit specific response from the respondents. A small percentage of the questionnaire was open-ended which too was kept simple and easy to analyse. If the respondent could not answer a particular question or for that matter wanted to adopt an option not mentioned in the list then there was a provision to do so. The questions were presented in a logical sequence, were attractive and it was ensured that the printing was legible and on a good quality of paper.

(iii) **Administration of the Questionnaire.** Largely, the questionnaire was administered personally to the target population the primary aim being
to afford a greater interaction with the respondents especially the YO, MLO JCO and OR. This also gave an opportunity to these personnel to seek clarifications. As the questionnaire was prepared in English it was extremely important to translate this in Hindi to the category of JCO and OR. The questionnaires for the senior officers were either sent by post or given in person. Wherever feasible the researcher ensured a personal interaction with the officers.

(iv) Experience Survey. This has been an ongoing process in the service span of the researcher. Knowledge of senior officers with rich experience was tapped to enlighten the researcher.

(v) Secondary Data. The researcher carried out a comprehensive and wide-ranging research which was aided by material available from libraries and internet, though limited documented work is available in India on the subject. General information on ethics and military ethics is available but scant information as relevant to the study is available on specific issues.

2.11 Analysis of Data. The data was analysed threadbare from which facts emerged as relevant to the study. A separate chapter 'analysis of the research data' forms part of this Thesis. The data was first tabulated and thereafter it was analysed according to the objectives and hypothesis. The data was grouped into manageable groups to arrive at meaningful results. There were certain sampling errors which were due to incorrect framing of certain questions and due to response errors. The percentage of the sampling errors were however miniscule and not taken into consideration during the process of analysis. The response to each question was analysed in detail and separately. The aims and objectives behind addressing this questionnaire to the respondents were enumerated and thereafter the analysis was carried out. Prior to analysis the data was presented both in the tabulated form as also in the form of diagrammatic representations. Certain response pattern was not truly representative of the ground level situation. The researcher has brought out this aspect in Chapter 17 and has given out his deductions and reasons thereof.

2.12 Presentation of the Findings. On the basis of the analysis of the information findings have been presented in a separate chapter. Based on the findings, a separate
Chapter entitled ‘priorities for action and coping strategies’ have been included in the Thesis.

2.13 **Scope of the Study.** The aim of the study was to make a realistic appraisal of the changing pattern of ethics in the Indian Army, the challenges that have surfaced and to suggest strategies to cope with the challenges. The scope for the study is gigantic. The edifice of the Army has evolved over a period of time and the foundations were laid by its forefathers. The organisational structure of the Army is sound and well tried out. Tradition reinforces this and history has time and again proved that the code of ethics evolved through the glorious years of Indian Army is second to none. However the commitment of the soldier is unrestrained and is being pulled in different directions thereby threatening the sound foundation. The aspirations of the soldier today vis-à-vis of yesteryears are totally different. Effect of materialism, impact of media and consumerism is very much more evident than ever before. The scope encompasses the entire gamut of revalidation of code of ethics in the Army in the present-day scenario and expectations for the future.

2.14 **Raison D’être of the Study.** A lot has been written on subjects such as Higher Directions of War, Anatomy of Military Profession, Military history, Aspects of Indian Defence, Military strategic problems, management at the macro level, etc. Rarely one comes across research being undertaken which analyses the grass roots situation in the Army. Management/welfare at micro level is often glossed over. The ever increasing impact of socio-economic forces, the growing demand of involvement of the Army in maintenance of peace and tranquillity within the State along with maintaining a high degree of operational preparedness have to be seen in the overall context of its effect on functional relationships in the Army both during peace and war. Unless attended to with all its seriousness and urgency this problem could attain unmanageable proportions undermining the very ethos of the Army so widely talked of. There are more warlike situations than ever before; therefore more attention is required to be paid to the psychological aspects of welfare-management to prevent suicides, depression and disgruntlement.

2.15 **Limitations of the Study.** The following aspects are the limitations of the study:

2.15.1 The Indian Army is second-biggest Army in the world. It is a gigantic organisation, therefore, in a time found span it would be extremely difficult to cover
all corridors. The exhaustive service experience of the researcher and that of his colleagues and senior officers will therefore be tapped for a meaningful study.

2.15.2 The Indian Army is located in various parts of the country in diverse terrain and environment which are constraints for the study.