CHAPTER - III

METHODOLOGY
The present chapter deals with the design and the procedure of the study adopted by the investigator. As the quality of research depends on research plan and measurement procedures, the investigator attempted to select the methods most appropriate and feasible to the problem under consideration.

**SAMPLE**

For the present investigation data were collected from the state of Uttar Pradesh. The statistical information regarding the inmate population (during 1995-96) was collected from the office of the IG Prisons (UP). According to the available figures 593 females were imprisoned in 52 district jails of the state for trials and 53 females declared as convicts were serving a sentence in Nari Bandi Niketan (Lucknow).

The selection was done on the basis of age, duration of imprisonment, length of sentence and number of prior arrests. The sample comprised of 200 selected undertrial inmates and 50 convicts. The mean age for young prisoners was taken as 32 years (range from 23 years to 40 years) and 68 years (range from 45 years to 72 years) for the elderly prisoners. The mean duration of time served was 20 months for undertrials and 24 months for the convict subjects. The socioeconomic status of the subjects was low.

The following subjects were not included in the sample:

1. Prisons having few inmates (less than 8) were not visited \((n=130)\).

2. Young inmates falling in the range of 18-22 years \((n=6)\) and elderly inmates above 72 years \((n=4)\) were excluded.

3. Due to frequent turnover of undertrial prisoners, the stay in prison varied from few days to several months. Thus, inmates who have spent less than 6 months \((n=9)\), more than 24 months \((n=8)\), and new arrivals \((n=86)\) who have spent only a few days were not included.
4. Habitual or repeat offenders ($n=72$) and mentally ill prisoners ($n=9$) were not a part of this study.

5. Prisoners granted bail but awaiting bail orders ($n=67$) and short term convicts ($n=5$) were left out.

**TOOLS**

**SOCIAL SUPPORT QUESTIONNAIRE (SSQ):**

Generally, social support researches concentrate on network measurement approach, dealing with its structure, size and density and further the quality of relationship with the members of the network. After imprisonment the structure of the network is likely to change and shrink in size. Hence, the perceived availability of social support from significant people (parents/children/spouse/others) was taken into consideration. In the present study for the assessment of social support items were based on the Inventory of Socially Supportive Behaviours (Barrade, 1981), UCLA-Social Support Inventory (Dunkel-Schetter, Feinstein & Call, 1987) and Social Support Questionnaire (Sarason et al., 1983).

The questionnaire consisted of 20 items representing three types of supportive behaviours: emotional, cognitive-informational and directive guidance. The Cronbach's alpha for the three types of supportive behaviours were found to be 0.89, 0.85, 0.83, respectively. Respondents were asked to indicate on four-point scales the perceived availability of support in the present circumstances (Appendix - II).

**ENVIRONMENTAL SELF REPORT SCALE (ESRS)**

For the present purpose the ESRS questionnaire comprised of 16 items; 8- items scale by McCain, Cox and Paulus (1980), (further used by Ruback & Carr) alongwith 8 items from Fisher's scale.

McCain et al. (1980) developed this scale for the study of the effects of prison crowding on female prisoners. In which the participants were asked to rate their room or trailer for eight dimensions on 7 point scales (Good-Bad, Unattractive-Attractive, Right number of people-Too many people, Unpleasant-Pleasant, Well arranged-Poorly arranged, Uncomfortable-Comfortable, Quiet-Noisey, Uncrowded-Crowded). Ruback and Carr (1984) further used the questions based on scale used by McCain et al., in an attempt to study attitudinal and behavioural effects of
crowding in a woman's prison. The group of questions had high internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = 0.9).

Fisher's (1974) scale involves rating the environment along different dimensions such as closed-open, lonely-not lonely etc. It includes 14 dimensions in which the subject gives his/her responses. The negative end is scored as 1 and positive as 7. The total score of each subject is calculated by summing. The higher the score the more positive the attitude. 8 items (Cronbach's alpha 0.72), found suitable in the present context, were also incorporated along with McCain et al. scale (Appendix-III).

PERCEIVED CONTROL SCALE (PCS)

This scale was developed by McCain, Cox and Paulus (1980) to assess how much control inmates had over five different aspects of their living situation (e.g., how they spend their time during day, how prison is run etc.). Ruback and Carr (1984) added four more items (e.g., whether they can do what they want to do in their room, the amount of interference they get from others in doing certain activities e.g., watching television). These were rated on seven point scales. The final group of questions were based on nine aspects related to perceived control over the prison environment. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the item of this scale was 0.74. The scale was adapted for the present population (Appendix-IV).

LIFE ATTITUDE PROFILE (LAP)

Life attitude profile is a multi-dimensional measure of attitude towards life. This instrument was developed by Reker and Peacock (1981). This instrument was designed to assess the degree of existential meaning and purpose in life and the strength of motivation to find meaning and purpose. It is a seven-point Likert scale resulted in an extraction of seven primary dimensions of life attitude. The seven dimensions are (i) Life Purpose (ii) Existential Vacuum (iii) Life Control (iv) Goal Seeking (v) Death Acceptance (vi) Will to Meaning (vii) Future Meaning to Fulfill.

Cronbach's alpha internal consistency estimates of the factor scales as reported by the authors ranged from 0.83 (Life Purpose) to 0.55 (Future Meaning to Fulfill). The LAP factor-to-composite LAP score correlations ranged from 0.34 (Existential Vacuum) to 0.62 (Goal Seeking), and significant at 0.001 level.
LAP consisted of 44 items, 14 items were deleted as they were not found suitable for the present sample. The questionnaire consisted of both positive and negative items. For the positive items the scores ranged from 7-1, i.e, strongly agree (7) to strongly disagree (1). Each category having scores as -

- strongly agree - 7
- mildly agree - 6
- agree - 5
- neutral - 4
- disagree - 3
- mildly disagree - 2
- strongly disagree - 1

There are two negative items in the factor IV (Death Acceptance) in which the scoring has been reversed, i.e., from strongly agree (1) to strongly disagree (7). The sum of all these scores gave the total LAP score (Appendix-V).

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

A pilot study was conducted on 25 prisoners by means of completely unstructured, free ranging interviews. This included information regarding : number of arrests prior to the one for the present offence, age, days served in prison, other members of the family imprisoned, legal status, financial status, family background, religion and whatever subjects wanted to say. In addition the statistical information, archival records together with the informal talks with the jail personnels provided specific insights into issues and problems of prisoners.

An intensive review of literature helped to cover a number of general areas pertaining to female criminality and gerontology. Finally a closely structured interview schedule was drafted. The schedule covered the following areas : prospects of death and dying, anticipation of future problems, somatic complaints (coded as none vs. one or more after imprisonment), reports of fights and assaults, preference for living arrangement (solitary confinement vs. living with others), perception of jail amenities, religious convictions, social skills programmes, anticipated post-release problems, prison adjustment (Appendix-VI).

Whenever possible verbatim remarks of the prisoners were recorded.
DESIGN
A2 (Social Support: Yes vs. No) X 2 (Type of prisoners: Undertrials vs. Convicts) X 2 (Age Group: Young vs. Elderly) factorial design was adopted. (Flow Chart 3.1). The paradigm of the study was:

Social Support x Type of Prisoners x Age Group

Social Support
  └── Presence ─── Absence
      │      └── Type of Prisoners ─── Type of Prisoners
      │                      └── Undertrial ─── Convict
      │                          └── Undertrial ─── Convict
      │                               └── Age Group ─── Age Group
      │                                               └── Young ─── Elderly
      │                                                └── Young ─── Elderly
          └── Young ─── Elderly

Flow Chart No. 3.1

VARIABLES

The variables were classified as under:

1. Independent Variables
   1) Social Support
   2) Type of Prisoners
   3) Age Group

2. Dependent Variables
   1) Environmental Perception
      a) Perception of Crowding
      b) Perceived Control
   2) Attitude Towards Life
PROCEDURE

The study was conducted between the year 1995 and 1997, with intermittent visits to various district jails along with Nari Bandi Niketan. The investigator went through the judgement copies and judicial records of prisoners related to their admissions and releases, legal status, days served in prison, age, number of arrests, domicile, marital status, etc. (Appendix-I).

In each jail, the Head Warder introduced the investigator to all the prisoners and instructed them to answer the questions being put up by the investigator. The prisoners were hesitant in conversing in the presence of the Warder and fellow inmates, thus, each inmate was interviewed individually in isolation in their premises.

The initial phase of study was devoted in resolving the curiosity and suspicion of the inmates. The subjects put forth several questions like -

'Why are you interrogating us?'
'Do you have any power to help us?'
'Can you help us in getting bail?'
'You might put us in trouble?'

The undertrial subjects made it clear whether their responses would contaminate their case or bring problem in seeking bail since the charges levelled against them were not confirmed by the court. Convicts inquired if their expressions would delay their release or effect remission.

The investigator made it clear that their statements would be kept confidential. One is only interested in knowing what sort of support they are getting in the present condition. What they feel about their future, how they perceive their surroundings and adjust with the prison environment, what brought them here and what is their daily routine. Being a scholar has no authority to help them but after studying their cases and problems would report to the Ministry of Home Affairs for their kind consideration.
Frequent visits and informal talks helped to establish a good relationship with the subjects. Though causal analysis of the crime was not the prime purpose of the study, the investigator patiently listened to all that each one said, their narrations regarding their prison stay, their regrets of inactions and how they got entrapped etc.

The questionnaires were translated in Hindi and the correlation between the two forms, Hindi and English by two experts (who had the command on both the languages) were: SSQ-0.89, ESRS-0.87, PCS-0.91, LAP-0.88 and Interview Schedule-0.92. Each participant completed the questionnaires and interview schedule in an interview with the researcher, as the literacy level was very low. Wherever required the expressions were noted down word by word.

Inmates’ perception regarding the availability of support after imprisonment, from significant people (family, friends and others) in their lives was assessed by SSQ. Each inmate was asked to rate on a four-point scale - "I never feel like that" (1), ....rarely (2), ....mostly (3), ....always (4).

After the rating on perceptions of social support, each recipient was asked about their satisfaction with it. It was found that those giving the response of ".... never", ".... rarely", were not at all satisfied with the support than those saying ".... mostly" and ".... always". On this basis, subjects scoring less than 40 were placed under “No support group” and those scoring higher were placed under “Yes support group”.

The responses on all the tests were scored and subjected to 2x2x2 statistical analysis, followed by post-hoc comparisons. The interview schedule data were analysed by computing $\chi^2$ from 2x2 fold contingency tables.