CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY
METHODOLOGICAL PLAN/DIAGRAM

- Selection of the Target Group
  - Survey / Case Area Selection
  - Sample Size Determination
  - Questionnaire Pre-testing
  - Data Collection
    - Primary Data Collection
    - Final Questionnaire Preparation
    - Final Survey
  - Secondary Data Collection
    - National Publications
    - International Publications

- Empirical Data Processing
  - Using Statistical Tools
    - Data Analysis & Interpretations
    - Final Report

Fig 3.1: Methodological Diagram
METHODOLOGY

Methodology refers to the procedures of research or techniques including description, explanation and justification of methods of data collection and handling. Further, methodology reflects the logic of scientific investigation that deals with the procedures for building up conceptual and logical knowledge base. Also, it is of a paramount importance in scientific inquiry as validity and reliability of the facts which primarily depend upon the system of investigation. The reliability and validity of the research findings in the social sciences depend very much on the soundness of methodology and as social facts do not simply lie around waiting to be picked up rather these are carved out of the continuous web of on giving reality and as such, these must be observed within specific frame of reference, so that these can be measured and connected to other relevant facts. All this requires sound ‘method’ or ‘ways’ for the systematic conduct of a study. Resultantly the accuracy, exactness and significance of a study depend heavily upon the methodology used in the research investigation.

An important task of social scientists is to observe social phenomenon and to explain them by means of scientific theories. By theory is meant a set of interrelated proposition that account for phenomenon under study. In different sociological researches, theories are used to explain the relationship of observed facts. Positivism on which the inductive strategy is based and entitle ontological assumption about an ordered universe made up to this discrete and observable fact. Social reality is viewed as consisting of a complex of causal relations between events. The structural-functional method is based on the fundamental assumption that society is a system of inter-dependence of various parts or sub-parts which tend to create a collective goal and order. In most of the early sociological researches, this method has been used to explain order and consensus in human social system. In Parsonian parlance AGIL is the basic determinant of social system through which it maintains its order and continuity.
The four pre-requisites shall be identified and explained in course of the exploration of different aspects of social organization of the community under study.

Dialectical method according to Marxist approach is based fundamentally on the assumption that society is based on opposition, contradiction and conflict. This conflict theory known as dialectical materialism explain the existing reality. Historical materialism explains the process of change. As a research methodology, application of dialectic or conflict does not seem relevant and applicable in the present study. It may be argued that structural and functionalist approach is suitable in this study.

Society is a system in dynamic equilibrium of interacting members expressing their behaviour. How to explain this social order have been a concern of sociologists. From functionalist perspectives, it is functional pre-requisites of social system. While from Marxian perspective social order is seen as precarious but its existence is recognised. From ethno methodologist point of view social life appears orderly but this order appears to exist due to everyday activities. In other words, “ethno methodology looks at task of seeing, describing and explaining order in the words in which people explain order in the world in which they live” (Zimmerman and Wieder).

In any study of anthropological nature, researcher has to be a keen observer of the social world he intends to study. Observation is, therefore, the first and foremost method to collect information from the field of study. In the present study observation is both participant and quasi-participant. It will be discussed later in the chapter under the techniques of data collections.
3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is the arrangement for collection and analysis of data in such a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose to economise it. Generally, research design means for setting up the research in this way as to derive systematic and logically sound conclusion. Among its various aims, one of the most important is to decide the data to be collected, the sample to be selected and the manner in which the collected data to be organised. And this is all for the purpose of providing a conclusive answer to the problem of the propose research. According to F.N. Kerlinger, “it is the plan, structure and strategy of the investigation conceived so as to obtained answer to the research question and control variances.”

As the nature of researches differs in terms of purposes, so designing of the research can not be uniform. Thus, research design may be incorporated into various ways: some researches may be aimed at exploring and describing the phenomena while others may involve a diagnostic and experimental objective. Therefore, the exploratory, descriptive, diagnostic and experimental researches are the classification of research design. These are explained as follows:

(i) An exploratory research is mainly concerned with gaining familiarity with a phenomenon or to achieve new insights into it, often in order to generate data or to formulate a more precise research problem or to develop hypothesis.

(ii) The descriptive studies aim at portraying the characteristics of a particular situation or group or individual (with or without specific initial hypothesis about the nature of these characteristics of studies).

(iii) Diagnostic study involves the purpose of determining the frequency with which something is occurring with which it is associated with
something else (usually but not necessarily with a specific initial hypothesis).

(iv) The purpose of experiment at study is to test a hypothesis of a causal relationship between variables.

Being a study of a women work force which has hitherto remained unexplored, it may be called an exploratory and a descriptive study for which case study method is preferred.

**3.2 CASE STUDY METHOD**

This is a method of research, investigation, searching and analysing the life of a unit. The social unit be a person, a family, an institution, an individual or a community, is known as a case study method. It is a way of organising social data so as to preserve the unitary character of social object which is being studied. Expressed somewhat differently, it is an approach which views any social unit as a whole.

Sociologists and social anthropologists used case study method with a view of describing “qualitative” aspects of social life for which they thought information can not be gathered merely by statistical methods. This method is thought to be useful in probing many facts of social units. In order to describe the significant characteristics of a whole unit, some cases are selected with the assumption that they represent the whole unit. Cases are constructed either with the help of life, historical documents, such as personal diaries, letters and autobiographies or by making genealogical charts, sharing experiences with individuals being studied, conducting personal interviews and using relevant literatures are the other techniques which are used for portraying the qualitative significant features of the unit being studied.
In sociological researches of ethnographic nature, case study is considered a good method, although its limitation can also be not ignored. Thus, various techniques such as sampling, questionnaire, statistical records etc are being fruitful to supplement, substantiate and verify information gained through the case study method. Besides, participant observation, interview-schedule technique has been used to elicit the information from a group of the respondents selected through a sampling technique from the universe of the study. In addition to the above, few case studies are also made on the lives of women labourers in IS on the basis of random sampling method. In this respect, case studies were made keeping an eye on the socio-economic background and their occupational career and problems the working sites and at home.

3.3 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

According to Norman Blaikie, it should be clear that hypotheses play a significant and limited role in social research. They are only relevant when ‘why’ question are being investigated and then, mainly when the deductive research strategy is being used to answer them. Hypotheses are not appropriate in the inductive strategy and are generally regarded as inappropriate in the abductive strategy at least in the initial stages (Norman Blaikie, 2000: 163). Goode and Hatt, a hypothesis looks forward. It is a proposition, which can be put to a test to determine its validity. It may be contrary to, or in accord once with common sense. It may prove to be correct or otherwise in any event however, it leads to an empirical verification. Whatever the out come, the hypothesis is a question put in such a way that an answer of some kind can be forth coming. It is an example of the organised skepticism of science, the refusal to accept any statement with out empirical verification.

Wilkinson and Bhandandkar state that once the problem to be tackled in the course of research is finally instituted the researcher advisedly proceed to
formulate tentative solutions or answer to it. These proposed solutions or explanation constitute the hypotheses that the researcher would needs to test on the basis of facts already known or which can be made known. It such hypotheses are not formulated even implicitly, the researcher can not efficiently go ahead with investigation of this problem because the research in the absence of director which hypothesis typically provide, would not know what facts no look and what relation or order to search for among them. Thus the hypothesis is very useful for the researcher with out it, research is unfocused, a random empirical wandering. The results can not even be stated as facts with a clear making. It helps the researcher to understand that what kind of date must be collected in order to answer the research questions. It also helps to know about the way in which they should be organised most efficiently. It helps to see and select only those facts which are relevant to the problem or difficulty he propose to solve. This is obvious that formulation of hypothesis is an important step in the process of scientific investigation.

To achieve the objectives of the study, the following hypotheses have been drawn and tested empirically in the field:

i. Working women in construction and construction related activity receive less payment as compare to male workers for the same job.

ii. Most of the women workers come from uneducated and unskilled family background.

iii. There is exploitation and harassment of working women sometimes to the extent of sexual exploitation.

iv. Mostly women workers are barred from some specific job positions of responsibility.

v. Most of the cases of discrimination and exploitation go unreported though there are prescribed measures of legal intervention in such cases.
vi. Engagement in the work and payment for the job and job conditions are mostly negotiated by middlemen and brokers.

vii. The working environment both physical and socio-economic is not favourable and conducive for the physical and mental health of workers which causes tension and illness of the health.

3.4 SAMPLE SELECTION AND SAMPLE DESIGN

As the universe of study consist of female workers engaged in informal sector of economic activities in Savar Thana region of Bangladesh, there may be two ways to collect data from this universe.

1. Through Census Method i.e. studying all the units of the universe which comprises of 2315 women workers in different components of informal sector. Practically it is very difficult to collect data from such a big number for the purpose of this study.

2. Sampling Method: generally in empirical researches in sociology collection of primary data is done by drawing a representative from the universe. Sample as we know is a small proportion of a large whole, which represents the characteristics of the universe. In the present study therefore, a representative sample has been drawn keeping in view different components of informal sector activities in Savar Thana, Dhaka region. These sectors include Brick Fields, Building Construction, Road Construction, Material Processing Units, and Earth Cutting etc. Obviously total women workers (2315) are distributed in these different section of activities. Therefore, a sample of 200 (9 per cent of 2315 approximately) will be a representative sample for the collection of primary data from the respondents.

The principle of proportionality has been applied and 80 from brick fields activities, 40 from building construction activities, 40 from road construction, 20 from construction material processing units and 20 from others (earth cutting,
sand and stone bringing, brick kiln, water carrying, sweeping etc.) making a sum of 200 have been identified by purposive random sampling technique. Thus, different variables such as age, sex, marital status, income, family background, education, terms and condition of work, nature of work, wage rate, wage discrimination, provision of health care, security measures etc. have been taken into consideration while making a sampling.

*For this purpose, out of total 73 (approximately) fields, 36 fields (50 % of total) has been picked up on purposive sampling basis, where in men and women workers work daylong basis. To understand the working condition of female wage labourers, the socio-economic background of these respondents have been taken into consideration in details.*

### 3.5 Technique of Data Collection

Collection of information from the selected and identified units of the universe of the study may be done through different techniques generally applied in anthropological and sociological studies. These include observation, interview, interview-schedule, questionnaire and case study etc.

**Observation**

Observation is an integral part of any scientific enquiry. In deed, science begins with observation and must ultimately return to observation for final validation. Observation as a scientific tools for researcher, it serves a formulated research purpose and is considered the most modern technique of the research in sociological inquiry. Observation technique may be used to explore the existential reality of the working women in the informal sector and gain deeper insight into the research problems. This technique is also a primary method of data collection in descriptive study and even in experimental studies design for testing a casual hypothesis.
Observation is incorporated into different types: simple observation, uncontrolled, participant and non-participant observation. The types of observational techniques to be chosen in a particular study which depends upon the nature of the study, the observational procedure is most likely to be relatively unstructured because of observer is also more likely to participate in the group activity. The researcher may be a participant or even a non-participant observer of the phenomenon depends on the nature of phenomenon. And in descriptive studies, the observational procedure are more likely to be relatively structured and involve a minimum of participation in the part of observer. However, it should be noted that the degree of structured and degree of participation need not vary together. Thus, in a particular research activity, it may be the demand of both techniques.

While employing observation technique, generally, a researcher faces two kinds of problems. One is the problem of accessibility and acceptability among the people being observed. If the researcher is accepted by the people, the other problem remains there. It relates with the possibility of influencing the behaviours of the people by the presence of stranger that is the investigator. Expressed somewhat differently the people may become conscious in sharing the real information needed by a researcher/investigator. In order to overcome problems researcher does not disclose his identity and purpose. Fortunately, such a problem was not faced by this researcher in the field due to the fact that he belongs to the fields of the study under we take notes of each and every aspects of life. We also record life histories of some people. This exercise enriches our data as well as helps us in identifying major aspects related with social and economic structure of working women in informal sector. No matter how objective, we are one may have doubt in the objectivity in this research, firstly due to researcher being ‘insider’ and secondly on account of certain problem,
associated with the techniques of participant observation. And, therefore, researcher employed some quantifiable techniques of researches in order to substantiate our observations as well as to make the study verifiable.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

To get information from the respondents other techniques like interview, schedule and questionnaire are quite popular in social science researches. In the present research, questionnaire as a technique is not found suitable due to the nature of the respondents. Personal interview (unstructured open-ended question) is also not feasible due to the huge number of the respondents under the study. However, a combination of interview and schedule is considered more scientific and practical for this study and therefore a schedule consisting of various types of questions pertaining different dimensions of the research problem has been prepared to administer with selected respondents. It is a form of structured interview through already drawn questions asked in face-to-face situation with the selected respondents of sample. The schedule incorporates questions pertaining to the family, age, sex, marital status, income, education, terms and condition of work, nature of work, wage rate, wage discrimination, provision of health care, security measures etc. aspects of working women in IS.

The interview was conducted individually and in free time of the respondents. Though the questions were formulated in English, they were stated and explained into the language of the respondents. Respondents were encouraged to provide as much information, as they desire. No interventions were made during the time of interview expect when the respondents seemed to have some problem either in understanding the questions or formulating the answers. The information, researcher has gathered through interview are tabulated and on the other hand some are simply describes. As mentioned above out of different observation, interview-schedule and case study is may be more appropriate in
this study. Observation as the term implies is an objective impartial seeing of the phenomenon as in a real life situation. In the present situation observation has been focused around questions, Where, How and When. But most reliably an interview-schedule has been prepared to administrated in face to face situation with the respondents. Question must not be lengthy, must not be overlapping and not be more-searching. As far as possible question are formulated in such a way that there answers are not touchy and irritating to the respondents. Keeping all this into consideration the researcher prepared an interview-schedule keeping in the objectives the study.

FIELDS INVESTIGATION AND REFERENCE PERIOD

The preliminary field investigation was done during the period from 30th May 2004 to 18th August 2004. The study was undertaken relating to the year 2002-2005, though the relevant information was collected with reliability and practicability of the study.

3.6 SECONDARY SOURCES

For this research work secondary source of information were also consulted by reviewing available literature on urban and suburb informal sectors with the emphasis on studies in Bangladesh and like other developing countries, Such secondary data have also been collected from various government and non-governmental departments, officials, agencies, and organisations, statistical year book, report of the labour force survey of Bangladesh, ILO Bulletins on urban sectors. Besides, available books, journals, websites relating to women in informal sector in developing countries have also been consulted.
3.7 APPLICATION OF STATISTICAL TOOLS

For data analysis, few distinct techniques viz., analytical and explanatory have been used for interpretation of data. Various statistical tools were used according to the requirements and suitability of sample. For descriptive statistics, average and the bar-diagram, pie-diagram have been used and to test the variability of different variables, standard deviation has been calculated. To test the hypothesis, chi-square test has been done. For applying the statistical techniques and tools, the modern statistical software package has been widely used considering the suitability of the study package.
REFERENCES:


Ibid. pp.1-3
Ibid. p.12
Ibid. p.128


Ibid. pp.118-124
Ibid. p.154

Ibid. p. 6
Ibid. p. 24


