CHAPTER III

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Area of the study

The materials for the present study have been collected from two rural areas and one urban area of Jaintia Hills District in Meghalaya. The names of two villages are Nartiang and Mihmyntdu. Jowai, the head-quarters of Jaintia Hills District is the only urban centre in the district.

The aforesaid two villages from the rural areas and the only urban centre are selected with a specific purpose. It has already been mentioned, one of the major objectives of the present study is to study the fertility and mortality differentials of the Jaintias according to rural-urban residence and religion. On the basis of religion the Jaintias can be divided into three sub-groups, that is, the Niamtre Jaintias, Hindu Jaintias and the Christian Jaintias.
The village Nartiang, is a historically important place in the district, which is the seat of ancient Hinduism among the Jaintias of Jaintia Hills District. It is the only village of Jaintia Hills District, where the Hindu Jaintias inhabit. Along with the Hindu Jaintias there are Christian Jaintias also, who inhabit in Nartiang village. A few Niamtre Jaintias, who have migrated from the neighbouring villages are also found to reside in the village. In the village there is a public health centre with a doctor and other paramedical staff. The public health centre is close to the Christian locality. The Hindu Jaintia locality is far away from the public health centre. The Hindu Jaintias live in hillocks, whereas, the Christian Jaintias live in the foot hills and flat lands.

The village Mihmyntdu is inhabited mostly by the Niamtre Jaintias. Some Christian Jaintia families are also found in the village. There is a public health sub-centre without any doctor but with a nurse.

Jowai is the head quarters of Jaintia Hills district and is the only urban centre in the district.

This report is based on the data collected from May, 1992 to April, 1993.

Sample

A total of 847 households, 431 from the urban area (Jowai) and 416 from the two rural areas, comprise the sample of the present study. The rural sample consists of 252 households.
from Nartiang and 164 households from Mihmyntdu villages. Altogether, 1091 evermarried women out of 847 households, were interviewed to carry out the present study.

The area wise distribution of the couples belonging to different religious groups is shown in Table 2.0. The religion of the wife is taken into consideration while distributing the couples as per religion both in rural and in urban areas, as the Jaintias are matrilineal.

**TABLE 2.0. DISTRIBUTION OF COUPLES BY RELIGION AND RESIDENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Number of Couples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nartiang</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mihmyntdu</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural total</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jowai</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grand total</td>
<td>468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Methodology**

The present study mainly aims at finding out fertility and mortality patterns and the differentials. For this purpose, a number of variables had to be taken into consideration. Thus, the structured schedule method was followed and house to house survey was conducted. Three separate schedules were prepared.
Researcher with village children in Nartiang.

The village counsellor standing near a thatched type house in Milmyntdu village.
The first schedule was designed to collect information regarding the household. This schedule include general information like the type of house, sanitary, electricity and drinking water facilities, total number of persons living in the house, name, age, sex, marital status, age at marriage, educational status, occupational status, health condition of the family members etc.

The second schedule, that is, the fertility and mortality schedule was prepared to collect information on age at menarche, age at menopause, age of women at first delivery, age of women at last delivery, reproductive performances including live births, pregnancy wastage, deaths, their present age, age at death in case of a dead child, sex, cause of death, type and place of delivery, knowledge and adoption of family planning devices.

A third schedule was designed to collect information regarding family planning method, value dimensions of children, ideal family size/norm etc.

In addition, the case study method was followed in order to support some of the information with evidence.

A pilot survey was conducted with an initially prepared schedule in order to find out the suitability of the items. To conduct the pilot study, a total of fifteen households were selected at random, five from the urban centre, Jowai, six from Nartiang village and four from Mihmyntdu village. While
conducting the pilot survey, some difficulties were met with the initially prepared schedule. In order to overcome the difficulties and shortcomings of the schedule, necessary modifications were made. Thus, it was accepted as the final form of the schedules for the present study.

Each of the evermarried woman from the respective households, was interviewed personally through the designed schedule. In some of the households, general information regarding religion, custom, culture, social structure etc., and also about their age, occupation, education, diseases and other related information were collected from the male members of the households as well. In order to get clear idea about the religion, socio-cultural structure, marriage customs, etc., of the Jaintias, personal interview of some important and well known persons were conducted through unstructured interview. In case of illiterate men and women or those who cannot speak or understand other than their own language, interviews were conducted with the help of the interpreters.

The Investigator met some women who refused to be interviewed. The households wherein this category of women belong, were rejected from the present study as information could not be collected from all the married women residing in the house at the time of interview.

The difficulty was experienced when the questions regarding age and income were put to the informants. In order to get appropriate or approximate information regarding age, I had to ask some extra questions and put the same questions to
different members of the family for cross-examinations. The data on age at menarche and menopause were collected by retrospective method. As a result, there is a possibility that there could be some recall lapses.

The data in the present study have been analysed using standard statistical techniques. The methods described by Barclay (1958) were followed for calculating different fertility and mortality rates.