CHAPTER – IV

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The methodology of the present study falls under descriptive survey research. According to Best and Kahn (1992), “A descriptive study describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exist, options that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing.” This type of research mainly deals with the relationship between variables, the testing of hypothesis and development of generalizations, principles or the theories that have universal validity.

Survey is the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research. Through survey method, data gathered at a particular point in time with the intention of describing the nature of existing conditions or identifying standards against which existing conditions can be compared or determining the relationship that exists between specific events (Cohen and Manion, 1989). Thus in a descriptive survey research, data specified in the problem are obtained from a clearly defined population in terms of the variables studied.

In the present study, data are gathered from ‘Neo-literates’ and ‘Illiterates’ of three development blocks (viz., Sipajhar, Raha and
Chandrapur) of three Districts (viz., Darrang, Nagaon and Kamrup) where literacy campaign by GVSA is being pursued.

Prior to finalization of the study tools an initial survey (pilot survey) was made in one development block to find out the feasibility of the study as well as the efficiency of the tools to be used. After the initial survey, the study was finalized.

4.1 Data Base:

In this study primary data are used. Primary data are collected from 300 sample respondents (discussed in sampling design).

4.2 Sampling:

4.2.1 Target Population:

All neo-literates who have completed Improved Pace and Content of Learning (IPCL) III, IV or V under the ‘literacy campaign’ by GVSA during 1993-99, in the seven literacy blocks of six districts of Assam.

4.2.2 The Sampling Frame:

The sampling frame consists of all the panchayats of seven development blocks of six districts where literacy campaign is being pursued.
4.2.3 Sampling Design

Multistage sampling was used with the neo-literates being the last unit of sample.

Stage 1: 3 literacy blocks were randomly selected from 7 literacy blocks.

Stage 2: 6 panchayats were selected at random, i.e., 2 panchayats from each block in selected 3 blocks.

Stage 3: from the selected panchayats in each block 100 individuals of which 50 neo-literates (25 males and 25 females) and 50 illiterates (25 males and 25 females) were selected by the method convenience sampling.

Thus a sample of 300 individuals was selected from 6 panchayats of 3 literacy blocks.

The sampling breakage is shown below in Table- 4.1
Table- 4.1 : Block-wise sample distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SL NO.</th>
<th>BLOCK</th>
<th>DISTRICT</th>
<th>PANCHAYAT</th>
<th>SAMPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Neo-literate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Sipajhar</td>
<td>Darrang</td>
<td>(1) Hazarikapara (2) Devanand</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Raha</td>
<td>Nagaon</td>
<td>(1) Phulaguri (2) Dighaliati</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Chandra-pur</td>
<td>Kamrup</td>
<td>(1) Chandrapur (2) Pachim Mayang</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3 Blocks</td>
<td>3 Districts</td>
<td>6 Panchayats</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Map: The location of GVSA literacy blocks are shown in the map of Assam attached herewith.

4.3 Description of the Tools Used

The following tools were employed to gain valuable qualitative and quantitative information for the study –

4.3.1 Literacy Test

4.3.2 Interview Schedule

4.3.3 Focus Group Discussion

4.3.1 Literacy Test

The Literacy test is intended to measure literacy achievements of neo-literates after completing the prescribed primers. For the present study, to measure reading, writing and numeracy competencies of the neo-literates a test paper was prepared as per the guidelines provided
by the Directorate of Adult Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, New Delhi (1992). The paper consisted of three sections, viz., Reading, Writing and Arithmetic with score distributions of 40, 30, 30 (total 100) respectively.

I. **The Reading section consists of the following types of items**—

(a) Reading of four words having vowel, consonant and matra with one mark for each correctly read word, (total marks-4).

(b) Reading with understanding of five small sentences with two marks for each correctly read sentence (total marks-10).

(c) A passage consisting of eight sentences with 26 words with 1 mark for each correctly read word (total marks-26), which also serves as a comprehension passage for writing.

II. **The writing section consists of the following types of items**—

(a) Three questions based on the passage meant for reading, to test comprehension and writing skills, one mark for each correctly written answer (total-3 marks).
(b) Fill up the blanks with appropriate words given in bracket, 1 mark for each correct word (total 6 Marks).

(c) Filling up a form. In filling up of the from the learner is asked to write his or her name, father’s name, mother’s name, address, occupation and his or her age, 1 mark for each item (total 6 marks).

(d) With the given words make sentences of, 1 mark for each correctly made sentence (total 5 marks).

(e) A short letter writing 1 mark for giving date, 2 marks for correctly written address, 1 mark each for correct spacing, correct alignment and correct word formation and 4 marks for text/body/message (total-10 marks).

III. The Arithmetic part consists of the following types of items-

(a) Fill up the blanks with missing numerals, 1 mark for each correct answer (total marks-5).

(b) Four addition sums and four subtraction sums (two digits), each correct answer carries 2 marks (total marks-16).

(c) Two multiplication sums (single digit), each correct answer carries 2 marks (total marks-4).
(d) One simple division sum (total marks-2).
(e) Write the time indicated on a picture of a clock (total marks-3).

To obtain NLM norm, a person should secure a minimum of 70 per cent aggregate marks in the literacy test (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic).

The progress of a learner is regarded as satisfactory if she/he secures at least 50 per cent marks in each literacy skill, i.e., Reading, Writing and Arithmetic (Directorate of Adult Education, 1992).

A copy of the test is appended as Annexure-I.

4.3.2 Interview Schedule

The interview schedule contains questions relating to literacy and various dimensions of individual development. Both structured as well as open-ended questions were included in order to obtain qualitative and quantitative information.

A copy of the Interview Schedule is appended as Annexure II.
4.3.3 Focus Group Discussion

In order to capture the real situation in the field, the focus Group Discussion (FGD) technique was used. Two questions guided the FGD. They are :-

Q. 1. Do you think that literacy helps in a person's own development?
Q.2. Will literacy help in societal development more particularly development of your own village?

4.4 Procedure of Data Collection

As per design of the study, data were collected from selected neo-literates and illiterates. In each block, with the cooperation of GVSA activists the investigator selected the neo-literates; equal number of illiterates were also selected. The neo-literates were motivated to appear a literacy test so that they could know what they had retained as a result of their literacy. Accordingly a literacy test was administered to them. ‘Namghar’ (prayer hall), school or ‘Community Center’ of the locality were the places where the test was administered to the neo-literates. Each neo-literate was provided with a answer script along with a test paper (prepared by the investigator) for the test. After the test was over answer scripts were collected for evaluation. In this way, data regarding different literacy skills like
Reading, Writing and Arithmetic competencies of the neo-literates were collected and assessed.

To see the effect of the literacy campaign upon the individual life and the community a face-to-face individual interview was conducted by the investigator with the neo-literates and the illiterates with a prepared interview schedule consisting of both the structured and the open-ended questions relating to the intended subject. Their responses formed the basis of inference and analysis of this study.

The investigator also held focus group discussions with some of these neo-literates and the illiterates on the issue of importance of literacy in one's individual life and society. The FGDs were held for the neo-literates and the illiterates and for the men and the women separately. Care was taken during the FGDs to create an atmosphere where the participants felt free to give their responses freely and without hesitations. The investigator (i.e., the researcher) listened carefully whatever the group had said without unnecessarily interrupting the flow of discussion. Only occasionally she tried to bring the discussion to proper focus by putting a question here and there. As stated above the discussions were mainly steered towards
gaining insight into impact of literacy at individual and societal levels. A tape recorder was used to record the responses during the interview without distracting the interviewee. The respondents' emotions, hesitations and other specific reactions were also keenly observed and recorded by the investigator. Valuable qualitative data were collected through this discussion.

4.5 Statistical Techniques Used

For quantitative data, Mean score, Percentage and 't' test were employed and for qualitative analysis the method of matrix display was used. The computation of statistical data was done through "Statistical Package for the Social Science" (SPSS), the computer package for analyzing quantitative data.