

CHAPTER - II

M E T H O D O L O G Y ...

1. Theoretical Model :

The present study of attitudinal change among the unmarried graduates necessarily corresponds to rural setting. For the purpose of the study, a sample of one hundred respondents consisting of fifty males and fifty females was chosen from various colleges located in mofussil areas of the Satara district.

An unmarried graduate from the rural set-up has been chosen as a unit of analysis, and an attempt has been made to understand the association between the higher education and the changing attitudes towards Marriage; if any.

The variables taken into account for the present study are, age of the respondents, sex, religion, caste, occupation, rating of family, education and religious mindedness. Here an attempt has been made to study the relationship between the higher education and religiosity, willingness to marry out side caste, insistence on dowry and physical characteristics of prospective spouses.

Operational Definitions :

Before explaining as to how a sample was selected and how the data were collected the researcher would like to define briefly some of the terms which have been used in the present study.

Change :

A 'change' is taken to mean a variation or substitution of one attitude for another.

Attitude :

An attitude may be defined as a "Tendency to react favourably or unfavourably towards some person, thing, or values".

Marriage :

"Socially sanctioned relationship between two opposite sexes established with a view to form a family".

2. Research Design :

The research procedures used in the present study were as follows :

2.1 The objectives of Study :

The general objective of the study was to find out the attitudes of unmarried graduates in a rural setting towards their marriage in general, and caste, occupation, education, dowry in particular in connection with marriage.

2.2 Hypotheses to be tested :

The short but precise and structured questionnaire was prepared in consultation with the research guide to collect the first hand information to test the following

hypotheses.

- 1) Higher education has not led to a change in endogamous nature of caste.
- 2) Tendency to insist on dowry among the graduates is on the decrease.
- 3) Religiosity has a place in settling of marriages as far as female graduates in the rural setting are concerned.
- 4) Marriages arranged by parents are still being preferred by graduates.
- 5) Age at marriage is increasing.
- 6) Media of news papers, i.e., advertisement for matrimonial alliances is highly disfavoured in the rural-setting.
- 7) Graduate females, too, prefer their husbands to be superior to them, in education, position, salary etc.

2.3 Locale of the Study :

The respondents selected for the present study hail from various villages affiliated to Dahiwadi, Khatav, Koregaon, Karad and Patan talukas of the district of Satara. The above places have colleges providing education upto graduate and post-graduate level (Karad) in Arts, Commerce and Science faculties. The village Talmawale, too, has a college providing education upto graduate level. The above

areas fall in the southern part of the Satara district in Maharashtra. Satara at the Western limits of Deccan table land, lies between $16^{\circ} 50'$ and $18^{\circ} 10'$ North, and $73^{\circ} 45'$ and $75^{\circ} 00'$ East. It has an area of 10,492 square kms., and a population of 17,27,376 according to 1971 census, with eleven talukas. The literacy of the district is 38.32 percent in which male literacy is 52.38 percent and female literacy is 24.77 percent.

3. The Design of the Study : Sampling :

Sampling involved the selection of unmarried graduate respondents from six colleges, 5 located at taluka places and one at the village, i.e., Talmawale.

3.1 Selection of the Colleges :

In the selection of the colleges main purpose was to select colleges, which are situated exclusively in the rural areas. Moreover, places which are not industrially developed and urbanized. However, Karad is an exception. Though Karad is industrially developing, the majority of the students come from the adjoining villages. The main reasons in the selection of these colleges were as follows :

Firstly, of the eleven talukas of the Satara district, three talukas, viz., Javali, Khandala and Mahabaleshwar do not have colleges, instructing upto graduate

level. Phaltan and Satara are two places, which are developed educationally, industrially and are on the threshold of Modernization and so had to be excluded from the selection.

Secondly, Dahiwadi (Man taluka), Khatav, and Koregaon are drought-prone areas and hence backward in all respects.

Thirdly, villages coming under above talukas are predominantly agricultural and hence representing the traditional rural structure.

Fourthly, these colleges were freely accessible to the researcher, since they are linked by roads and State Transport buses.

On the basis of above mentioned qualitative criteria, colleges were chosen for the present study.

3.2 Selection of Respondents :

The next step in the sampling was to select respondents, i.e., unmarried graduates, since they were conceived to be the units of analysis in the present study. The method used for the selection of the respondents was " systematic sampling". Thus, the visits were paid to the above mentioned colleges in order to get a list of graduate

pass-outs in the year 1980-81. Two separate lists were prepared, one for the male and the other for the female respondents. While preparing lists it was strictly seen that respondent comes from a village and not even from a taluka place. The study was restricted only to unmarried graduates only, with a view to limit the number by excluding under-graduates and mariculates. Secondly, an individual does not think of his or her marriage until he completes his or her education. Efforts were also made to include unmarried graduates of various age-groups, educational levels, castes, religious groups, employed and unemployed and of varied socio-economic family backgrounds.

To study the total universe of all unmarried graduates was a physical impossibility. However, a list of passed-out graduates in the year 1980-81 was obtained from the colleges mentioned earlier. Two separate lists of 500 male and 250 female graduates were prepared with a view of probing into the problems of a sample of 50 male graduates and 50 female graduates was chosen with the help of sampling technique. Later on respondents' addresses were obtained.

4. Tools and Techniques of Data Collection :

4.1 Questionnaire :

The data were obtained mainly by administering an anonymous questionnaire to the respondents. A questionnaire

was constructed in English mainly because of two reasons. First, all the respondents were graduates, and secondly, data were to be processed on Electronic Data Processing Machine. The questionnaire was a structured one, having open-ended as well as close-ended questions. A brief summary of the purpose of the study, along with the instructions was provided to the respondents. The questionnaire was divided into five parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of questions regarding, age, religion, caste, occupation. In short socio-economic background of the respondents was the main focus. Questions in the second part were framed to probe into the educational background of the family. The third part of the questionnaire was devoted to the religious background of the respondents. Questions in the fourth part were related to the attitudes towards marriage; whereas the fifth part of questionnaire was dealt with the expectations regarding respondent's would-be husband or wife and this part was further sub-divided into sub-divisions, seeking separate information from males and females as well.

The framing of questions was done in such a fashion that they could be easily understood by the respondents in order to get quick responses from them. Leading questions as well as embarrassing questions were avoided. Highest possible efforts were made to avoid questions depicting

private and personal life of the respondents. The questions were framed in such a manner that even the most reluctant respondent could have no hesitation in giving the required information to the researcher.

Pre-Testing of the Questionnaire :

The questionnaire, after structured, was shown to the experts, professionals and the guide. Their suggestions were taken into account in a frank manner and it was restructured and modified accordingly. The questionnaire was pre-tested on ten respondents, four in villages, three in the ladies' hostel and other three in the gents' hostel of the Shivaji University, Kolhapur. In the light of this experience some questions were modified and some others were dropped all together.

After pre-testing, a modified and up-to-date questionnaire was handed over to the respondents personally with a request to fill in their information frankly without revealing the identities, so that a sense of objectivity could be maintained. The respondents were assured of their anonymity. A fortnight's time was given to them to fill in the questionnaire at home during their leisure time. Ofcourse, the questionnaires were handed over to the respondents, only when, they were fully convinced of the academic purpose of the study and its utility and

significance. The researcher himself collected the questionnaires, and before collecting the questionnaires, the respondents' feelings about the questionnaire were also ascertained. The respondents were also requested to fill in blanks if some questions were left unanswered. Filling of each and every questionnaire took about fifteen to twenty five minutes.

Establishing Rapport :

To gain proper and authentic information a good researcher should establish a proper rapport before the conducts enquiries. However, establishment of a rapport with strangers, especially with female respondents, was quite a difficult job. The present researcher could success in this matter, to the extent that he could get as many as 118 questionnaires filled in. Respondents were contacted personally, through acquaintances, hostel secretaries, wardens of hostels and VIP's of villages, local school teachers and college and university students. The respondents were told very frankly and politely about the purpose of the study and were also assured that information given by them would be strictly used for research and academic purposes only and would be kept strictly confidential. Since all the respondents were graduates, the researcher found it easy to convince them. When they were convinced about the real

purpose of the study, then only the questionnaires were handed over to them. In this way the rapport was fully established with the respondents, and hence, the data collected may be said to be quite authentic and reliable. However, the researcher remained faithful to the data, without permitting personal bias.

Code Book :

The collection of questionnaires was followed by the preparation of a code book. All coding was done in code numbers. There were 62 columns in all. Then, data were transferred to code-sheets. A tabulation plan was made according to the requirements of various aspects of the study. These code sheets and tabulation plan, then, were sent to the Electronic Data Processing Unit of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay. This was followed by interpretation of tables in the light of requirement of the study.

Experiences and Difficulties in the field-work :

The experiences that were confronted in the field work were quite interesting, pleasing as well as better, too.

It was rather difficult to contact female respondents in the villages. Since they were unmarried they were reluctant to give any information regarding their views on

marriage. "Why do you poke your nose in our private lives?" or "a stranger like you, has nothing to do with it", or "this is none of your business" and such remarks were heard fairly frequently.

In one village, when enquired about the girl and her whereabouts, the members of her family, thought of the researcher as a prospective mate who had come with a proposal for their daughter and was received with warm hospitality.

Further, in the ladies' hostel the warden of the hostel was reluctant to give permission to see hostel girls, but later on, when the warden was convinced fully, she allowed the researcher to take to the girls. But when the girls came out and came to know the purpose of the visit to them they began to give lame excuses like, 'wanted to study' or "lack of time", or 'come tomorrow'. But when the warden requested them, they were convinced and took the questionnaires. While collecting the questionnaires, it was found that even a fortnight's time was inadequate for some of them, for they did not fill in questionnaires, due to lack of time, or since they were out of station. One questionnaire was left completely blank and was returned. When asked politely the girl said,

" I don't want to marry throughout my life time, then where does the question of stating my views on marriage arise ? That argument would be baseless and useless.

However, a few female respondents pursuing their post graduate studies, were very anxious to fill in the questionnaires and requested the researcher to show the results of the study, after its completion.

As far as male respondents were concerned all were very happy on hearing the subject of study and they showed their willingness readily, without any degree of hesitation to fill in their questionnaires.