CHAPTER-IV

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Introduction

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In it we study the various steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his research problem along with the logic behind them. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research methods/techniques but also the methodology. The researcher should also know which of the method is relevant to the present study and which are not.

The research methodology has many dimensions and research methods do constitute a part of the research methodology. The scope of research methodology is wider than that of research methods. Thus, when we talk of research methodology we not only talk of the research methods but also consider the logic behind the methods we use in the context of our research study and explain why we are using a particular method or technique and why we are not using others so that research results are capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself or by others.

Thus research methodology refers to the sum of techniques of data collection, tool or methods of analyzing data and theoretical perspectives that governs research and the logic behind the enquiry.

Methods of research are very important in a research work. Methods explain the various steps to be adopted in formulation a research problem—the manner in which the problems are formulated, the definition of terms used, the selection of area for investigation, the validity of data collection, tools, analysis and interpretation of data.

All educational research in fact can be classified and categorized in one or combination of the following methods

1) **Historical Method**: -Historical research attempts to establish facts so as to arrive at conclusions concerning past events. This is usually accompanied by an interpretation of these events and of their relevance to present circumstances and what might happen in the future. The main purpose of historical research, therefore, is to arrive at an accurate account of the past so as to gain a clearer perspective of the present.

2) **Descriptive Method: -** Which provides a method of investigation to study, describe and interprete what exist at present.

3) **Experimental Method:** This provides a method of investigation to describe basic relationships among phenomena under controlled conditions.

The selection of a method and the specific design within that method appropriate in investigating a research problem will depend upon the nature of the problem and research questions, and kind of data that the problem entail.

The selection of method should be in harmony with specific principles and adequate enough to lead the dependable generalization. A pre-planned and well defined method will provide the investigator a scientific and a feasible plan for attacking and solving the problem under investigation.

Method of the present study

The present study aims at determining and presenting with authenticity the important facts about the life, character and contribution of important Educator - Srimanta Sankardeva made in the field of Education, Literature, Art and Culture. The study is a necessary foundation for upliftment of moral as well as spiritual value based education for the present society, so the present study is a biographical research and therefore the researcher has completed the piece of research work by adopting biographical research under historical method of research.

Bio-graphical research

Biographical research aims at determining and presenting truthfully the important facts about the life, character and achievement of important educators.

Biographical research is an exciting, stimulating and fast-moving field which seeks to understand the changing experiences and outlooks of individuals in their daily lives, what they see as important, and how to provide interpretations of the accounts they give of their past, present and future. The kinds of material that are deemed relevant also cover a wide area: 'personal documents' or 'documents of life' (Plummer 1983) which may include diaries, letters, autobiographies, biographies, memoranda and other materials(Denzin 1989). Clandinin and Connelly conclude that these are 'field texts', which may be produced before the research for a different usage (Clandinin and Connelly 1994: 419). They outline oral history, annals and chronicles, family stories, photographs and other personal and family artifacts, research interviews, journals, autobiographical writing, letters, conversations and field notes (Clandinin and Connelly 1994). So, documents may be written for different purposes, for different audiences (including the self) and immediately or much later after the events described. All these different sources and strategies have been adjudged, by opponents and proponents, to raise important methodological issues surrounding reliability and validity.

The appeal of biographical research is that it is exploring, in diverse methodological and interpretive ways, how individual accounts of life experience can be understood within the contemporary cultural and structural settings and is thereby helping to chart the major societal changes that are underway, but not merely at some broad social level. Biographical research has the important merit of aiding the task of understanding major social shifts, by including how new experiences are interpreted by individuals within families, small groups and institutions.[1]

The foremost purpose of bio-graphical research is to gain a clearer perspective of the past and the present. The present problems are understandable only on the basis of their past.The most common motive is to arrive at an accurate account of the past. The merits of bio-graphical research are–

- Biographical research provides us with a greater appreciation of the culture and of the role which education is to play in the progress of society.
- It enlightens us as to how the functions and roles of social institutions have shifted from time to time.
- It is a necessary foundation for any educational reform.
- It helps to remove educational prejudices, misconceptions, fads and frills.
- It enables us to understand the dynamics of educational change.
- It helps in avoiding mistakes of the past.
- Biographical research provides important information concerning the effects of certain past educational practices and may suggest programmes for future action, based upon the evaluation of these past experiences.
- It develops understanding of the deep rooted causes of the present day educational problem.
- It develops our ability to locate, analyse and appraise historical evidence and to understand the limitations of this evidence.
- The most common motive is to arrive at an accurate account of the past.
- It provides an important element in the professional training and equipment of the teachers and educational administrators.
- It is an ally in the scientific study of education rather than a competitor.
- It inspires respect for sound scholarship and reverence for great teachers.

Only in the light of their origin and growth, can the numerous problems of the present be viewed sympathetically

The demerits of bio-graphical research are--

- In biographical research study the efforts of the historian in the collection of data are seriously handicapped because the historian (researcher) has not lived at the time and is thus removed from the event that the researcher investigates. Therefore he must draw his data from the experiences and observations of others.
- The recorded experiences are available in their exaggerated form and are full of superfluous details. They are praise - oriented and do not give any comments and judgment.

- The recorded experiences are written from an outdated point of view and do not suit present day requirements. The ancient historian could not have foreseen the requirements of his successors after a gap of many centuries. For example, he tried to give an overall picture of the society whereas we want specific item - wise information about education. No age is in a position to anticipate very completely the questions to which the following ages will seek the answers.
- The data collected for biographical research study are not comparable to the materials of the physical sciences. They have to be reconstructed in many cases, from rather nebulous and unverifiable sources.
- The records which have been destroyed cannot be created over again. The available records are incomplete and otherwise defective in several ways.

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Documents collected for the present study

A document may be authentic and yet not reliable. It may be genuine in its authorship but it may not reveal a true picture of the person, time or event under investigation. Its author may not have been competent, honest or unbiased enough. He might have worked under fear, pressure or vanity. An unduly long period of time may have elapsed between the incident and its recording, So that memory might have failed in presenting a complete or accurate picture. The data cannot be used as historical evidence worthy of consideration, unless the possibility of the occurrence of such distorting factors as this is weeded out by a careful examination of the content of the documents. The following documents are collected by the researcher which helped her to carry on her present piece of work.

A. Books on Sankardeva

Barkakati, S. K. (1995) *Sri SriSankardeva- A total personality,* BaniMandir, Guwahati Assam.

Barkakati, S. K.(2005) *Mahapurusa Srimanta Sankardeva,* BaniMandir, Guwahati, Asssam.

Barua, B. K. (2009) *Sankardeva- Vaishnava Saint of Assam.*Bina Library, Guwahati, Assam.

Barua, G. et al, (Ed.) (2008) Srimanta Sankardeva and His Philosophy, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Assam. India.

Chaliha, B. P. (Ed.) (1978) *Sankardeva-Studies in Culture,* Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon, Assam.

Chaudhury P. C. (1972) *Jagatguru Srimanta Sankardeva*, New Book Stall, Guwahati, Assam.

Darbari, J. (Ed.) (1998) *Srimanta Sankardeva--The Living Legend,* Vikash Publishing House Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

Das, P. (2013) *Srimanta Sankardeva in the world Plateform: Dr. W. L. Smith and PrabhatC. Das,* Madhuchayanika Publication, Guwahati, Assam.

Gait, S. E. (2008) *A History of Assam*, EBH Publication (India), Guwahati, Assam

Goswami, K. D.(1999) *Life and Teaching of Mahapurusa Srimanta Sankardev,* Forum for Sankardeva Studies, Guwahati, Assam.

Goswami, R. K. D. (1996) *Esssay on Sankardeva*, Lawyer's Book Stall, Guwahati, Assam

Gupta, Bina, (2008) *A Tribute to Sankardeva, Arunava Publication, Guwahati, Assam.*

Malakar, R. (1977) *Teaching of Sankardeva,* Sankarjyoti Association, Chandigar,

Neog, M. (1967) *Sankardeva,* National Book Trust, India, New Delhi.

Neog, M. (1998)) *Sankardeva and His Times-Early History of the Vaisnava Faith and Movement in Assam,* Lawyer's book Stall, Guwahati, Assam.

Phukan, B. (2010) *Sirmanta Sankardeva-Vaisnava Saint of Assam*, Kaziranga Book, Guwahati, Assam.

Sarma, S. N. (1999) *Neo-vaisnavite Movement and the Satra Institution of Assam*, Lawyer's Book Stall, Guwahati, Assam.

B. Journal on Sankardeva

Bora, S. C. (Ed.) (2002) *Mahapurusajyoti, vol.-IV*, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon, Assam.

Chaliha, B. P. (Ed.). (1999) *Mahapurusajyoti, vol.-II*, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon, Assam.

Chaliha, B. P. (Ed.). (2000) *Mahapurusajyoti, vol.-III*, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon, Assam.

Chutia, D. (Ed.). (1997) *Mahapurusajyoti, vol.-I*, Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Nagaon, Assam

C. Souvenir on Sankardeva

Gayan, B. (Ed.) (2009) *Bhakti Jyotsna* , Srimanta Sankardeva Sangha, Simaluguri, Nagaon, Assam.

D. Books composed by Srimanta Sankardeva

i. Kirtana Ghosha : It is the earliest monumental works by Srimanta Sankardeva. It is saidto be a magnificent collection of versified prayers andanecdotes culled from *Bhagavatapurana*.

ii. Gunamala : It is a gist of the whole of the *Bhagavatapurana* with special treatment of the career of Krishna and it was composed by Srimanta Sankardeva in Assamese verses at the Koch court Naranarayana.

***iii.* Bhagavatapurana:** Out of twelve skandhas of *Bhagavatapurana* Sankardeva translated eight skandhas into Assamese language viz-*Bhagavata-I, II, III, VI, VIII, , X, XI, XII*

and amog these Books *Bhagavata-X* is very popular known as *Adi- Dasama.*The documentary evidence has been found by the researcher in the book Sankardeva and his Times by Neog, M. published by Lawyer's Book Stall, Guwahati, 1998, p.161.

Collection of data

The researcher has visited Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati; Krisna Kanta Handique Library, Guwahati University; District Library, Guwahati; Srimanta Sankardeva Kalakhetra, Guwahati for searching the review of literature. The researcher has relied on a number of secondary sources in the form of books, journals, periodicals, articles, English and vernacular magazines, dissertations and theses. The researcher has collected all available datas which are relevant to the problem.

Besides these a personal contact was made by the researcher with the prominent educationists who have provided a lot of valuable information relating to the educational contribution of Sankardeva which fall under formal and informal education. The researcher has visited the prominent Satra and Namghar in Assam like Auniati Satra, Sri Sri Uttar Kamalabari *Satra*, Bengenaati *Satra*, Garmur *Satra*, Barpeta Kirtan Ghar and Bheladenga Satra where the researcher has met with the Satradhikars who have given important information relating to her research work. In the *Satra* and *Namghar* the researcher has found *Sachi Paat* (the bark of Sachi or Agaru tree) the original manuscript of Sankardeva where verses of *Bhagavata Gita*, *Kirtan ghosha* and *Gunamala* were written. The data to be collected are classified into primary and secondary sources.

Primary sources

The primary sources are eye witness accounts and are the only solid bases of historical enquiry. The original documents or remains come under the category of primary sources. They are available in written, pictorial forms.

i. Personal records: Sankardeva's diaries, autobiographies of Sankardeva, letters, manuscript, articles, original books of Sankardeva.
ii. Interviews with prominent educationist.
iii. Pictorial form: photograph, drawing, painting and sculpture.
iv. Remains or relics: musical instruments, art objects, cloth.

Secondary sources

Secondary sources are the accounts of an event provided by a person who don't directly observe the event, object or condition. The person may have directly contacted an actual observer and talked with him or read account by an observer. The researcher relied as much as possible on primary sources and used the secondary sources only to bridge the gaps between the various pieces of primary data.

In the location of source materials of the present study periodical indexes, bibliographies, historical reviews, dissertations, theses, journals of Mahapurushjyoti, research journals provided helpful guidance.

Devices and techniques

Since the present study relies on the historical method**,** there is no need of test. But in every type of research generally some devices are used to collect data. Accordingly in the present study the investigator has employed the following devices or procedure to collect relevant data.

(i) Extensive study of ancient scriptures of Srimanta Sankardeva
(ii) Extensive study of books, theses and journal of and on Srimanta Sankardeva
(iii) Review of related literatures on Sankardeva.
(iv) Visit to different *Namghars* and *Satras* of Assam and thorough discussion with Satradhikars pertaining to the study.
(v) Interviews with some prominent educationists having depth of thoughts of Srimanta Sankardeva.