

**FUNCTIONS AND DYSFUNCTIONS
OF
RELIGION IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY**

*Thesis submitted to the University of Calicut
for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology*

By

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am well aware that this work, indeed, is the deed of God Almighty that is realised through me and hence I dedicate this thesis to the All Pervading.

I am happy that I got a savant, **Dr. Joni C Joseph** as my Supervising Teacher. I could learn a slew of things from him. His unassuming down-to-earth behaviour, I wistfully aspire to possess. I yearn, I had that integrity and probity which he profusely possesses. I hanker very much to be a personable personage like him. In his meekness of wisdom, he dedicated himself to the services of others, unmindful of his health or wealth. His unstinted guidance imbued with his toil and moil enabled me to fulfil this voluminous task. I owe a very great debt of gratitude to him.

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(Rev.Fr. John Zachariah.E)

P R E F A C E

The researcher right from his boyhood days had great fascination to know about religion, its ontology and functions in society. The attraction towards religion snowballed into a deep craze to fathom the phenomenon. This is in fact the reason for selecting this subject for his research.

The empirical part of this study was carried out in Kerala community by taking a cross-section of the population and collecting data from them. This study attempted to enquire into the positive and negative contributions of religion in contemporary society of the study area, which has been struggling to shore up against the odds of value drain. Apart from this, this study analysed the perceptions of different social segments on the above dimensions of religion and compared them.

For developing the above core themes of the study, the attitude of the people towards religion and their religious beliefs & practices were analysed.

The researcher has immense satisfaction that he could suggest certain methods based on the study for arresting religious disharmony prevailing in the contemporary society as a stumbling block to all the developments of this important social institution.

(Rev.Fr. John Zachariah.E)

C O N T E N T S

Acknowledgement

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Chapter – 1

Introduction

Chapter – 1

Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

Religion is one of the oldest social institutions of human kind. It has been executing various functions in the Society. Religion is a bond uniting men together. The root meaning of religion is “that which binds”. “You shall love your neighbour as yourself” (Mathew, St. 22: 39) signifies the oneness of human race and a sense of social responsibility of its members to one another. Love of God and love of neighbour are the inward and outward sides of a truly religious life.

Religion helps us to follow the path of rectitude as it propels us to be away from certain activities, which it considers as sinful. For the righteous and upright, religion promises peace of mind in this earthly life itself and heavenly life of rejoice after death. Naturally, everyone aspires to be pleasant and smiling always. Thus, as far as the social aspect is concerned religion controls our conduct in day-to-day life. The “Ten Commandments” given to Moses are a set of behavioural regulations. The commandment to worship one God is religious only; having no direct bearing on pattern of interaction between human beings; but the commandment not to steal is moral as well as religious, since it defines a social pattern, at least in negative terms. This commandment will probably be interpreted to mean “respect the property rights recognized in the society”; thus it will ultimately reinforce the social institution of property; however that may be socially defined. Thus from a sociologist’s perspective it would bring order and harmony to the society and also would allow the society to function in an organised and systematic way. According to Stanley “the consequences of religion are unity among the

believers, conformity in behaviour and the legitimation of social structures” (Stanley, 1988: 546).

Religion, Individual and Society:

According to Robert N Bellah, religion is “an individual quest for meaning rather than a collective act of worship. Modern man has his own freedom than ever before to search for and construct his own ultimate meaning”. (Bellah, 1976: 143). Religion influences our personal life. When the personal life of individual becomes candid and immaculate, the society benefits for its smooth functioning. According to Alfred North Whitehead, “Religion is what the individual does with his solitariness” – (Whitehead, 1926: 47). Each one of us does have a particular significant role in contributing to the richness and variety of the human society. We can mould the society only by making necessary transformation in individual men’s hearts and minds. There can be no conflict in between the individual good and the social good.

A man is what he thinks. The social discipline should be such that it must provide the individual with the atmosphere and circumstances to think uprightly, which will not only help each individual to grow to his utmost but also would ultimately uplift the society. The beliefs and values of the society are often absorbed into the religion and ultimately that may become the morality of the society.

In our traditional society religion occupies an eminent position in every arena of man’s life, whether it be political, economic, educational, recreational, family life or social welfare. Thus Ray states, “There is scarcely a sphere of man’s life that is left untouched by the conditioning effect of religious ideas” (Ray, 1948: 3). Gandhi says,

‘Man without religion is man without roots. Therefore, religion is the basis on which all life structure has to be erected, if life is to be real’. [Gandhi, 1980:137].

Religion and Modern Societies:

The Modern Societies are undergoing a process of secularisation. It means the influence of religion in all areas of social life is steadily diminishing. According to Herberg, religion has become “a way of sociability or belonging rather than a way of reorienting life to God” (Herberg, 1960:137). It is thus frequently religiousness without serious commitment, without inner conviction.

We are facing a great cultural change. When we acquired a spectacular growth in economic prosperity and intellectual advancement by dint of hard work, it has turned to be the harbinger of the ruin of spiritual orientation of humanity. It seems we are at the brink of decay of traditional religion, morality and social order. Disintegration of faith cuts at the root of human unity. Our traditional values are fast disappearing. The crude ways of the fundamentalists bring in more violence, oppression and cruelty. People are in a state of doubts and discord. Disintegration of faith cuts at the root of human unity. Modernism is a reaction against this traditional order. Consequently everything around us is unsteady and contradictory. We cannot deny that man has reached a highly advanced stage of development in most of his faculties, yet he is lacking in the integration of binding together of different elements to keep up an healthy balanced attitude in different spheres of his social life.

The Court verdicts and the Legislative acts also play as an impetus in the social change. Legalising abortion, defining the rights of homosexuals, permitting pornography, liberalising divorce through ‘no fault’ laws, prohibiting prayer in the

schools, etc. do have much impact in the cardinal virtues and moral concept in the social life and in the long run may affect the society deleteriously.

The recent Hindu-Muslim Communal conflict in Kozhikode District at Maarad in Kerala State massacring 9 persons on 2nd May 2003 (Manorama, 2003: 1) should be an eye opener to the diabolic and heinous ulterior motive and obverse effect of religion upon the society. On flimsy reasons one kills the other, forgetting they are brothers and sisters of the same Society and Nation. Thus in *Jnana-Yoga* we read as “And thus we find that though there is nothing that has brought man more blessings than religion, at the same time there is nothing that has brought more horror than religion. Nothing has made more peace and love than religion; nothing has engendered fiercer hatred than religion. Nothing has made the brotherhood of man more tangible than religion; nothing has bred more bitter enmity between man and man than religion. Nothing has built more charitable institutions, more hospitals for men and even for animals, than religion; nothing has deluged the world with more blood than religion” – (*Jnana-Yoga, 1989: 375*). The Group identification on religious basis constrains persons to take factions in conflicts forgetting the aftermath consequences of it. When people are strongly committed to their religious groups and values communal commotion on religious grounds may be pungent and would be thrashing the peaceful life in the society.

The significant cause of social disorders is an ultra sensitive and intolerant attitude of each religious faction towards the other. Each religious group considers itself as a separate group and not as a part of the national mainstream. Trivial individual selfish interests gradually take over the feelings of patriotism and nationalism. Moreover the religious, caste and communal feelings of common people are relentlessly exploited

by the politicians for their selfish motives. Party tickets are acquired according to the communal characteristics of the regional constituencies. The religious bogey is moulded to let down the opposing parties. Instead of competing elections on issues such as unemployment, poverty or corruption, the political leaders manage dexterously the religious politics to their selfish ends at the time of election campaign. Indubitably we can infer that it is the disregard for genuine religious beliefs that is mainly responsible for the present mushy and maligned state of the society. All the religions teach tolerance, non-violence, love and universal brotherhood but the very precepts are defeated by the unenlightened bigots and such situations are exploited for political purposes without any compunction for acquiring power and pelf by some heartless elements.

Thus we see that religion is the central stage where people are playing both integrative and disintegrative roles. The institution of religion is not scientifically studied with regard to its functions and dysfunctions to present social life based on empirical facts

This study is a humble attempt to find out the functions and dysfunctions of various religious forms of present day society.

Survey of Related Literature
Chapter – 2

Chapter- II

SURVEY OF RELATED LITERATURE

RELIGION:

Religion is an attitude towards superhuman powers. Superhuman power in effect is related with spirituality. Spirituality is considered as an innate quality of human beings. They search for that invisible and invincible force which transcends time and space and influence everything in the universe. Religion may be considered as the apparatus, which reveals and realises spirituality of human beings. Religion is defined by the oxford dictionary as “Human recognition of superhuman controlling power and especially of a personal God entitled to obedience, effect of such recognition on conduct and mental attitude”. (Oxford, 1963: 1048).

“Man’s intellectual urge for completeness is basic to religion; man has a craving for God though his realisation of what that End is - has varied greatly from age to age” – (Spinks, 1963:50). In the light of this fact C. G Jung has defined religion as “the fruit and culmination of the completeness of life” – (Jung, 1958: 42).

Philosophy also upholds the connection between humans and the superhuman, all pervading force. According to the great Indian Philosopher Radhakrishnan “everything that lives aims at its own perfection and man is intensively aware of the fact that he is incomplete. Religion has that unique human activity by which man can seek the larger life of perfection and freedom because it gives meaning and purpose of life and supplies the courage to live” – (Radhakrishnan, 1969:443).

Roland Robertson states that religion “refers to the existence of supernatural being which have a governing effect on life” (Robertson,1969: 170). Melford E Spiro adopts a similar definition when he states that religion is based on “beliefs in superhuman beings and in their power to assist or harm man” (Spiro, 1968: 196). Geertz looks religion in yet another way. According to him religion is “a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive and long lasting moods and motivations in men by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. (Geertz, 1947: 92).

The functional perspective changes the emphasis from human needs to society’s needs. According to Durkheim, totem is a sacred emblem of a clan of Australian aborigines. To explain the origins of religion, Durkheim studied totemism, among the Arunta tribe of Australia. It is at once the symbol of God and of the society. Thus he suggests that in worshipping God, men are in fact worshiping society. Society is the real object of religious veneration. Primitive man comes to view society as something sacred because he is dependent on it. Durkheim argues that social life is impossible without the shared values and moral beliefs which form the collective conscience. Religion reinforces the collective conscience. The worship of society strengthens the values and moral beliefs, which form the basis of social life. By defining them as sacred, religion provides them with grater power to direct human action. It ultimately means the norms of the society become the sacred rule of the religion. Thus the doctrines of the religion are being decided by the society itself. And the law of the society is the doctrines of the religion. The religion strengthens the unity of the group/society and it promotes social solidarity. When the group comes together for

religious rituals, actually the group/society express, communicate and comprehend the moral bonds, which unite them. Society holds such an awesome power over the individual's whole being that it is literally sacred to him. However, the clan itself is too complex and too abstract to be the recipient of this tremendous respect and awe, so these feelings are projected onto the totem, which stands for society. In turn, the organisation and classification of nature is made to mirror the organisation of the clan and tribe. In short, man deifies his own society, which becomes virtually God. Religion then is a vast symbolic system encompassing every aspect of society, and at the same time stabilising and maintaining the continuity of society by constantly reinforcing its traditions and values.

Durkheim considers religion as a universal social fact. It is universal because of the reason that any group worship is really society worship itself. The society is held together by religious rituals and festivals in which the group's values and beliefs are reaffirmed. Durkheim rejected Spencer's notion of 'animism' that is the spirit worship as the most basic form of religious expression and Max Muller's concept of 'naturism' i.e. the worship of nature's forces. He opined that reliance on spirits and supernatural forces will make religion an illusion and the essence of religion is not on a belief in transcendental God but on society. According to him religion is not a spiritual force but a social fact.

Bronislaw Malinowski differs with the ideas of Durkheim and he does not see religious rituals as the worship of the society. Malinowski argues "the existence of strong personal attachments and the fact of death, which of all human events is the most upsetting and disorganising to man's calculations, are perhaps the main sources of religious belief " (Malinowski, 1954:194). The funeral ceremony expresses belief in

immortality and so comforts the bereaved. The social group unites at the funeral ceremony to support the bereaved. This expression of social solidarity reintegrates society. According to Malinowski, funeral ceremonies provide an approved collective means of expressing individual feelings, while at the same time maintaining social cohesiveness and preventing disruption of society. Thus Malinowski attempted to reveal both the psychological and social functions of religious behaviour. Like Durkheim, Malinowski sees religion as reinforcing social norms and values and promoting social solidarity.

According to Malinowski, “the purpose of religion is to purge the human mind of its stress and strain”. (Malinowski, 1948: 49). In other words, it is cathartic in its action. It is a device to secure mental and psychical stability in an individual’s life. Rituals reduce anxiety by providing confidence and a feeling of control at the time of impending and imminent dangers lurking around an individual. Malinowski points out with reference to the Trobriand Islanders that religion is intimately connected with various emotional states, which are states of tension i.e. their magical and religious practices centre round the fishing expeditions. Religion has the function of bringing about readjustment between man and the supernatural in upset states of existence. Malinowski’s distinctive contribution to the sociology of religion is his argument that religion promotes social solidarity by dealing with situations of emotional stress which threaten the stability of society.

Radcliffe-Brown takes a different stand. The function of religion he says “is not to purge fear and other emotional strains from the human mind, but to instil a sense of dependence in it” – (Radcliffe, 1952: 43). He opined that ultimately, the survival of the group is more important than that of the individual and if the latter has to

make some sacrifices it is in his own interest to do so, because without social survival individual survival is not possible. Adherence to a norm of behaviour is essential in terms of social survival. It is the fear of supernatural control and punishment as also the expectation of support in the case of socially approved conduct compels the individual to adhere to the norms of the society. Radcliffe-Brown went even farther than Durkheim in rejecting individual psychological interpretations of religion. He saw social phenomena as systems of adaptation and society itself as a dynamic network of functionally interdependent elements. The function of religion is to celebrate and maintain the norms on which society depends. Therefore, the function of religion is to create a two fold feeling of dependence on society and there by obtain the individual's concurrence with the social norms, the ultimate aim being social survival. The function of religion is the contribution it makes to that total activity, which is designed to perpetuate society. Radcliffe-Brown's and Malinowski's sociological explanations are derived in part from Durkheim's theory of religion and their view points might appear opposed, but they are not; they have to be taken as complementary.

Talcott Parsons is of the view that religion provides certain guidelines for human action and standards against which man's conduct can be evaluated, just like the ten commandments of the Christian society. Parsons like Malinowski, view religion as "a mechanism for adjustments to such events, which hit life and jeopardise the normal life and religion is a means for restoring the normal pattern of life" (Parsons, 1965:76). The uncertainty of life and the inability to predict about the future cripples the man. The religion maintains social stability by allaying the tension and frustration, which could disrupt social order.

Talcott Parsons argue that human action is directed and controlled by norms provided by the social system. The cultural system provides more general guidelines for action in the form of beliefs, values and systems of meaning. Religion is part of the cultural system. As such, religious beliefs provide guidelines for human action and standards against which man's conduct can be evaluated.

Social life is full of contradictions which threaten the meaning man bestows on life. Parsons argues that one of the major functions of religion is 'to make sense' of all experiences, no matter how meaningless or contradictory they appear. An example is the question of suffering, 'Why must men endure deprivation and pain and so unequally and haphazardly, if indeed at all?' Religion provides a range of answers: suffering is imposed by God to test a person's faith; it is a punishment for sins; suffering with fortitude will bring its reward in Heaven. Sufferings thus become meaningful. This allows intellectual and emotional adjustment. On a more general level, this adjustment promotes order and stability in Society.

Berger and Luckmann write "throughout human history religion has played a decisive part in the construction and maintenance of universe" (Luckmann, 1990: 464). They argued that all the certainty is basically uncertain; it has a very precarious foundation. Things are real because people believe they are real. They further argued that religion is the most effective mechanism for the legitimation of universe of meaning. Unlike other sources of legitimation, only religion links meaning with ultimate reality

Max Weber rejects the view that religion is always shaped by economic factors as was argued by Engels. Weber was of the view that religious beliefs can be a

major influence on economic behaviour. Weber claims that “Ascetic Protestantism was a vital influence and their teachings such as restless continuous systematic work must have been the expansion of the spirit of capitalism. Making money became both a religious and business ethic. It justified the activities of business man”. (Weber, 1963:38). Restrictions in a frivolous spending created frugality and paved way for capitalism.

Sigmund Freud argued that the origin of religion can be found in the problems of the child seeking to work out adequate relationships with his parents, particularly his father. At first the child considers his father to be a figure of absolute power. When he learns that his father is only a weak and imbecile human like any other human with definite limitations to his benevolence and his power, the youth feels deprived of the psychological support and security he felt once as a small child. He therefore, constrained to turn to the universe and to a belief in a cosmic Father or God who can continue to give him the support he once had from his human father. “Religion is an expression of need felt by fearful individuals searching to return to the safety of the womb, says Freud and adds that it is a universal obsessional neurosis of mankind” (Freud, 1979: xi)

Karl Marx held that “religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people” (Marx, 1963:28). According to him, ruling classes adopt religious beliefs to justify their position both to themselves and to others. He added further that man makes religion and religion does not make man. Sociologists who analysed religion, by and large, highlighted the contributions of the institution to the Society. Marx and his

associates have however, pointed out the negative impact of the institution on certain social structures particularly the downtrodden masses. Apart from the exploitative role highlighted by the philosophers in religiously plural society like ours, religious rivalries may emerge and when it attains the dimension of fundamentalism damages to the social fabric occur. Karl Marx considers religion to be result of economic factors and hence it is essentially a social affair. Mahatma Gandhi regarded religion as essentially an individual experience. Engels held that religion is nothing, but fantastic reflection of mind of those external forces which control their daily life, a reflection in which terrestrial forces assume the form of supernatural forces. In the beginning of history, it was the forces of nature that were at first reflected and in the course of further evaluation they underwent the manifold and varied personifications among the various people. Julian Huxley, who has been regarded as “religious humanist”, affirms that religion to continue as an element of first-rate importance in the life of the community must drop the idea of God. If this is admitted, even atheism can be regarded as a religion – the religion of those who passionately deny the existence of God (Julian, 1979:13).

Part of the function of religion has been to dispel the fears of darkness. Jung was impressed by the splendour of the African sunrise, and the brooding darkness of the African night. “It is the psychic primal night which is the same today as it has been for countless million years”, he speculated. “The longing for light is the longing for consciousness”. (Jung: 1961: 266) For Jung, religion is not merely anxiety-reducing, but positively therapeutic. Religious behaviour is instrumental in helping the individual towards greater integration and maturity. Religion is not, as Freud would have it, infantile; rather it is a means by which the person can transcend his infantile fixations. Thus Jung and his school of analytic psychology emphasise positively transformative

rituals and myths, such as those involving rebirth into a new selfhood and the magical journey of the hero.

Much of the psychological and social value of religion comes from the activities called for by its practice. Participation in religious ceremonies may bring a sense of personal transcendence, a wave of reassurance and security, or a feeling of closeness to fellow participants. Although the rituals and practices of religions vary considerably, even those rites that seem most bizarrely exotic can be shown to serve the same basic social and psychological functions.

Religious ritual is the means through which persons relate to the sacred; it is religion made overt. Not only is ritual the means by which the social bonds of a group are reinforced and tensions relieved, it is also one way that many important events are celebrated and crises, such as death are made less socially disruptive and less difficult for the individuals to bear.

Origin of Religion:

There is a great deal of disagreement among thinkers on the origin of religion. Philosophers look upon the genesis of religion from different vantage points. In the 18th century Charles de Brosses argued that “the primary form of religion was fetishism - the worship of inanimate objects like stones, and animate objects like trees, animals, etc”. (Brosses, 1972: 8). It is the adoration of material things because of their mysterious hidden power. The word fetishes derived from the Portuguese explorers, who first applied it to wooden images of the West African Negroes. The essence of a fetish is that it has attributed to it a mysterious power for good or evil which some

preliterate people call '*mana*'. The fetish is adored or insulted according as to whether it fulfils or does not fulfil its possessors' wishes.

The philosopher Herbert Spencer gave a similar theory with some variations. Spencer proposed that man makes the ghosts of his ancestors into gods. Thus ancestor-worship is the root of every religion. The primitive people had some kind of belief in the continued existence of the soul after the death. This belief found its expression mostly in propitiating the departed soul or ghost at the time of funeral and subsequently for a period of time. This belief in ghosts developed into a persistent ancestor worship. The belief in ghosts seems to have played a significant role in the development of religion. This theory is sometimes called euhemerism after fourth century B C thinker named Euhemerus who argued that the gods of religion were originally living men of great power and authority who were raised to the status of divine beings. (Spencer, 1972: 6).

James Frazer an exponent of magical theory was a classical scholar who collected a great deal of material on religion and wrote a very influential study in many volumes called '*The Golden Bough*'. (Frazer, 1972: 6). According to him, religion is the child of magic. The theory is based on the supposition that man's first attempt to control nature was through magic. But when he realized that it was impossible to subdue the powers of nature through magic, he began to propitiate and worship them. Frazer infers the origin of religion in this transition of belief from magic to the supernatural. Frazer believed that a magic stage preceded the animistic one. According to M F Keesing, magic is a term which summarizes a variety of methods by which man purports to influence automatically the course of events by that touch of supernatural.

One of the great pioneers in the field of anthropology Edward Tylor argued that religion had its origin in the belief in immaterial souls that might inhabit objects like stones, trees, mountains, animals, or human bodies, but which also could exist independently of them. An important type of animism is ancestral worship which is found among the Sandals and Oraons. Tylor believed that the preliminary form of religion was animism or the belief in 'souls'. He coined the word animism (after the Greek word *anima*, 'soul') to refer to the belief in the existence of such trans-empirical souls or spirits. A man may dream of a friend who has recently died. In the dream the man seems to continue to exist as a soul independent of his physical body. Through dream experiences, man thus became convinced of the existence of a realm of spirit entities which are the basis of religious beliefs (Tylor, 1972: 5). Tylor argues that "religion, in the form of animism, originated to satisfy man's intellectual nature, to meet his need to make sense of death, dreams and visions" (Tyler, 1970: 142). According to Tylor, religion has evolved through the sequence of animism, polytheism and monotheism. Risby also contend that the primary tribal religion is animism.

According to the renowned British anthropologist Robert Ranulph Marett animatism i.e. belief in impersonal power behind every material objects, designated as *mana* which preceded animism should be regarded as underlying all religion. This impersonal power is worshipped to maintain peace and prosperity in the group. It is known as the animatistic theory. (Marett, 1990: 502}. Defining faith in *Mana* found in tribal society, R.H. Codrington has pointed out that *Mana* is a force altogether distinct from physical power, which acts in all kinds of ways for good and evil and which is of the greatest advantage to possess or control. The Ho and Munda tribes of Chota Nagpur call it *Bonga* [*Bongaism*]. (Madan, 1990:166) *Bonga* is a form of *Mana*.

Totemism consists in the fact that a tribe is supposed to be related to an object mainly animal or plant towards which they behave in a reverent manner by adopting its name and offering sacrifices or adoring it. The totem is considered to be the originator of a particular tribe. The main exponents of the importance of totemism for the origin of religion were W. Robertson Smith, S. Freud, E. Durkheim, and J.G. Frazer.

W. Robertson Smith, who had made a special study of the sacrifice among the Semites assumed totemism at the basis of all religion. He maintained that on a certain festival the totem animal, identified with the God and the members of the tribe, was sacrificed and a communal meal made of its flesh and blood; thus the intimate connection with the totemic God was renewed and his vital powers newly absorbed by this common feast, or communion. He claimed that all sacrifices were derived from this totemic communion sacrifice.

Sigmund Freud explained the origin of religion by totemism differently. Accordingly, to him man lived in the past in hordes, consisting of one adult male, some females and immature individuals. The sons of the primal horde were driven off by their father when they grew up. They later banded together, slew their father, ate him and appropriated the females. As survival of those primordial times the psycho-analysts discovered a sub-conscious sexual love of the son for his mother, and of the daughter for her father. The totem, now, is a father-substitute. The primordial hatred of the son for the father is transferred to some beast to which the child feels himself related.

Durkheim was intrigued by the phenomenon of totemism i.e. the practice of taking a particular natural object or animal and making it into the symbol [or totem] of a particular social group called a clan. Durkheim believed that in totemism the social nature of religion as well as its social origin was clearly demonstrated. (Durkheim, 1972: 9).

J.G.Frazer's great work on totemism tries to explain the relationship between totemism and origin of religion. However, later he rejected the theory.

Naturistic theory is generally associated with the name of F. Max Muller and has found acceptance by David Hume, Giddings and a number of other German scholars also. Naturism means the belief that the forces of nature have supernatural power. Max Muller believes this to be the earliest form of religion. Nature contains surprise, terror, marvels and miracles, such as volcanoes, thunder and lightning. Awed by the power and wonder of nature early man personified, deified and worshiped these objects. Where animism seeks the origin of religion in man's intellectual needs, naturism seeks it in his emotional needs. Naturism is man's response to the effect of the power and wonder of nature upon his emotions. The Garo tribe of Assam worships sun and moon, rivers, mountains, stars, trees and other natural objects. (Max, 1967: 22).

According to C E M Joad, the early religious ideas could be understood as a mixture of "fear and cupboard love". – (Joad, 1975: 24). According to Plekhanov, "religion begins only when a tribe begins to believe in the existence of a relationship between itself and supernatural being". – (Plekhanov, 1965: 95). For according to him, the distinctive feature of religion is the belief in a God or Gods.

The 18th Century English Deists tried to narrate the origin of religion on the basis of human reason. They felt that the fundamentals of religion, such as the being of God, immortality of the soul, the authority of moral law etc. are basically the ideas of reason. Thus, according to them, religion of reason is natural to man and known to him from the inception. But the priests then began to exploit the fears and credulity of the masses in order to bring them under control for their own advantage. They invented superstitious and elaborate systems of rituals which gradually replaced the simple religion of reason. Therefore, according to the Deists, religion has a two fold origin; human reason and deceitful priest-craft. But the purest form of religion had its origin in the very rational nature of the primitive man.

Sumner and Keller are of the opinion that religion arose in response to a definite need—adjustment to the supernatural or imaginary environment which appears just as real as the actual environment and adaptation to which is just as impelling. According to them had there been no aleatory element, religion might not have come into existence. It is known as the Aleatory Theory. (Sumner, 1990: 502).

W. Robertson Smith maintained that ancient religions consisted primarily of institutions and practice, i.e. of rites and ceremonies which are to be regarded the most elementary forms of religion. Durkheim also ascribed to this view. For him Totemism is the very core out of which religion develops. He concluded in his book 'the elementary forms of the religions life' that society itself is the ultimate source of religion and thus arrived at sociological explanation of religion. It is known as the Sociological Theory.

Divine revelation has been considered as the source of religion by the Jewish, Christian and Mohammedan theologians. Religion for them is revealed by God for the guidance and salvation of mankind. But modern scholars have rejected the divine revelation theory as unscientific and dogmatic.

FUNCTIONS OF RELIGION

Manifest Functions of Religion in Primitive Society:

Taboo is the unwritten law of the primitive savage society. Taboo is not an English word. It is derived from Polyneism word. It means to forbid, or forbidden. The aim of taboo appears to be to limit an individual to the norms of the society. Its purpose is three fold: productive, protective and prohibitive. Taboos associated with the process of cultivation are designed to be productive; those like keeping women, children and in cases men also away from certain places; actions and objects are protective; and those which seclude a person or limit contact with him or her, as is done in the case of a chief, a priest, a magician or a menstruating woman, are designed to be prohibitive in the sense that they prohibit the persons tabooed from doing harm to others. Protective and prohibitive taboos are almost the same. The sexual relationship between bloods relatives are incest taboo. Taboo is an essential ingredient of social morality. Taboo, therefore, functions to sustain the awesomeness of the supernatural by reinforcing attitudes of care and mystery and by punishing attitude of carelessness and profanity in dealing with the supernatural. It also sustains the social system by using supernatural sanctions to punish social deviants and would be heretics. Radcliffe-Brown considers taboo as a social mechanism by which an orderly society is able to maintain itself in existence. (Radcliffe, 1931:161).

Spirit possession, supernatural visions, and taboos have been used as control mechanisms. Even belief in the omnipresence and omniscience of God controls conduct, for the believer's conscience convinces him of the rightness and wrongness of certain types of contemplated behaviour.

In many societies, human illness is closely connected to the spirit world. In Navajo societies, doctors sometimes consult with Navajo medicine men and the "Navajo Healers" treatment is considered a unique medicine for the spirit. - inferred from [William, 1975: 35-37].

According to Durkheim religious ties are signs of the individual's integration into the society and its norms. He avoided making guesses about what preliterate people thought about the universe. But he had concentrated on the ways in which religion becomes a kind of social cement, binding the individual to his or her society – sociologically, the most prominent manifest function of religion.

For Durkheim, the key to understanding how religion works was the idea that traditional religions have divided the world into two realms, the sacred and the profane. This distinction is basic to Durkheim's definition of religion. "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" - (Durkheim, 1965:52). Profane things are the stuff of everyday life: furniture, food, working, playing. The sacred world consists of spirits and mythological personalities, of magic and of special objects or persons, all very powerful. The profane means business as usual. The sacred inspires

awe and fear; it calls for reverence and caution. The sacred is the field of religion; the non-religious field is profane.

The most sacred objects to the Australian aborigines were certain stones called Churinga. These stones housed the souls of the clan's ancestors, the spirit of the clan's totem animal, and the spirits of the clan members themselves. The Churinga, then, performed several binding functions. The Churinga gave each generation a link with the past because they were the homes of the ancestral spirits. Therefore they implied link with the eternity. The spirit of the totem animal in the Churinga bound the clan to the world of nature. The Churinga also contained the spirits of all the living clan members, making an unbreakable bond between them.

Ultimately, the most sacred objects, the Churinga, become the symbols of society itself. These symbols create an amazingly strong emotional bond. Realising this, Durkheim concluded that all gods and spirits become symbols of society. Eventually, he said 'God and society is the same thing'.

Historical evidence supports Durkheim. Ancient Egyptian, Sumerian, Israelite, Persian, Assyrian and Hittite cultures were centered on their gods. For this reason, in war, statues of the enemy gods were often the first objects to be destroyed. Since the foreign gods were symbols of the enemy, their destruction would assure the destruction of the people themselves.

Durkheim considered the major manifest functions of religion to be that of providing social unity. Religious rites and ceremonies also contribute to social unity.

They develop formation of habits or cooperation, a uniform order of conduct and imbue in them a common social idea. All these help social integration.

Religion formed the chief support of a society's norms and institutions, according to Durkheim. Even such practices as slavery have been justified in the name of religion. This was attained in America, by claiming that the black race was descended directly from Noah's son Ham, who had sinned and was punished by being made a slave.

Even though religion usually supports the social order, the social structures change. Religion, which once upheld monarchy, now supports democracy. Slavery was both condoned and condemned by religion.

Societies depend on the willing of cooperation of their members. For the most part, cooperation is won through ordinary processes of socialisation. But the socialisers need all the help they can get, particularly when a large amount of self-discipline is required. By adding divine sanction to human values, religion buttresses social norms and creates a moral community. The members feel a common bond because they share a belief in an unobservable or transcendent reality. Many religionists and some social scientists argue that even where alternative belief systems are available, only religion can meet the deepest human and social needs.

The Prophetic Functions of Religion:

Religious Leaders are often the stern critics of society. They condemned their people's evil ways and urged them to do good. The well acclaimed Prophet Isaiah of Old Testament period admonished the people "Wash you, make you clean; put away the

evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek judgement, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow” (Isaiah, 1: 16-17). It is from them that we derive the term *prophetic function*, which means the efforts of religious leaders to achieve moral or ethical reforms. Often, these efforts concern personal habits drinking, adultery, dishonesty or spotty church attendance. Sometimes, they deal with larger issues of social change.

Religious Leaders were often treated as a threat to Society. Out of ignorance, often the Religious Leaders, who fought to bring radical change to the Society, were considered as a threat to the established order of the society. Many religious leaders who crusaded for fundamental change were at first regarded as threats to the establishment. Later on, with the civil rights and anti-war movements, their positions came to be accepted by the general population. Partly because of their actions, a new status quo is created.

Religion as a Means of Self-fulfilment and Personal Adjustment:

The term ‘religion’ is used in at least two basic senses in psychological studies. One is that religion is defined as a set of ‘accepted forms of religion’ – prayer, worship, mystical experiences – that are set off from, but related to, other forms of personality expression. In this context, religion has only limited significance for the human personality, since it is one of several organizing factors – and not even the most important of these. Religion here is seen as a certain kind of social conditioning that can have either beneficial or detrimental effects on the person who is trying to develop self-awareness. On the other hand, the term ‘religion’ sometimes is used to indicate the whole field of self-fulfilment. This is a definition of the function of religion in terms of

a goal. Of course, such a use does not require that the investigator accept theological propositions – for instance, about the reality of God as the object of worship. It only assumes that the human personality, as we experience it in ourselves and others, requires ‘moral and spiritual values’. Thus self-fulfilment involves the relationship with something outside an immediate conscious awareness, whether this is called ‘superego’ ‘archetype’ or ‘emotional need’. When religion is defined as ‘what is appropriate to achieving a self-fulfilment’, it is regarded as being ‘the psychiatry of the masses’.

A closely related interpretation of religion, which places a higher functional value on religious activity, is that religion gives people ‘something to hold on to’ in periods of personal crisis. This view, expressed by such scholars as Clyde Kluckhohn and E.O James, emphasizes the fact that man lives in a precarious environment full of dangers and hazards. Religion serves as a means whereby man preserves his personal integrity and a sense of meaning in the face of biological, physical, social, and psychological threats – the most profound of which is death. Religious rituals are those social forces which give stability and reinforcement to the person and to society in the face of disaster, and provide more significant rewards than those achieved through mere biological maintenance and reproduction. Through religious beliefs and rituals, men anticipate potential threats and are thereby better able to handle them when they actually come. Similarly, they are better able to accommodate themselves to unfulfilled wishes by placing them in an uncontrollable, universal context. (Kluckhohn, 1969: 30). Religion helps people to adjust to life’s problems and provide guidelines for daily life.

Religion as Cultural Habits and Values:

Students of cultural anthropology have taken religion seriously as one aspect of cultural patterning. They are intellectual heirs to Durkheim, Weber, and Freud. Like their predecessors, anthropologists view religion as a product of human imagination that functions to establish patterns of cultural self awareness and communication and the means to establish equilibrium within society after a crisis such as war or the death of a leader. Thus, religion is derived from cultural and social needs. As a product of the human mind and social interaction, however, it plays a decisive role in the patterns and forms that constitute any culture. They become the unconscious assumptions on which the conscious patterns of culture are built. It is very often these hidden configurations lying beneath the outward cultural manifestations that provide the moving dynamics for society.

One of the basic ways in which cultural anthropologists interpret religion is to view it as a cultural habit. Religion is seen as a system of ideas and emotional responses whereby a culture reflects habitual ways of action and through which the society interprets and validates itself. In such a configuration of personal hopes, definitions of life and techniques for solving problems reside cultural values, norms, and standards of living. This view of religion is found in the works of Alfred L Kroeber, who emphasizes that “the essential elements of a culture are its patterns, which provide the integration of people into an organization and the channels whereby segments of society can function as a culture” (Kroeber, 1969: 32).

Organised religion also controls individual and group behaviour by magical attempts to manipulate the supernatural for the detection and punishments of offences against the mores.

Latent Functions of Religion in Primitive Society:

We must admit that religion is not the only integrative power. But it makes contributions to integration. Universally, it has an important role in crystallizing, symbolizing and reinforcing common values and norms.

The Bible says “Do you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor sexual perverts, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God” (Corinthians, 6: 9-10). For the hearer, it is only a religious admonition, but at the same time it is moral too as it defines a social pattern for the smooth and peaceful integrative functioning of the society.

According to Embree, religion consists fundamentally of a body of ritual and belief which may be classified under two broad heads:

- (1) the series of seasonal festivals associated with agriculturally and other deities and celebrated on a neighbourhood basis
- (2) ancestor worship performed on a kinship basis.

These two aspects of the religious life serve the following functions:

1. to give ritual recognition to things of social value to the society, e.g. rice, silk, wind, water, human life
2. to strengthen the social relations of the groups involved, especially the local group and the kin group (there are sometimes special deities

connected with occupational groups also, such as Carpenters or Waggoners)

3. to give the individual

- a sense of dependence on the group through emphasising his duties towards it and
- a sense of security as a member of the group, thus emphasising his rights as a member of the group. A man of few kin, or a man who lives isolated from the local group, is a poor man, a beggar, a nobody (Embree, 1941:189).

In the primitive religion, Myth and rituals meet the need of the society in a striking and obvious fashion. By relating the human world to a world of divine forces and powers, the social milieu receives a kind of validation it does not seem to possess when considered in its own right alone. Ritual accomplishes social integration by an act of social integration. By coming together in an integral act, the society discovers that it has been maintained, preserved and reinforced as an integral entity. The family that prays together stays together because in doing their religious things together they are together.

Ritual performs a heuristic function. It assists us in concentrating attention and focusing energies in such a way that our human capacities cooperate at their most potent level in the performance of a desired act. As Mary Douglas observes: an external symbol can mysteriously help the coordination of brain and body” Thus: “The Dinka herdsman hurrying home to supper knots a bundle of grass at the wayside, a symbol of delay. Thus he expresses outwardly his wish that the cooking may be delayed for his return. The rite holds no magic promise that he will now be in time for supper. He does not then dawdle home thinking that the action will itself be effective. He

redoubles his haste. His action has not wasted time for it has sharpened the focus of his attention on his wish to be in time". (Douglas, 1968: 64).

Ritual can also provide a directly creative function in solving personal and social dilemmas. It can help man to solve difficulties, release tensions, and resolve ambiguities in his social relationships that otherwise might fester and eventually break the social bond. In ritual celebrations, the status of a given leader or clan is either reaffirmed or perhaps slightly modified according to the slight changes that may be introduced into the ritual each time.

According to Confucius "ritual serves as a buffer protecting the delicate egos of the participants while enabling unpleasant actualities, such as the ascendancy of one man over another to be stated in a way that is palatable and acceptable to both. The blunt edge of the truth is softened by the pleasing complexity of the ritual". (Confucius, 1972: 40).

According to Firth, 'statement', can be made through ritual 'in a manner less brusque, more protracted, and more behaviourally involved, than with ordinary language'. (Firth, 1936:94).

Rituals and myth are used to deal with psychological function. In sacred religious stories Human beings find consolation and the means to accept that which cannot be changed otherwise, and thus personality disintegration through anxiety and grief is prevented.

Among primitive societies it is common for religious holidays to be the occasion for orgies, when the customary restrictions on heavy drinking and sexual license are temporarily lifted. It often seems that one of the major functions of religious institutions is to draw people out of their isolation and to break the daily routine with distinctive celebrations. (Hunt, 1976 : 179)

Manifest Functions of Religion in Pre-Modern Society:

Religion is the base of Morality. Berger and Luckmann write, “Throughout human history religion has played a decisive part in. the construction and maintenance of universes” (Luckmann, 1990: 464). Religion is the base of Morality. One can not expect to be morally upright unless he is religiously trained and nurtured in cardinal virtues of the society. A moral life without reference to religion is like a house built on sand. And religion divorced from morality is like a ‘sounding brass’, (Corinthians, 13: 1) good only for making a noise and breaking heads. One can cease to be a real man if the moral values in him are not recognised. Morality is the core of religion. Unchastity is the death knell of family life. Hence morale and morality are indispensable factors for the uplift of the individual and the society as well. “Modern legal institutions and many of the laws related to ethics and morals which they uphold are closely linked with religion” – (Nicholas, 1939: 326).

Religions do have some moral expectations from its members and usually enforces them upon its members in one way or the other. The violators of moral norms of the religion do have to face the threat of disease or some other forms of disaster in this life itself and even in their after life. It is very obvious, that to a great extent the moral norms supported within the religious group are at the same time norms of the society and

social control within the religious group has functional importance for the wider society as well.

Many religious rituals serve as social control instruments. The religious funeral emphasises the importance of living in terms of the religious value system and often indirectly appeals to the authority of the deceased over survivors by indicating “this is what he would have wished” - (Parsons, 1951 : 304).

Religion as a unifying force is most apparent during national crises. During wars, an especially strong link is established between God and country. During World War I, all the major powers declared that God was fighting on their side. During World War II, these attitudes prevailed and became stronger. The government of Germany tried hard to achieve the fusion of God and country noted by Durkheim by picturing Hitler as a quasi-divine leader of a sacred cause.

In most cases, a type of unity can be brought about during times of crises, even though people have very divergent religious beliefs.

Religious rituals and festivals in which the group’s value and beliefs are reaffirmed hold the society together. One important consequence of a group of persons having the same religious heritage and beliefs is unity. All believers, whether of high or low status young or old, are united through the sharing of religious beliefs. Thus religion, through the holding of common values to be cherished, sins to be avoided, rules to be followed and symbols to be revered, integrates. Group unity is also accomplished by creating the universal feeling that God looks upon this particular group with special

blessings. Religion fosters social solidarity by uniting believers into a community that shares values and perspectives.

More than any other institutions, it has encouraged men to care for self, for neighbours, for the varied life around us, for the natural world that supports us. “The primary function of religion is the preservation of social unity. So everything leads us back to this same idea; before all, rites are means by which the social group reaffirms itself periodically” – (Durkheim, 1954 : 387). W.Trotter, Emile Durkheim and others, look upon religion as the manifestation of collective feeling.

Religion expands one’s self to infinite proportions. Man unites himself with the infinite and feels ennobled. Through unity with the infinite the self is made majestic and triumphant. Man considers himself the noblest work of God with whom he shall be united and his self thus becomes grand and luminous. Society also gains from the self-flattery provided by religious belief. Religion assures a greater reward in the after life to worldly failures than to the successful. Such kind of assurance drains off much discontent and members are encouraged to continue to play their part in society.

Religion is the ultimate source of social cohesion. The primary requirement of society is the common possession of social values by which individuals control the actions of self and others and through which society is perpetuated. These social values are never scientifically demonstrated but emanate from religious faith. Children should obey their parents, should not tell a lie or cheat, women should be faithful to men; people should be honest and virtuous are some of the social values which maintain social cohesion. It is religion that asks man to renounce unsocial activities and requires him to accept limitations upon his wants and desires. Love and service are two

great teachings of religion. All religions have preached them. Religion is the central element in the life of civilization. According to Demant, “the impulse that makes civilization is a kind of spiritual restlessness seeking to fashion the structure of life that will satisfy the craving”– (Demant, 1990:505). Religion also provides a good opportunity for friendship. The religious congregations serve as a place for men to find their mates and for friendly association. This friendship function of religion is a vital service to adults and youth as well

The religion has made major contributions to prison reform and provides chaplains who help considerably in the rehabilitation of inmates – (Lee, 1939: 110). The Salvation Army and other groups provide many social and religious services in jails and prisons and help restore criminals, alcoholics, and other deviants to useful places in society – (Louis, 1944: 267).

The manner in which some of its welfare activities – especially those connected with alms giving and charity – were conducted has created professional paupers and inflicted mental injuries upon some givers and recipients – (Harlan, 1940 : 209). Often without general consciousness that it is exercising a social ministry, the church makes a major contribution to welfare as a by-product of its spiritual ministry – (Douglass, 1952: 89). It has also emphasized benevolence and forbearance. It also created the habit of charity among the people who opened many charitable institutions like hospitals, rest house, temples to help the needy and the poor.

Religious consciousness in man inspires him to perform activities of social welfare. The church and other religious associations organize various humanitarian functions which contribute to the well being of society. The social welfare activities

carried on by the religious institutions are greatly significant. The following are some of them:

Religions support the folkways and customs by placing the powerful sanctions of the supernatural behind them. They make certain acts not only offences against society but against God as well. Disobedience brings condemnation from the spiritual forces. In its positive form religion provides a model for living. It upholds certain ideals and values. The believer imbibes these ideals and values in his life. Religion can help our youth to become moral, disciplined and socialized citizens of society. There is also the function of educating the children at least in the tenets of religion. Through the transmission of religious heritage to the young, the religion conserve ethical and religious teachings and moral directions, rebuild them and perhaps extend them in each new generation. Religious ideology and practices control the behaviour of individuals and groups.

Religion has served humanity through the spreading of education. The scriptures are great literary works and store house of knowledge. Besides, religion has also contributed to the growth of literature, art and music. The desire to laud and please gods has led people to extol them in song, sculpture, painting and architecture. Some of the world's most beautiful monuments are building erected to the glory of the gods. Vast temples, mosques, cathedrals and artistic images express man's desire to portray his conceptions of the supernatural in aesthetic and inspiring ways. The sacred writings stimulate an appreciation of beautiful prose and poetry. Religious themes are the inspiration for some of man's finest paintings and the desire to sing praises has led to the creation of some of the world's fine music.

Religious symbolism is drawn on to explain the environment and interpret the place of human beings within it. This may take the form of a cosmology explaining the origins of the earth and the heavens; various animals may be seen as mysterious beings whose qualities of swiftness or cunning need special explanation; the fruitfulness or barrenness of the land, the cycles of birth and death, winter and summer can all be represented in a more or less elaborate mythology. This process of interpretation reflects an impulse to make the world more comprehensible usually by attributing familiar, human motives to supernatural beings and forces.

In all societies there is evidence of a search for moral meaning. Human beings seek an organizing principle that will validate their most important strivings and make sense of their sufferings. If they can believe in a God given scheme of things, individuals can exercise power or accept frustration with greater equanimity. They can turn potential chaos and meaninglessness into an orderly world view.

According to S.Radhakrishnan the function of the religion is to further the evolution of man into his essential divine stature through a development of increased awareness and intensity of understanding. It would bring about deeper and more enduring adjustment in life. Religion provides ways and means, by which individual could organize his inward being and respond to what is envisaged by him as the ultimate reality. Hence religion according to him is essentially intensification of experience, the displacement of triviality by intensity. - (Burnett,1959:353). The purpose of religion, therefore, as S.Radhakrishnan sees it, is to help man to overcome a world of discords, conflicts and divided consciousness and to lead him to a life of harmony, freedom and love.

Most human experiences are routine and do not evoke strong emotions or extraordinary feelings, but there are circumstances that transcend the routine. Great natural events may accomplish this by casting people into a state of wonder and awe. In addition, certain individuals are able to enter into psychological states that appear to enlarge their vision and bring them into mystical union with the world. Many religions foster this kind of experience through incantation and similar practices.

Life is mysterious in many of its aspects. How life begins and how it ends are beyond the comprehension of people. The same is true of the universe. What force commands is mysterious to most people. To explain such mysteries or at least to create some satisfactory attitude towards them both rural and urban people resort to religious interpretations and find happiness and consolation in them. Religious beliefs also provide satisfying explanations of life beyond the grave and no doubt play a major role in sustaining people in this life.

Catholics have lower rates of suicide than Protestants. Jews in spite of their urban residence, occupational distribution and anti-Semitism, have the lowest rates of all. Durkheim theorized that “these differences are due to variations in the degree of social cohesion of the groups”. [Durkheim, 1962:469]

Crises are more numerous in urban areas than in rural area. Accidents are more common. There is more vice more crime and juvenile delinquency. Personal disorientation is more common and there is more suicide. Pathological types are more frequent. Those people loose their wealth, their homes and their status. Extremes of poverty and wealth are more apparent in cities than in rural areas. One of the sources of support in crisis is religion, which frequently serves as a source of explanation. It often

offers guidance and frequently restores faith. Religion is often used in psychological and psychiatric therapy for mentally sick persons. The development of religious interest in some mental deviates serves as a means of externalizing the thought and interest of the individual away from himself and his obsession. It serves also to reorient the individual to new sets of values. In this dual role religion is a therapeutic force. The impersonality of the city is a factor which certainly affects the peace of mind of the individual and is likely to be a factor in the precipitation of personal crisis. This being so, one contribution that religion would seem to make would be the cushioning of these shocks.

Social action implies that the religious institutions or its followers are motivated by societal concerns and considerations. These are designed to benefit humanity or at least a segment of it. Religion motivates people to belief and to action. Many religious bodies have been leaders in education and today support systems of schools or individual schools and colleges.

An ethical basis of economic and political activity may be provided for by religion. For instance, it was not just an accident that capitalism, individualism, democracy and Protestantism developed together in the United States and in Europe. The four are related to one another and to some degree, at least, sustain each other. Such traits as asceticism and unworldliness in the beliefs and practices of people are sustained by their religions. Examples of this may be seen in the religion of the Jesuits. On the negative side, organized religions divide populations. Historically and currently they have increased intolerance and hate.

In some cases religious leaders practice the healing art. Many religions allow the release of pent up emotional energy. In some religions, this release or

catharsis, takes place quietly, through familiar soothing rituals, peaceful meditation, or the enjoyment of sacred music and art. In other religions emotional release is more overt - even boisterous. Singing and dancing, testifying and speaking in tongues are a regular part of the service. Some worshipers reach ecstatic states, losing the sense of self and reaching a feeling of oneness with the universe.

Latent Functions of Religion in Pre-Modern Society:

One of the most often cited latent effects of religion is the relation between the “Protestant ethic” and the “spirit of capitalism”. Protestant leaders of the reformation had no desire to erect the spiritual foundations for a capitalistic society and often denounced capitalistic trends in their day. None of these protestant practices originated in a deliberate desire to encourage commerce and perhaps for that reason their effect was all the more potent. Yet the industrial revolution and the growth of large-scale business concerns was much more rapid in predominantly protestant than in largely catholic areas and in mixed areas protestants were much the more active in business development. It means religion promotes economic prosperity.

Weber contends that early Protestantism caused its followers to worry intensely over hellfire. Eventually, they became convinced that the lord blesses the works of those he loves. Therefore, emotional reassurance was to be found in working hard, saving and getting ahead in the world for success was interpreted as a sign of god’s blessing. The role of missionaries in aiding commercial interests during the age of colonialism is frequently cited as an example of the latent functions of religion.

Robert R Merton found that Puritanism in 17th century England helped to promote science. More than either Catholics or Anglicans, the puritans saw the study of nature as a pious undertaking, because nature was the handiwork of God. Merton viewed that puritan love of nature as the handiwork of God, led to an outburst of scientific study and discovery, among English puritans.

The Hindus to keep up a high standard of chastity in the race, have sanctioned child-marriage, which in the long run has degraded the race. At the same time, it cannot be denied that this child-marriage makes the race more chaste. If the nation needs to be more chaste, then it is indispensable to weaken the men and women physically by child-marriage.

Chastity is the life of a Nation. The first death sign of a nation is unchastity. When that has entered, the end of the race is in sight. In the US, where the greatest liberty of women prevails, the number of unhappy homes and marriages are very large in number.

Manifest Functions of Religion in Contemporary Society:

In contemporary society the functions of religion have the impetus of great revolutionary change. In our country today religion is assuming a more important role than nuclear energy in shaping our destiny. If religion is not understood and followed in its true spirit, very soon it would engulf and destroy us as nuclear weapons could do. We have come to a stage in which either we use religion constructively or else allow the fanatics to destroy us. The true ideal of religion should reach the common mass also. It is the duty of the educated to enlighten the public on the genuine role of religion. The

Religions in the contemporary society do perform a wide range of manifest and latent functions along with dysfunctions:

It may be mentioned that the world today has become very much materialistic, so much so that the higher values of life seem to have deteriorated. The result is that there is chaos and confusion in man's life. Distrust, treachery, exploitation, etc. dominate the present world. It seems that it is the absence of true religious trust and faith, which is the cause of all unrest and crisis in the present world.

“The extent and character of religious participation differ with socio-economic status” [Goode, 1951 : 187]. The poor are less likely to be members of a congregation, to attend church, temple or mosque regularly, or to take part in organised religious activities. They are also less likely to be informed about religious matters. However the poor who go to church tend to be both more believing and more emotionally involved in their religion than persons who are better off.

The financially well off tend to be religious in a more intellectual, formal and organisational way. They attend church regularly, they are active in the church and they are informed about their religion. But, compared with poor church goers, they are apt to be less believing, less expressive and less emotionally dependent on their religious faith. The poor attend church less regularly, their knowledge is scantier and they participate less in church activities. But when they are religiously involved, they are apt to be more unquestioning in their faith and more reliant on it.

Today's religious pluralism has been interpreted as evidence of secularisation. In particular, it has been argued that a range of competing religious

institutions have reduced the power of religions in society. Bryan Wilson however, interprets the ecumenical movement as further evidence of secularisation. He argues that ‘Organisations amalgamate when they are weak rather than when they are strong, since alliance means compromise and amendments of commitment’ (Wilson, 1990: 477). He believes that ecumenism represents a declining Christianity grasping at straws. Though it has caught the imagination of some churchmen Wilson argues that the ecumenical movement has aroused little general interest and produced a few positive results.

Indeed, in biological evolution modernists see evidence of divine plan and purpose. Modernists find nothing in modern science to prevent belief in a divine or ultimate power, shaping the world for the better. [Mathews, 1924: 132].

The Theologians point out that though the religions differ in their beliefs, religious experience is common to all religions. Religious experience may occur in a communion with a higher being. It is felt in loyalty to a noble cause. There seems to be little question that the trend of modern culture is such as to make this need for religion a very genuine one. For instance, the modern city sometimes brings loneliness in the midst of thousands of fellow beings more intense than that felt by the hermit. Religious experience seems to transform such a sufferer and brings cool water to parched lips. Saint Paul felt it on the road to Damascus. Saint Augustine has written about it and John Bunyan has described what it meant to him. So have many others. We quote here from Tolstoy, who suffered as have many others who lacked emotional integration and a sense of high purpose in life. “God is there, without whom one cannot live and to acknowledge God and to live accordingly are one and the same thing. God is what life is. Well, then live, seek God and there will not be life without God”. – (Tolstoy, 1928 : 185).

When we are battered and beaten we turn to religion for comfort. Humiliated, we are able in religion to identify ourselves with a righteous cause and with the personalities of great saints and our spirit is lifted. When the strain is very great, we feel the need of a good shepherd who will “lead us by the still waters and make us to lie down in green pastures”- (Psalms 23:2). Because religion helps to make our purpose a high one, our conduct is ennobled. There is much strain in modern life. Our hospitals are filled to overflowing with the mentally sick. It is also experienced in life that prayer meetings are catalysts of creativity and help people to refrain from nefarious activities.

Nationalism and other ideologies may be integrative as some writers treat nationalism as a religion and the national flag as a ‘sacred’ object. However, there are non-religious functional equivalents of religion which may also help to integrate the society. To some extent national heroes and patriotic ceremonies also do have an integrative value.

The Contradictory Functions of Religion in Modern Societies:

Religions do have some contradictory functions also. Most modern societies which allow religious freedom are, like the United States, complex; they are not bound together by one church. Even countries with an official religion tolerate diversity. In Sweden there is an established church which hardly anyone attends. The Soviet Union, whose government tried to replace religion with ideology, has reopened churches which had been closed under Stalin. In Ireland, a political scientist has observed, “Even an atheist must be a protestant atheist or catholic atheist in order to have status in the society”. – (Leo, 1974 : 30). A Boy Scout official says 16 year old James Clark of Foster (Rhode Island) has been denied scouting’s highest rank because ‘we can not in

clear conscience allow any boy to the rank of Eagle scout who is an admitted atheist' - (Californian, 1970 : 7). 'The Burkes, who earlier adopted a boy, now 3 ½ 'were found to be persons of high moral and ethical standards', but Essex County judge William Comarata ruled Friday that Burkes 'were not suitable parents for the adoption of the child because they did not believe in god'. - (Times, 1970: 15).

The above narrations evince the contradictory functions of religion in modern societies. Religion appeared to have a number of contradictory functions in modern societies.

The contemporary Christian church is faced with a basic dilemma brought about by its two contradictory roles - to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comforted. The comforting function is criticised because it focuses on helping the individual but ignores the problems of society. The challenging function – the injunction to be an agent of social protest and social reform – is criticised because it is divisive, alienating some members who disagree with the position taken. The evidence is clear that the majority of clergy are opting for the 'comforting' function over the 'challenging' function.

The Psychological Functions of Religion in Modern Societies:

For both the individual and the group, religion performs certain psychological functions. For the individual, religion is a guide to the place and purpose of humanity in an immense, confusing universe.

Religion helps to shape behaviour by presenting moral and ethical codes. It also helps to organise life experiences. Most religions have rituals and ceremonies

(baptism, circumcision confirmation, bar mitzvah, the marriage ceremony, last rites, funerals) which mark turning points in life.

Religion also tries to answer questions about death, suffering and the presence of evil in the world – questions for which ordinary experience has no answers.

Religion is an emotional safety net, comforting people and relieving their anxiety in times of suffering, tragedy and death. Thus it helps to relieve confusion and despair. (Stewart, 1978: 393). To the extent that the world is dangerous and unpredictable, people suffer and face both specific fears and more general anxiety. Unease may stem from fear of natural forces and the sense of human weakness and dependency. Social circumstances too can be cruel and capricious and there is always the uncertain certainty of death. Some human responses to such fears and anxieties are to revere the powers of nature, appease them or seek their cooperation. One may also look to a supernatural realm in which, after death the individual will be safe from the frustrations of human existence. Religions lessen the tensions of life and to bring peace to troubled souls.

Psychologically, religion has the function of giving people answers to moral questions and also a feeling of place and importance in the universe. It answers questions that can be sources of bewilderment and despair. For many, religion provides a feeling of emotional catharsis or cleansing through prayer, confession, or emotional ecstasy. Religion can heal psychological complaints and probably thus affect one's physical health as appears to be the case in Navajo healing ceremonies. Religion arises as a response to individual psychic needs and to their requirements of social solidarity.

Social Functions of Religion:

Common faith, a common set of values, common worship, common efforts to propagate or perpetuate the faith, common sentiments, and common religious experiences – especially if accompanied by persecution or opposition - have bound the believers together; into clans, cults, sects, utopian societies and other groups that vary in size from two members, comprising one sect discovered in a sociological survey to millions that are members of the major world religions.

Religious Institutions usually help to conserve values and practices that have been found beneficial through trial and error experience in the Society. But at times, Social pressure prevails upon the Religion to be pliable with the demands of the Society by modifying its age old customs and practise. This we can cognise from the new religious policy adopted by all denominational apostolic churches that the Priest concerned can perform the rituals of the burial in cases of Suicidal death also. Till recently, i.e. prior to 1995, the priests were not allowed to perform the rituals of burial in Suicidal deaths and the dead was allowed to be interred without any Religious solemnity. It evinces the fact that the churches were constrained to alter the existing practices as it needs to be viable in accordance with the pressure of the society.

Religion tends to be neither completely conservative nor radically in favour of eliminating the status quo; it is rather a ‘profound appreciator of the worlds value, as revealed to it through the eyes of its faith, against shallowness and despair’. - (Robert, 1952: 39).

“The primary function of Religion is worship. The word is derived from two old English words which mean worth ship. In other words, worship involves attitudes and actions of reverence that declare the worth of whatever is worshiped” (George, 1953: 3). “At least four attitudes all of which are significantly influenced by social experiences are involved in worship: (1) contemplation or meditation on the divine; (2) revelation or insight into truth believed to be divinely imparted; (3) the consciousness of a personal relation to God; and (4) fruition, the new life which grows out of the experience” (Edgar, 1940: 71). “Theologically Christian worship involves a fellowship with men and with God which is an outward, visible expression of the believer’s inward, invisible communion” – (Frederick, 1936: 139). “The primary religious function is public worship which is the basis and centre of organised religious life. Without it or a functional equivalent the church could not exist” (Ernst, 1931: 1007).

Rituals tend to strengthen the socially important attitudes of respect of son for father and of younger brother for elder brother. The Bible teaches “you shall rise before the grey headed and honour the presence of an old man”. (Leviticus 19:32). The effects of rituals tend to be heightened when the ritual is performed in public. The worshipper sees that his attitudes are held in common with other people. The rituals of Hajj are the most unifying influence in Islam. Thousands of Muslims, rich and poor, Arabs, Turks, Persians, meet on common ground and are impressed with their equality before God.

Facilitating individual religious experience is the function of the Religion. The group exists for the benefits of the individual. In many ways the religious experiences of persons are facilitated by the religion, which is a basic means of

“inducing, formulating, expressing, enhancing, implementing, and perpetuating man’s deepest experience, the religious” - [Hertzler, 1948: 5].

From religion to religion the philosophy concerning life after death varies. The Australian aborigines’ and modern Hindus believe in reincarnation. Ancient Egyptians, like modern Christians and Muslims believed that they shall attain heaven if they lead an upright and righteous moral life. All the religions, regardless of their differences in faith and rituals, trust in the life of eternity. The link of all to one eternal world unites them.

Belief in immortality has helped innumerable persons to live fuller, more secure and more serene lives than otherwise would not have been possible. It reduces anxiety, make life more tolerable. Belief in immortality is a socially derived need. It is significant source of social discipline and provides motivations for living that otherwise would be lacking. [Ashley, 1955: 67].

Ideas of the soul and the after-life project desires for continuity of personality. Ideas of God, project wishes for more adequate and more complete control of human affairs. God’s knowledge is the obverse of man’s ignorance; God’s wisdom is the obverse of man’s stupidity and error; God’s love is the obverse of man’s yearning for approval, affection and comfort from his fellows (Firth, 1971 : 249)

Religion and Stratification:

Religious beliefs as well as Religious participation vary from stratum to stratum in the class structure. Dynes Research, has shown that acceptance of the sect type

of organisation is associated with low socio-economic status, while acceptance of the Church type of structure is more frequently found among those with more formal education who fill occupational statuses of higher prestige. (Dynes, 1955: 20)

There is a direct relationship between incidence of Church membership and economic status or prestige. (Cantril, 1943: 48).

Church attendance is highest among the middle class. One careful and detailed Research project found that Religious interest varied by, among other things, social mobility (Lenski, 1953: 18: 533).

Certainly, the denomination to which one belongs is a factor in his status in the stratification system.

Religion played and continues to play a key role in the affairs of man and society because of its following nine functions according to Dube. (Dube, 1994:79-80)

1. explanatory function [explains why, what, etc. relating to the mysterious],
2. integrative function [provides support amid uncertainty and consolation amid failure and frustration,
3. identity function [provides a basis of maintenance of transcendental relationship for security and identity],
4. validating function [provides moral justification and powerful sanctions to all basic Institutions],
5. control function [holds in check divergent forms of deviance],
6. expressive function [provides for satisfaction of painful drives],
7. prophetic function [expressed in protest against established conditions],

8. maturation function [providing recognition to critical turns in an individual's life history through rite de passage],
9. Wish-fulfilment function [covering both latent and manifest wishes].

Some religious organisations have the function of providing recreation in dances, in athletics or in social parties. Numerous socio-religious recreational activities are provided by organisations like the YMCA, YWCA, YMHA, Catholic Youth Centres, Bible conferences, summer camps, and children's clubs loosely associated with churches.

Most participation in religious activities occurs during "leisure time"; from this perspective religious attendance itself is a "recreational activity". Less of our conduct is regulated by religion today than in the middle ages. Even in the modern times, recreation on Sunday was forbidden at one time and smoking cigarettes was considered as sin. The concern with human behaviour is different in the Hindus and in the Christian religions. It is very strong in Confucianism

As the conscience of society, religious institutions are critic and judge cultural institutions and their practices by its ethical standards. "The social gospel movement, vocational discussion groups and social action committees illustrate the attempt to make religion relevant to contemporary life and direct the functions of society to be upright". - (Herbert, 1952: 89). Popular opinions hold that Religion is a major preventive and cure for delinquency and crime.

According to Mata Amrithanandmayi Amma "the essence of all religions is to train persons to be compassionate to others and the religious leaders should highlight the importance of compassion through their own lives" (Amma: 2006:4)

Latent Function of Religion In Contemporary Society:

Ministering to the grief-stricken is part of the more general religious task sometimes called the “cure of souls”. But with respect to the social system, the cure of souls is essentially a control function. This is brought out in the use of sanctions, from admonition and occasional refusal of communion to excommunication. Like most of the social functions of religion, the control function of the cure of souls is ‘latent’. (Johnson, 1960: 466)

Religions can also have the latent function of alienating certain groups in society. American and English missionaries found that the most willing converts in India were the untouchables. They with no status at all in their own religion had nothing to lose. “When the untouchables were aided by the Indian Government beginning in the 1950s, many of them converted back to Hinduism since otherwise, they could not receive aid intended for untouchables” (William, 1971: 2). Moreover, in experience it is found that the converted new Christians are seldom given chances to come up in the main stream of Christians. Even the conventional group do not give their children in marriage to the new converted family and thus an isolation is created within the Christian group itself.

The Christian emphasis on monogamous marriage has some latent consequences quite the opposite of the desires of churchmen. Protestant countries tend to emphasize the sexual exclusiveness of marriage and partly in consequence, have a high divorce rate. Catholic countries generally prohibit or restrict divorce and partly in consequence, see the rise of a number of more or less permanent extra marital

relationships. Many among the lower classes react to the prohibition of divorce by setting up households without legal marriage and shifting mates when they wish. Most of the middle and upper class people are properly married, but a discontented husband may establish a relationship with a mistress which the wife is powerless to prevent, since divorce is either completely outlawed or religiously taboo. Thus both the Protestant and the Catholic approaches to ideal family life have latent consequences which modify the monogamous character of the family. (Horton, 1968:195).

It can also be perceived from studies that religious writings include humorous anecdotes and colourful descriptions with latent recreational functions.

DYSFUNCTIONS OF RELIGION

Dysfunctions of Religion in Primitive and Pre-Modern Societies:

Religion can be a divisive force when a number of different religious groups compete for communicants or when religion struggles with other institutions, such as the governmental, for pre-eminence. Religious differences accentuate the differences among societies. Since religious groups have feelings of superiority, there may be conflict brought about by discrimination, competition for converts or feelings of hatred. Also because religious ideas tend to be strongly held, groups may split rather than compromise. Liberals and fundamentalists even within the same religion, denomination or local church will doubtless disagree on numerous issues. A common result, of course, is division.

Religion is too much interested in its dogmas and institutions as a result of which the development of spirituality becomes a secondary affair. The idea of equality

and brotherhood of mankind is the keynote of all religions of the world but it is seldom put into practice by the religious organizations of today. However, every religion may preach the ideal of universal brotherhood but in practice it is seldom materialised. Variations of ideas, dogmas and institutions in the realm of religion are permanent obstacles in the matter of fostering universal unity and amity. Often progress has been stopped in the name of religion. It has degenerated in dogmatism and bigotry denying freedom of thought. Blackmar and Gillin wrote that “religion, ever conservative and dogmatic has tried time and again to crush the spirit of earnest men seeking to discover the truth and to prevent them from revealing newly discovered facts. It retarded the advance of science; it interfered with the free inquiry of scholars; it suppressed the democratic aspirations of common people” (Blackmar, 1990: 506).

“It has favoured war and poverty, exploitation and fatalism, prostitution and idleness and advocated such practices as cannibalism, suicide, slavery, untouchability and incest. There is hardly a vice which religion has not at one time or another actively supported” (Sachdeva, 1990: 506).

Galileo, in the middle of the 17th century, was forced by the church to recant his defence of the Copernican theory that the earth along with other planets, revolves around the sun; he was made to accept publicly the medieval religious cosmology, which placed the earth at the centre of the universe. Religion killed the great personalities, like Jesus, Galileo, Socrates, Mahatma Gandhi etc. mercilessly.

Religion has been involved in some of the bloodiest wars of mankind and has been a major factor in man political and economic revolutions. – [John, 1961: 406].

The destructive influence results largely from the bigotry characteristic of zealous believers.

Dysfunctions of Religion in Contemporary Society:

A prominent criticism of the religion is that it is too conservative. As a guardian of societal mores, it sometimes is used by dominant social classes to maintain a social system which has become a stumbling block to progress. This conservative side of religion probably is the major cause of the traditional enmity of science towards religion. It tends to endow prevailing customs and doctrines with divine sanctions and to repress new ideas and usages almost as if its primary task to prevent change - (Julian, 1953: 261). Too often through its well meaning but benighted representatives, religion has mocked the findings of careful and conscientious scholars – (John, 1948: 473).

When a person is in trouble, the priest concerned should help him rather than saying “Let us pray”. Of course, prayer is *unquestionably* worthy, yet when the other party expects a tangible help from the priest as “faith without works is dead” (James: 2:26), syrupy words shall be in vain.

Much evidence supports Fallaw’s belief that the Christian church generally has been so caught up by this “institutionalism” that organisational strength rather than personal spiritual growth has become its goal. The clutter of denominational machinery is overemphasised to the detriment of spiritual values.– (Robert, 1960: 19).

Religious congregations have often turned to be “an occasion to show off new clothing and similar motivations apply at other times” – (Brinkman, 1955: 52). It weakens the motive of the religion. Religious formalities may be substituted for personal deficiencies. Cruel fathers may cloak their brutality with pious prayers and penitential phrases. Selfish or indolent mothers may hide behind a verbal religious barrier. Formal religious activities may be used as a shelter to hide dishonesty and social inadequacies (Moberg, 1962: 363).

Common prayers may significantly reinforce family unity if all members are in basic accord on religion. But if one marital partner is accustomed to formal, ritualistic prayers and the other to emotionally expressive, spontaneous utterances or to the quiet devotion of silence before God, family prayers may become a major source of tension (Moberg, 1962: 363)

Historically, it is only rarely that the privileged classes of a society have effectively worked to change the conditions of the less fortunate of their society. This is because those very conditions serve to maintain the privilege in their exalted positions. Those who protest run the risk of bringing into play forces which lead to their own destruction. If members of the privilege classes were to protest, they would run the risk of losing their position of privilege. - (Henslin, 1976: 272).

To Karl Marx, religion was the ‘opiate of the people’, (Marx, 1978: 391) serving as narcotic to close people’s eyes to the conditions surrounding them. In the hope of getting a better deal in the next world, some religions tell people to put up with their problems. Others tell them that they are fated to suffer. This attitude of resignation keeps people from attacking social problems. Marx’s charge against religion contains

some truth. Slaves, serfs and poor people in many parts of the world have been encouraged by religion to turn away from earthly problems. In considering religion and social action, then, we must remember that it can act in two ways as a stimulant and as a narcotic. Religion generally supports social order, its norms and institutions; yet it also takes on a prophetic function of protest against the ills of the social order.

In Marx's words, "Religion is the sob of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, the spirit of conditions utterly unspiritual. It is the opium of the poor". (Marx, 1939 : 38). Karl Marx called religion the 'opium of the people' because he believed that the workers escape into religion. He argued that religion diverts the energies of the oppressed from changing their circumstances because believers focus on the happiness they will have in the coming world rather than on their suffering in this world. He further said 'The idea of God is the keystone of a perverted civilisation' (Marx, 1966 : 69). According to him, ruling classes adopt religious beliefs to justify their position both to themselves and to others. He added further that "man makes religion, religion does not make man" (Marx and Engel, 1955: 11). To Marx, religion is an illusion which eases the pain produced by exploitation and oppression. Religious teachings and practices reflect a society's inequalities. Religion legitimates social inequality; it reflects the interests of those on power by teaching that the existing social arrangements of a society represent what God desires. Thus Marx ventures to utter that Religion is like a drug helps one forget the misery and focus on future happiness in the next world. Karl Marx, a conflict theorist, saw religion as inhibiting social change by making existing social arrangements seem right and inevitable. Religion further promotes the status quo by teaching the faithful to accept their condition – thus religion is the ultimate tool to promote false consciousness.

Karl Marx never regarded religion as a social product. The individual, according to him, is only a social being wholly interested in materialised pursuits and satisfaction. Karl Marx regarded the essence of Christianity as theoretical. Religion is not empirical and practical. It is only a philosophical ideology. According to him philosophy is religion brought into thought.

In India the country was partitioned in the name of religion and even today religion in the garb of communalism stands to threaten the national solidarity.

It is normal for the Religion not to effectively protest or to actively seek solutions on behalf of those being victimised by the social order. Religion is not protesting the established order on behalf of the down trodden of society.

Religions become a source of social instability. This usually occurs during periods of drastic change or revolution for the culture as a whole, or in times of intense competition between religious bodies struggling for power. “When outside pressures produce divisions in society and when the established social and psychological expectances of people are frustrated, the Church or Temple is less likely to have a manifest integrating effect”. – (Yinger, 1957: 72).

Internal divisions within a community over question of religious dogma and worship can lead to open conflict. It gives little consideration to hostility between different religious groups within the same society/community/religious group.

Gandhi maintained that people of all religions have a deep interest in Christ. As he pointed out, Hindus hail the claim of Jesus that “I and the Father are

one” (John, 10: 30). Some Buddhists have spoken of him as the Buddha of the west. The Koran speaks of Jesus as the Messiah as a prophet and messenger of God. All this should provide a basis for a two way communication and spiritual fellowship between Christianity and the other great religions. Yet there persists the religious conflict as a dysfunction amongst the religions

Conflict itself can occur between religious groups (with the sanction of each religion). Recent world history gives bloody evidence of this occurrence (for example, Muslim verses Hindus in India and Pakistan, Muslims versus Jews in the middle east, Catholics versus protestants in northern Ireland). Religious conflict has also occurred within the United States at various times. Confrontations between Catholics and Protestants, between warring sects of Muslims (Black Muslims versus Sunni Muslims) as well as Protestants and Jews, have been fairly common. Clearly, religious values are reason enough for individuals and groups to clash. The history of religion is mostly the history of persecution. Wars have been fought in its name.

Conflict theorists acknowledge that religion may unify in small societies but in diverse societies religious differences divide them. From the conflict perspective, religious unity within a society, if it does occur, has negative consequences. Such unity is used to legitimate the interests of the powerful [for example, slavery, racial segregation, conquest of ‘Pagans’ and war]. Similarly, the interest of the powerful are served if the poor believe that they will be rewarded in the next life. Such a ‘theodicy’, (“a theodicy is a Religious explanation and justification”) prevents revolutions by the oppressed and serves as Marx suggested as ‘Opiate of the masses’ [Marx, 1990: 505].

In the past Hinduism was a pious religion upholding universal brotherhood and aspiring for the welfare of every living thing. However, it has lost its world vision and became fundamentalist due to various reasons. Naturally, other religions are sceptic about their security and existence. This creates inter-religious tensions.

Gandhi believed that “all religions are branches of one and the same tree – the tree of truth. The shape and size of the branches may vary, but the same vital juice runs through them all” (Gandhi, 1978:127). Conversion from one religion to another is dysfunctional to the religious harmony.

Belief in immortality has helped innumerable persons to lead a more secure and more serene lives than otherwise would have been possible. But it sometimes has dysfunctional by-products, such as causing men to take too careless a view on their own life as also of others' lives.

Religious trusts become owners of landed properties and do not hesitate to indulge in extreme forms of extortion and repression of the peasantry. Religions thus became agencies of disunity and disruption of humanity where as it should be a rule of conduct to live in a harmonious and corporate spirits, neutralizing all anti-social tendencies.

In their struggle for power and pelf the Spiritual Leaders of every denominational Religion had forgotten all about the service to be rendered to God and mankind. People do have only a more superficial and transient interest in religious activities merely because it had become fashionable.

Today very little attempt is being made by leaders of the various religious organization to bring about amity and good will between their followers. Whenever some congregation of a multi-religious nature take place in this country with the declared aim of combating irreligious tendencies; such gatherings fail to receive support or encouragement from the established Religious Organisations. Such organizations do not think of considering ways and means of eradicating economic exploitation and political repression.

No doubt the development of science and technology has made it possible for all humanity to live in comfort and happiness but the faulty social order and service of the exploiting classes prevent the materialization of this happy prospect. In this grim situation one would normally expect religious men with their vaunted idealism and love for humanity to support the downtrodden and handicapped. But on the contrary, what we find is that they tend to support the status quo and try to put a brake wherever possible on the trends of the social transformation.

Professor Abdul Aleem in his article "Have religions Outlived Their Social Function" has pointed out that "recent history has shown that all social reforms were implemented without the support and on many occasions in spite of the active opposition of the men of religion. As these people have still got the power to sway the thoughts and actions of large masses of people in many areas of the world, they could have been the instruments of social change if they only wished it. It is, perhaps, impossible for the protagonists of institutionalized religions to get out of their grooves of to change the frame work of their thought; without this they cannot perform useful function" (Aleem, 1965: 307).

Giving and taking dowry is prohibited since 1961, yet the innocent girl is killed and persecuted. Though the religion knows the ways and means to protect its women folk, it neglect and flinch back from its responsibility, which is a dysfunction of the religion.

Religion handled by vested interests may create communalism. Communalism is an ideology which states that society is divided into religious communities whose interests differ and are at time even opposed to each other. The antagonism practised by the people of one community against the people of other community and religion can be termed 'communalism'. This antagonism goes to the extent of falsely accusing, harming and deliberately insulting a particular community and extends to looting, burning down the homes and shops of the helpless and the weak, dishonouring women and even killing persons, 'communal persons' are those who practice politics through religion. (Ahuja, 1999 : 245).

Religion is considered a means of weathering the storms of life, enriching spiritual experience, preserving social order or fending off anxieties rather than as "a transcendent revelation of the nature of man and the world" (Leo, 1949: 18). It is made homocentric rather than Theo centric; the old beliefs become so hollow and empty that "Peace of mind" cults and other innovations centred on man rather than on God replace them.

Ascetic monasticism, celibacy or other forms of self-denial may be used to escape the burdens of family life and the rigors of society. Prayer may be used as an escape mechanism by the indolent or neglectful. Dependence upon God may be used as an excuse for evading responsibilities of medical care, soil conservation insect control or

crime prevention. The religious cults which condone antisocial personal habits and periodic confession which replaces painful personality reorganisation alike emphasis a type of pseudo holiness that permits neglect of obvious social duties – (Fromm, 1941 :42).

Dysfunctions of religion also precipitate in the form of worshipping god men, fear of *Satan* etc. Among Hindus, the evil practices like untouchability try to reinforce their strength.

CULTIC RELIGION

“The word cult derives from the Latin Cultus, which means both cultivation and worship. Thus Cult connotes a certain kind of religions practice or ritual”. [Broom: 1954:389].

Those with unusual doctrines, not generally accepted by the society, are called “Cults”. Cult is a new or different religion at odds with dominant culture. Cult is a group or movement exhibiting a great or excessive devotion or dedication to some person, idea, or thing and employing unethically manipulative techniques of persuasion and control designed to advance the goals of the group’s leaders, to the actual or possible betterment of members, their families or the community. All religions began as cults. Cults often emerge with the appearance of a charismatic leader, exerting extraordinary appeal to a group of followers.

Cultic Religion satisfies the mental need of the present generation. It accepts all the persons, without taking into consideration their previous life history.

The cult has little concern with governmental, educational or economic activities. It stresses ecstatic emotional experience of its members and asks only that the larger society tolerate what is often regarded as weird behaviour.

Functions of Cultic Religion:

Cultic religion has originated where the Conventional religions failed to fulfil the requirements of the common man. Around us we can see at present several Cultic groups coming up abruptly. We can not deny that the present trend of these cultic groups in no way harm the society rather they preserve to maintain the equilibrium of the society rendering mental peace to those who approach them by pacifying them in one pretext or the other. We must admit that they also pave the way to the Cult to be serene in their day-to-day life. They also teach the moral ethics and tenets, which in no way harm the society or any other religion. The recently originated cults of Mata Amrithanandamayi Amma, Sri Sri Ravishankar's art of living are widely accepted Cults. It is a protest against the failure of established religions to meet the needs of marginal groups.

The rational approach of the Cultic Religion to modern life fetches popularity to it and new members are thronged into it. The daily need of the individual for a peaceful life is given much stress by the cultic religion.

Dysfunctions of Cultic Religion:

The major dysfunction of the cultic religion lurks around the leader of the cult. Most of the cults are accidental in origin. At least some of the cultic leaders begin their careers in the mainstream denominations and they were ousted out for their immoral

activities or for such other derelict demeanour. There are every chances of getting the innocent followers deceived by the leader in camouflage.

The longevity of cultic religion is often only till the death of the leader who formed the cult as his/her successor need not be an upright enlightened soul as the predecessor was and may lead the followers to ruin.

Moreover, there is every possibility that the cult may have some tenets of its own which may not be in concurrence with the norms of the society and thereby the society may isolate the individual. The consequence of it shall be far reaching as that incongruous individual shall be a problem to the family and society as well.

The Rationale Behind the Study:

The survey of literature indicates that this important institution has been analysed only at the philosophical level. Further, various new trends are coming up in the religious life of our society like Cultic religion. In the case of power alignment and power transactions within the religious structures, organised religions have become parallel to political organizations. Religions, which were remaining unorganised also are getting organised in the above line. Therefore, the institution has changed its face considerably, necessitating analyses of it based on empirical realities. Hence this study is suggested with the objectives given in Chapter III, Methodology.

Chapter – 3

Methodology

Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

Both science and religion search for truth. The search of each usually benefits both functionally. Religion, like science demand objective reality. If it does not represent objective reality, it cannot endure any more than science. - Ellwood.

Scientific methodology is the *sine qua non* of any investigation which gives it the status of science. This study being a scientific one utmost care has been given to stick on to scientific methodology. The details of the methodology are discussed in this chapter.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES:

The major objectives of the study are:

- 1) to analyse the attitude of contemporary society towards religion.
- 2) to assess the influence of the attitude towards religion on the perception of the community on the functions and dysfunctions of religion.
- 3) to assess the social functions and dysfunctions of religion in contemporary society.
- 4) to explain the reasons for the increasing popularity of cultic religions in terms of their functions and dysfunctions.
- 5) to suggest measures for arresting the problems created by religions in contemporary society.

Hypotheses:

Based on the objectives, this study formulated the following hypotheses for testing:

1. Religion as a social institution has both functions and dysfunctions in contemporary Kerala society and its functions outweigh the dysfunctions.
2. The positive functions of religion create favourable attitude of the people towards religion
3. Pious motives of religion promote mental hygiene of its followers and thus a healthy social psyche is created.
4. Material motives drive the contemporary society towards religion and they create inter-religious hostilities
5. Progressive strengthening of any one religious group in the public sphere necessitates other groups also to strengthen themselves which ultimately creates religious hostilities.
6. Religion prevents the widening of the gap between the poor and the rich.
7. Religious leadership can create insular or cosmopolitan outlook within their religious group and hence the hostility and harmony can be created between them by the leadership.
8. The overloading of metaphysics in conventional religion gives popularity to cultic religion, which is more people friendly.
9. Cultic religions' rational approaches to modern life make them more attractive to the society.
10. The social background of the people influences their perceptions on the functions and dysfunctions of religion.

Explanation of Major Concepts:

The major concepts which require explanations are defined as given below:

Function:

“Functions are observable consequences that constructively contribute to adjustment, adaptation or integration of the society or institution under study” Merton distinguishes between Manifest functions, Latent functions and Dysfunctions, (Merton, 1957: 84).

The functions comprise the following salient elements:

- (a) Manifest Functions: Manifest functions refer to functions that are obvious. .
- (b) Latent functions: Latent functions are functions that are unrecognised or unintended.

In this study the meaning of the Concept is as defined by Merton

Dysfunctions:

Dysfunction is negative function. That is, the damages suffered by the functions. Dysfunctions are the consequences that decrease adaptation, stimulate maladjustment or have disintegrative and destructive results. Some consequences, of course, are hypothetically non-functional, contributing neither to adjustment nor maladjustment; and many are mixed, having both positive and negative implications.

A perspective that is highly concerned about order is by definition concerned about what happens when social order breaks down. Merton uses the term dysfunction, which refers to a negative consequence that may disrupt the system. Dysfunction also conjures up the notion that a social phenomenon can be functional in one setting and dysfunctional in another.

Some functions and dysfunctions are *manifest* (intended, deliberately sought, and recognized by participants), while others are *latent* (unintended,

unanticipated, concealed or not recognised. In this study the concept is used in this meaning.

Attitude towards Religion:

Attitude is the personal view of something, better to say the opinion or general feeling about something. Attitude towards any phenomenon may be defined as the motor mental predisposition for acting in a particular way with regard to the phenomenon. [Young, 1954:152]. Here the attitude under investigation is the one towards religion.

Variables and Their Measurement:

Variables are inherent characteristics of the subject of research. The presumed cause is referred to as the independent variable. The presumed effect is referred to as dependent variable.

The dependent variables that are to be analysed are:

- (1) Functions of religion and
- (2) Dysfunctions of religion, (The meaning of the variables is discussed under concept definition).
- (3) Attitude towards Religion

Attitude towards religion in the study is analysed both as dependent and independent variables. When it is considered as dependent variable, the investigation is aimed at finding out how it varies with the sociological variables described under the independent variables.

For the measurement of attitude a Likert scale is constructed. After establishing its validity and reliability it is used in the study.

For the measurement of the dependent variables, namely functions and dysfunctions, indices are selected and the variations in them are assessed.

The following indices are selected to study the functions of religion:

- 1) Unifying power of religion,
- 2) Promotion of charity,
- 3) Promotion of cleanness,
- 4) Promotion of human love,
- 5) Contentment with life,
- 6) Social Control,
- 7) Social Stability,
- 8) Spread of education,
- 9) Status of women.

The indices selected for studying the dysfunctions are:

- 1) Religion – politics nexus,
- 2) Accumulation of material wealth by religious formations,
- 3) Money transaction in the name of charity by religious groups,
- 4) Androcentricity of religion,
- 5) Religious fundamentalism.

These indices are used for analysing the functions and dysfunctions of modern Cultic religion also.

Independent variables:

Variations in the outlook on the functions and dysfunctions with reference to the usual sociological variables are analysed and hence those variables are defined as the independent variables. The explanation and measurement of them are given below:

1. Gender:

If the sex of a person is biologically determined, the gender of a person is culturally and socially constructed. There are thus two sexes and two corresponding genders. In sociological study even when male/female is used the reference is to the masculine/feminine qualities. In this study male/female designate the gender difference.

2. Age:

In this study 'age' means the number of years the respondent has completed at the time of interview. According to the age status the respondents were grouped into four categories namely, (1) up to 30 years, (2) between 30 – 45 years, (3) between 45 – 60 years and (4) between 60 – 75 years.

3. Religion:

'Religious groups' is used to denote to the respondents in terms of their religious affiliation (Siddh, 1974:21). In this study three religious groups namely, Hindu, Muslim and Christians were there in the sample.

4. Education:

Educational status refers to the number of years of formal schooling the respondents have had. The respondents were divided in to the following three categories

according to their educational attainment namely, (1) up to SSLC, (2) Higher Secondary and (3) College.

5. Occupation:

It refers to the main economic activity undertaken by the individual which provides regular income. During analysis the occupation was categorised as Manual Labourer, White collar employment and Professionals

6. Income:

In this study income refers to the average monthly income of the household to which the respondent belongs, from all sources (Occupations, Agriculture, Trade, etc.) The respondents were grouped into the following four categories on the basis of their average monthly income. The categories are (1) up to monthly income of Rs.3000/- (2) between Rs. 3000 – 6000, (3) between Rs. 6000 – 9000 and (4) Rs. 9000 and above.

7. Marital Status:

Marital Status means whether the respondent concerned was married or not. Here in this study the respondents were divided into the following two categories (1) Married (2) Unmarried (3) Widow/Widower.

8. Family Size:

Family size means the number of members the respondent's family comprises of. In this study the Family Size was grouped into the following three categories namely, (1) up to 4 members, (2) 4 – 6 members, (3) 6 and above members.

9. Place of Residence:

Place of residence means the type of geographical area in which the respondent lives. In this study the place of residence was categorised as (1) Rural and (2) Urban.

10. Attitude towards religion:

Attitude is the motor mental predisposition for action towards any phenomenon, concrete or abstract. In this study, the predisposition towards religion is considered as an independent variable. On the basis of the score obtained on a Likert scale constructed for measuring the attitude, it is classified as Highly Favourable (score 80 – 95), Favourable (score 65 – 80), Lukewarm (score 50 – 65) and Indifferent (score 35 – 50) attitudes.

Measurement of Attitude:

A Likert Scale was constructed for the purpose. Though there are standard versions of the Scale readily available the researcher felt that it is better to construct one which incorporates the special social and religious characteristics of the study area. Hinduism, Islam and Christianity are the religions practiced in Kerala. The religious life of the people of the area is to be considered as the same as the geographical area is very small and same religious texts and scriptures are followed by the people. So it is believed that Kozhikode district will sufficiently represent the whole of the state. On the basis of the intimate familiarity of the researcher with Kozhikode community, the area was selected for the purpose. The details of constructing the scale are given below:

An inventory comprising of 84 items (as shown in Appendix-I) was prepared for the purpose of assessing the attitude of the people towards religion. The

Corporation area was considered in terms of Wards. From the Wards one was selected at random. From the selected ward, 75 households were chosen. The House Tax Register was used as the Sampling Frame for the selection of the households. Similar procedures were adopted to select 75 households from the Panchayat area. Panchayat Wards of the area constituted the Sampling Frame for first stage selection. Ward – 6 from Kozhikode Corporation area and Ward–1 from Kooderanji Grama Panchayat of Kozhikode District were got when a random selection of the Wards was made. Thus the 150 heads/eldest members of the households constituted the respondents for the item selection processes of the Likert Scale. The items of the inventory and their Validity Coefficients are given in Appendix-II. The first twenty items, when the items are arranged in the descending order of their Validity Coefficients, constituted the Likert Scale for measuring the attitude of the people towards religion. The selected Scale Items and their Validity Coefficients are given in Appendix-III.

The reliability of the scale was ensured by the Split Halves method. The reliability coefficient of the scale was found to be 0.60. The correlation is significant at a $P < 0.01$ as the Calculated Value of “t” is 9.19.

Details of the calculation of the reliability coefficient are given in Appendix – IV.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY:

The population (universe) of the study is constituted by the households of the State of Kerala, represented by their heads/eldest members.

Sample of the Study:

The sample of the study was constituted by 450 Households represented by the heads or eldest members. For the selection of the sample, the State was considered as three zones, the North, the Middle and the South. The Zones are represented respectively by the Districts of Kozhikode, Ernakulam and Thiruvananthapuram. One rural and one urban area were selected from each of these Districts using the following procedure:

One Ward each of the three Corporations was selected. Randomisation technique was used for selecting the Ward. For selecting the rural areas, multi-stage random sampling technique was used. In the first stage selection, Panchayats of each of the chosen districts were considered. In the second stage selection, wards of the selected Panchayats were considered as the units. The units in both the stages were selected at random. From the urban and rural areas selected, 75 households each were chosen at random. The House Tax Registers available in the Corporations or Panchayats as the case may be, served as the sampling frame. Those houses which were remaining unoccupied were removed from the sampling frame.

Thus the total sample size of the study was 450 households which were represented by their heads or eldest adult members.

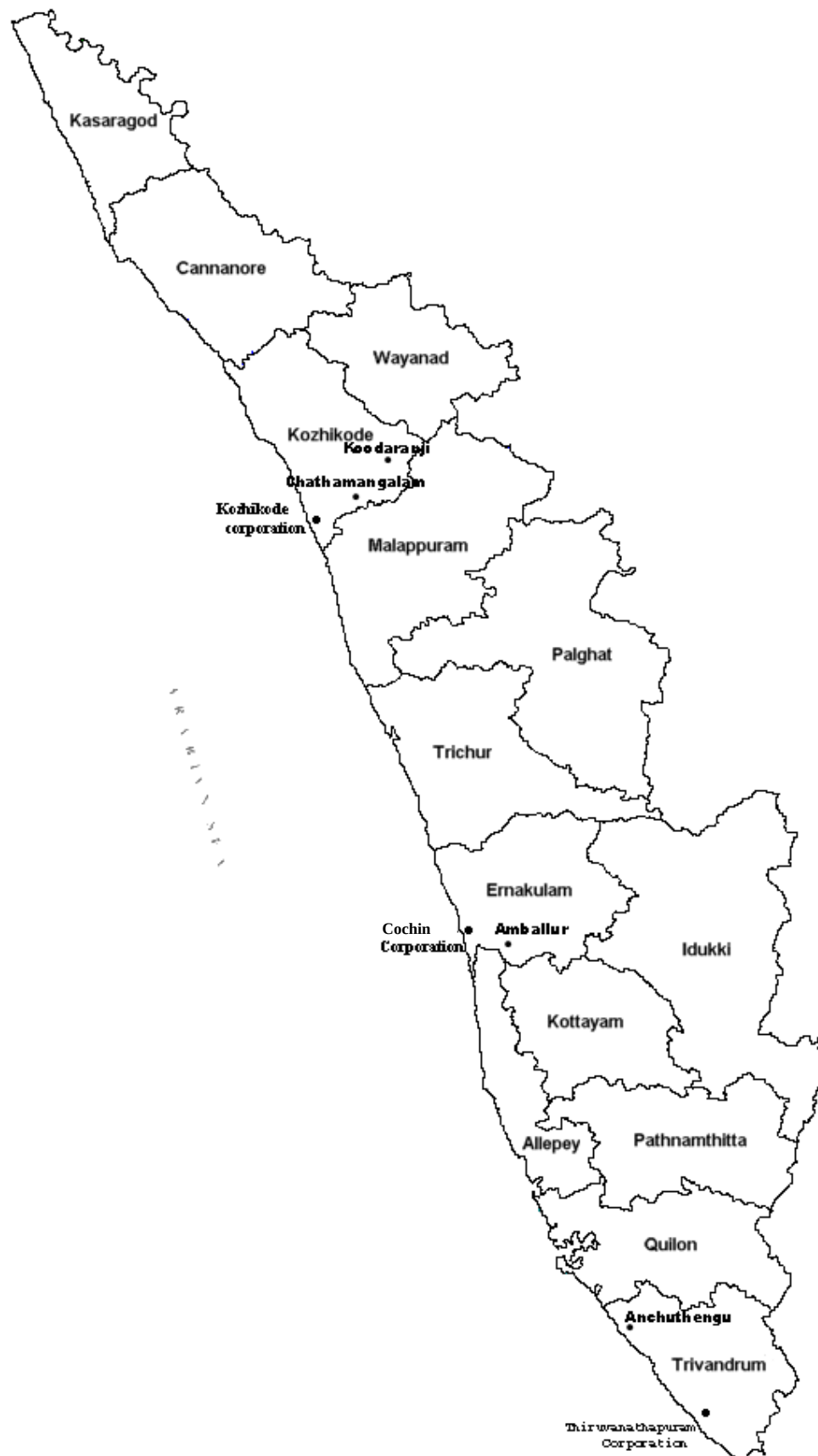
Data Collection:

The primary source of data was Interviews of the heads or eldest member of the households. Interviews were carried out at three different zones, the North, the Middle and the South represented respectively by the Districts of Kozhikode, Ernakulam

and Thiruvananthapuram. One rural and one urban area are selected from each of these districts.

Thus the following wards of the Corporations and Rural Panchayats were chosen for study:

| Corporation Selected (one ward from each Corporation area) | Rural Panchayat of that selected Corporation's District (one ward from each Panchayat area) |
|---|--|
| Kozhikode Corporation (Ward -5) | Ward-2 of Chathamangalam Grama Panchayat, which is situated 25kms north – east of Kozhikode |
| Cochin Corporation (Ward -4) | Ward-1 of Amballoor Grama Panchayat, which is situated 18kms south – east of Ernakulam |
| Thiruvananthapuram Corporation (Ward -3) | Ward-1 of Anjuthengu Grama Panchayat, which is situated 40kms north of Thiruvananthapuram along the sea coast |



The Researcher carried out the interviews of 75 heads of households from each ward of the above Corporation and Grama Panchayat areas, totalling to 450 heads of households. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured Interview Schedule prepared for the purpose, enquiring into the functions and dysfunctions of religion (both conventional and modern cultic religion) as perceived by the respondents. The Interview Schedule used in the study is given in Appendix – V and “References” given as Appendix – VI.

The secondary data for the study was collected from published materials and other persons who were wealthy sources of knowledge relating to the study. Details collected through personal observations and informal discussions during the investigator’s field work supplemented the formal survey data.

Data Processing and Analyses:

The primary data collected through the interviews was scrutinised to confirm their completeness, reliability and validity. The scrutinised data was coded for Computer Data Base creation. They were then fed into a Computer System. Analyses were carried out to satisfy the objectives of the study.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the study. Under inferential statistics the non-parametric tests, namely, Chi-square Test was used. Under descriptive statistics, measures of Central tendency and standard deviation were used.

Care has been taken to stick on to the scientific methodology through-out the study.

Research Setting

Chapter – 4

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH SETTING

The empirical part of the study was conducted in the state of Kerala. This chapter reveals the sociological characteristics of the community. This description will help scholars to know in what social background the study has been carried out.

Kerala occupies the South –Western corner of Indian Sub-continent. The area of the state is 38863 sq.km. According to 2001 Census, the population of the state is 31,841,374 persons. Other demographic characteristics are briefly given below:

| | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|--------------------------|----------|
| Male/female break up | : | 15,468,614 males | |
| | : | 16,372,760 females | |
| Sex ratio | : | 1058 females/1000 males. | |
| Birth rate | : | 18.3 per thousand | |
| Death rate | : | 6.45 per thousand | |
| Infant mortality rate | : | 14.0 per thousand | |
| Density of population | : | 819 per sq. km. | |
| Literacy | : | 90.9% | |
| | Male | : | 94.2% |
| | Female | : | 87.7% |
| Life expectancy | : | 71.5 years | |
| | Male | : | 69 years |
| | Female | : | 74 years |

A profile of the Socio-Cultural characteristics is given below:

The major religions of the State are Hinduism, Islam and Christianity.

The approximate strength of the followers of these religions is as follows:

| | | |
|------------|---|--------|
| Hindus | : | 56.20% |
| Islam | : | 24.70% |
| Christians | : | 19.00% |

(a small number of Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, Jews and other communities are also present in Kerala)

In the Northern Districts of Kerala except Wyanad, (Kozhikode, Kannur, Kasaragode, Palghat and Malappuram) Muslim and Hindus are almost equal in proportion. Wyanad is a District atop the Western Ghats, thickly populated by Christian migrants. Muslims and Hindus are minorities here. Another speciality of the population of the district is the presence of a sizable proportion of Adivasi Population. 17 % of the State's Tribal population is in Wyanad. 1.10% of State population are Tribals. The major tribal present here are: Paniyar, Kurumar and Adiyan.

In the District of Malappuram, followers of Islam have slight edge over the others. In the Thrissur, Ernakulam, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta Districts, there are higher proportions of Christian population. In Kollam and Thiruvananthapuram, the religious groups balance one another.

Kerala was famous for its religious harmony. But recently the trend is seen changed. This is particularly after the organisation of the majority community [Hindus] properly. In the coastal area of Thiruvananthapuram fishermen belonging to the three communities unleash their hostilities every now and then. Though they can not be considered as communal conflicts, yet disturbance usually surfaces there. Nilakkal in

Pathanamthitta District is another sensitive area where there are cold wars existing between Hindus and Christians. Two great religious conventions [one that of Christians and the other that of Hindus] annually take place on the banks of river Pampa.

The Coastal belt of Kozhikode District witnesses Hindu-Muslim Conflicts. It was in this Coastal area (at Maarad) where 9 persons were brutally massacred as a result of the Hindu-Muslim Conflict on 2nd May 2003.

All other areas, by and large, are peaceful. However, the Hindu-Muslim communities are not in good terms with each other. The seed of discordance lies in the Moppillah rebellion, which took place during 1920s in Malappuram wherein the Muslim peasants revolted against Hindu landlords. It was a severe problem for the British Government too. Many casualties occurred when the Britishers suppressed the revolt.

The famous Guruvayoor Temple, the hill shrine Sabarimala, the Thekkan Kasi-Thirunelli, Padmanabha Swamy Temple Thiruvananthapuram, Omallur Church, Manarkad Church, Kanjiramattom Mosque, Tirurangadi Mosque etc. are famous pilgrim centres of the three communities in this State.

Cultural activities in the state are praise worthy. The famous dance drama '*Kathakali*' is an original contribution of the State to the cultural heritage of this country. The art form was popularised by '*Kalamandalm*' under the patronage of poet *Vallathol*. Many other dance forms are also there in the rich cultural store house of the community. *Bharatha Natyam*, *Mohiniyattam* are the popular varieties. *Yakshaganam* which is Karnataka's own dance form is popular in the northern part of the state, particularly Kasaragode. These dance forms are, by and large, have their story from, the epics and

puranas of Hindu Religion. *Kaikottikkali, Thiruvathirakali, Kummattikkali, Velakkali, Ottamthullal, Porattunatakam*, are also the folk culture of the Hindu community, which have roots in the Hindu mythology. All these cultural varieties have been diluting the communal passion embedded in the religion and secularising the society.

The migrant Semitic religions, viz. Islam and Christianity also do have their contributions to the cultural life of the state. *Oppana, Daffmuttu* are popular cultural forms of Muslim. The rhythm and steps as well as the folk language used are so attractive that the cultural forms cut across religious boundaries and integrate the people into one secular social mass.

The contributions of Christians to the Cultural frontiers are limited though their contributions to other areas like health and education are astonishing. However, *Chavittunatakam* and *Margamkali* are to be mentioned here in this context.

It is to be inferred that the traditional religion of the community, Hinduism used cultural platforms as its propagating agencies of the religion and integrating mechanism of the community members. For attaining these ends the Semitic religions have their formal structures, particularly educational institutions.

Malayalam is the official language of the State. Kasaragode, the neighbouring District to Karnataka; Palghat, Thiruvananthapuram and Idukki, which have boundaries with Tamil Nadu, sizable portions of the population use respectively, Kannada and Tamil as their mother tongue. The rest of the State population use

Malayalam as their mother tongue. In the case of Adivasi population, they use mixed language and dialects.

The State language Malayalam, has a very rich literature. To the branch of Poetry, members of Hindu religion contributed the lion's share. Novel, Short Story, Literary criticism, analyses of social situations, etc. are common assets of writers belonging to all religious groups. If we mention personalities who have fostered literature such persons as G Sankarakurup, Thakazhi Sivsankara Pillai, SK Pottakkad, MT Vasudevan Nair, come at the forefront. They are winners of the Jnanapeeda Puraskar.

The gap between the rich and the poor is not as alarming in Kerala as that in other state. Though there exists poverty, the gravity is less compared to that of other states.

Malayalees are not a group of desperate and lazy ones. Instead, they reach everywhere in the world and come to the forefront through hard work. Malayalees attain fame with their sagacity and capacity for imagination.

The State population is considered as hundred percent literate and naturally the reading habit is fairly good. If we take Newspaper circulation and Journals as indices of the reading habit of the people we have to project the following statistics:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---|-------------|
| No. of Newspapers published | : | 226 |
| No. of copies circulated | : | 32, 83, 957 |
| No. of journals published | : | 1,169 |

The film culture of the society is very good. Several Malayalam films won National awards. Many of the Malayalam films get invitations to International Film Festivals. The State Film Industry has a galaxy of actors both male and female who have secured international acclaims. Adoor Gopalakrishnan who has become a part of the International Film Culture belongs to the state.

Kerala has almost hundred percent TV coverage. Cable TV network satisfies the information and recreational needs of the people.

Kerala is fully covered by Akasvani, the official radio of the country. There are three high power and one low power Transmitters in the state. Apart from this, there are Five FM Transmitters, one each at Kannur, Kozhikode, Kochi, Devikulam and Trivandrum. Moreover, at Manjeri an FM Transmitter is expected to be inaugurated very shortly.

Telephone density in the state is one of the National bests. Cellular phone is also very much spread in the State.

Coming to the political scenario the political parties have been polarised into two Fronts, the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the Left Democratic Front (LDF). The former is led by the Congress party and the latter by the Communist party [Marxist]. Both Fronts have National and Regional Parties as their members. For the last several years UDF and LDF ruled the state during alternate terms of five years. Both the Fronts have policies of propitiating religious groups to capture political power. Further many of the regional parties are satellite organisation of religious groups. So community based politics is present in the state now.

Being a 100% literate State the people are aware of their rights and therefore, social exploitation is practically absent. Awareness about outside world is very high as people are in constant contact with it through the media. The demographic characteristics are almost equivalent to that of developed countries.

Good housing is a speciality of the State as it is considered by people as a status symbol.

Chapter V

ATTITUDE, BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Attitude Towards Religion:

Attitude is a predisposition of mind that creates favourable or unfavourable orientation to objects (material and non-material). The attitude very much determines the interaction pattern of the individual (or group) with the objects. In this study the researcher has made an attempt to analyse the attitude of the people towards religion. For the purpose, a Likert Scale was constructed and measurements taken. The details of the scale and method of construction were included in the chapter on the Methodology. In this chapter discussions on the analyses of the attitude are given.

5.1: Attitude Towards Religion:

For the purpose of analyses the score received by the respondents are classified into four groups. Score 35-50 is labelled as indifferent attitude towards religion, 50-65 as lukewarm attitude, 65-80 as favourable attitude and 80-95 as highly favourable attitude. The analysis on the level of favour shown to religion based on the score reveals that only 3.78% of the respondents are indifferent to religious life. 30.67% have only lukewarm attitude towards religion. However, 48.22% and 17.33% have respectively favourable and highly favourable attitude towards religion (Table No5.1.1). On an inductive generalisation we may conclude that the people under investigation have favourable or highly favourable attitude to religion. It is not an astonishing fact since being religious is an innate quality of human being. In his/her craving for locating the

ultimate reality of human life no institution other than religion can help him/her to this extent.

There are certain views that there is no such an ultimate reality, which unfolds in different manifestation. But human become helpless to explain many secrets of life including birth and death. Though religion may be considered as human made the content of it, namely, spirituality is not mere creation of human. At the most just like dormant spark is fanned to make fire, the slumbering spirituality may be energised by human efforts. So it is the secret of nature that human becomes spiritual being.

Subsidiary analyses to investigate into the relationship between the attitude and the background variables were conducted following the usual pattern. It is seen that variables namely, age, religious affiliation, education, income and family size are associated with the attitude.

5.1.1: Age and Attitude Towards Religion:

Analysis of the data based on the age structure reveals very interesting facts. If we take the 'favourable' and 'highly favourable' responses together the total varies from 67.10% to 79.59% through 57.83% and 62.79%. The figures correspond respectively to <30 years, 30 – 45 years, 45 – 60 years and 60 – 75 years. The analysis shows that religion is more favourably looked upon by the lowest and highest age groups. The inclination of the highest age group may be taken for granted as it is the experience that the elders look upon religion with more respect and fervour. The life of the younger generation is becoming problematic, they are struggling to get education of their choice, job is a far cry, the thirst for material prosperity and independence from older generation is an ever time high. But the realisation of their dreams is elusive. These situations may

prompt the youngsters that something metaphysical is there which may be a source of consolation. Thus may be the younger generation falling back on religion.

The lower middle age group (30 – 45 years) is more neutral to religious matters. The analysis shows that 37.41% of them have a lukewarm attitude towards religion. The figures in respect of the other groups are considerably lower than those relating to this group.

Table No. 5.1.1
Age and Attitude Towards Religion

| Age (in years) | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 3 (3.95%) | 22 (28.95%) | 37 (48.68%) | 14 (18.42%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 7 (4.76%) | 55 (37.41%) | 66 (44.90%) | 19 (12.93%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 6 (4.65%) | 42 (32.56%) | 64 (49.61%) | 17 (13.18%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 1 (1.02%) | 19 (19.39%) | 50 (51.02%) | 28 (28.57%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 19.76 df = 9 Table value = 16.92 P <= 0.05

The Association is significant

5.1.2: Religious Affiliation and Attitude Towards Religion:

Attitude towards religion is intimately associated with religious affiliation, it is assumed. As in the previous analysis, Table No.5.1.1 if we combine the favourable groups together, we see that overwhelming majority of both the Muslims and Christians have favourable attitude towards religion (82.67% and 70.66% respectively Table

No.5.1.2). Contrary to this, the Hindus coming under this category is a minority (43.37%). Again 48% of the Hindus (the highest segment) is having lukewarm attitude towards religion. The corresponding figure in respect of the Muslims and Christians are respectively 16% and 28%.

The results indicate that the Semitic religions with its steel frame have the capacity to attract the members to them and keep them adhering to them. In the case of the Hindus the lack of such an organising mechanism is the reason for their lukewarm attitude to religion.

Table No. 5.1.2
Religious Affiliation and Attitude Towards Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly Favourable Score 80– 95 | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 13 (8.67%) | 72 (48.00%) | 58 (38.67%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 2 (1.33%) | 24 (16.00%) | 70 (46.67%) | 54 (36.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 2 (1.33%) | 42 (28.00%) | 89 (59.33%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 93.71 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.1.3: Educational Status and Attitude Towards Religion:

Education is a deciding factor of the attitude – the study indicates. From analysis 5.1.3 we see that majority of the school educated respondents have favourable attitude towards religion (51%). In the case of the other two groups, they are the highest segments (47.50% and 47.41% respectively). The sizable segments among the Higher Secondary and College educated respondents have lukewarm attitude towards religion (35% and 31.85% respectively). Another significant result is that among the different

educational groups, comparatively school educated respondents has the highest (25%) favourable fascination for religion. On a consolidation of the results, it may be pointed out that the lower educated has highest fascination towards religion. The other groups are below them.

Table No.5.1.3
Educational Status and Attitude Towards Religion

| Educational status | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 0 (0.00%) | 24 (24.00%) | 51 (51.00%) | 25 (25.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 2 (2.50%) | 28 (35.00%) | 38 (47.50%) | 12 (15.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 15 (5.56%) | 86 (31.85%) | 128 (47.41%) | 41 (15.13%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.01 df = 6 Table value = 12.39 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.1.4: Income Status and Attitude Towards Religion:

Income is also presumed to be instrumental for the formation of attitude towards anything. Here too, the basis of the analysis is the presumption of income and the attitude towards religion is associated. Analysis 5.1.4 reveals that the assumption is true; the higher income brackets have lesser fascination towards religion. Similarly, the lukewarm attitude increases with increase in income. The highly favourable groups are comparatively larger in the low income brackets (<Rs.3000 and 3000 – 6000).

The results indicate that the material prosperity and affinity towards religion are in opposition.

Table No. 5.1.4
Income Status and Attitude Towards Religion

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 1 (0.94%) | 22 (20.75%) | 57 (53.77%) | 26 (24.53%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 10 (4.81%) | 67 (32.21%) | 92 (44.23%) | 39 (18.75%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 4 (5.80%) | 26 (37.68%) | 33 (47.83%) | 6 (8.70%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 2 (2.99%) | 23 (34.33%) | 35 (52.24%) | 7 (10.45%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 18.45 df = 9 Table value = 16.92 P < = 0.05
The Association is significant

5.1.5: Family Size and Attitude Towards Religion:

The association between family size and the attitude can be easily understood in analysis Table No. 5.1.5. The largest family is having greater favour to religion. 61.29% show favourable attitude and 16.13% high favour towards religion. A greater portion among the small family have lukewarm attitude (34.45%). Further, comparatively a larger segment of the middle size family has very high fascination for religion (23.76%). On the whole the larger family shows more fascination to religion. It may be due to the fact that religion is strong agent of social control. The larger families seek the support to a greater extent from formal agencies like religion. The small family may be capable to socialise its offspring by itself. Or the socialisation may not be so strongly carried out in smaller family as the larger family does (Table No.5.1.5).

Table No. 5.1.5

Family Size and Attitude Towards Religion

| Family size | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 13 (5.46%) | 82 (34.45%) | 113 (47.48%) | 30 (12.61%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 3 (1.66%) | 50 (27.62%) | 85 (46.96%) | 43 (23.76%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 1 (3.23%) | 6 (19.35%) | 19 (61.29%) | 5 (16.13%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 15.51 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P < = 0.05
The Association is significant

RELIGIOUS BELIEF:

It can be expected that motley population do have different Beliefs and Practices as far as religion is concerned. They differ in accordance with the cultural and spiritual evolution of the individual. Here an attempt is made in this study to analyse the differences in their religious Beliefs and Practices.

5.2: The Concept of God

The concept of God is different to different persons. It is found in the study that 56.22% uphold the view that God is the unseen force which controls the world and 35.78% visualise God as that which can not be explained in words as it is inexplicable. Another 3.33% see God as the force of the society and yet another 4.67% responded that the concept of God is not applicable to them as they do not believe in any such force called God. This analysis indicates that people look upon God as a super natural all powerful force.

5.2.1 Age Status and Concept of God:

This study also investigated into the relationship between age status and the outlook. It is revealed that majority of all the age groups opined that God is the unseen force which controls the world. The age group 30 – 45 years adheres more to the view that God is the unseen force (59.86%) which controls the world. Those who are 45 years and above distinguish themselves by showing their unalloyed devotions to God and more among them accept that humans are incapable of explaining what God is. In the first response (unseen force) we see only a revelation of facts. But in the second (can not explain) we feel the mood of a total submission to God. The details of the analysis are given in Table No.5.2.1:

Table No. 5.2.1
Age Status and Concept of God

| Age (in years) | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 42 (55.26%) | 2 (2.63%) | 25 (32.89%) | 7 (9.21%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 88 (59.86%) | 6 (4.08%) | 42 (28.57%) | 11 (7.48%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 70 (54.26%) | 5 (3.88%) | 52 (40.31%) | 2 (1.55%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 53 (54.08%) | 2 (2.04%) | 42 (42.86%) | 1 (1.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 17.25, df = 9, Table value = 16.92, P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

5.2.2: Religious Affiliation and Concept of God.

Wide disparity is seen in the opinion of the respondents according to their religious affiliation. It is found that 62.67% of Muslims consider God as unseen force

which controls the world, while 56.67% of Christians and 49.33% of Hindus subscribe to the view. It means amongst the Semitic religions Islam is more firm in their religious conviction and Christians stands next to Muslims in the matter. However, it can be seen in Table No.5.2.2 that 37.33% each of the Hindus and Christians and 32.67% of the Muslims consider that God can not be explained.

Table No. 5.2.2
Religious Affiliation and Concept of God

| Religious Affiliation | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 74 (49.33%) | 9 (6.00%) | 56 (37.33%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 94 (62.67%) | 1 (0.67%) | 49 (32.67%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 85 (56.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 56 (37.33%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 13.10, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.2.3: Educational Status and the Concept of God.

It is assumed that there is difference between different educational groups on the concepts of God. From the Table No. 5.2.3 it can be seen that the view that God is an unseen force is more firm among the lesser educated group. Around 59% of Secondary and Higher Secondary educated category uphold the view. The corresponding figure in the case of the College educated is 54.44%. It shows the College educated are more savvy and discerning, compared to the school educated. While 38.89% of the

College educated preferred to stick on to the opinion that God can not be explained in words, a lesser portion only of the School level concur with this ideology.

Table No. 5.2.3
Educational Status and Concept of God

| Educational Status | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 59 (59.00%) | 3 (3.00%) | 36 (36.00%) | 2 (2.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 47 (58.75%) | 6 (7.50%) | 20 (25.00%) | 7 (8.75%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 147 (54.44%) | 6 (2.22%) | 105 (38.89%) | 12 (4.44%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 13.32, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Occupation, Income, Marital status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here

5.3: Nature of God:

Another index which was selected to reveal the religious ideologies was the perception on the nature of God.

The analysis (Table 5.3.1) reveals that 58.22% of the respondents believe that God is ‘a living one’, human like entity without physical existence. It is also seen that 23.33% do not ascribe any human characteristics to God but consider it as an abstract entity. It is rather a construct of human mind. Another 9.78% feel that it is the embodiment of power in a single entity whose morphology is not known. The rest 8.67% considers God exists in manifold forms, a separate God for every separate event in the world and such gods are invisible to human beings.

The analysis highlights that a majority of the people view God as a power which has human characteristics without physical existence.

5.3.1: Age Status and Perception on the Nature of God:

Analysis on the relationship between age and perception on the nature of God reveals that the older people have more faith in the ‘Living Nature of God’. Among the 45 – 60 and 60 – 75 years age groups, 58.14% and 66.33% respectively believe that God is a living God. It shows that as the age advances, the belief in God as a live entity also gets strengthened as seen in Table No. 5.3.1 below:

Table No.5.3.1
Age Status and Perception on the Nature of God

| Age (in years) | A living God* | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 42 (55.26%) | 20 (26.32%) | 11 (14.47%) | 3 (3.95%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 80 (54.42%) | 37 (25.17%) | 9 (6.12%) | 21 (14.29%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 75 (58.14%) | 34 (26.36%) | 10 (7.75%) | 10 (7.75%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 65 (66.33%) | 14 (14.29%) | 14 (14.29%) | 5 (5.10%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 262 | 105 | 44 | 39 | 450 |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---------|---------|--------|
| | (58.22%) | (23.33%) | (9.78%) | (8.67%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|---------|---------|--------|

Chi-square value = 21.20, df = 9, Table value = 16.92 P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.2: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Nature of God:

Analysis to reveal the relationship if any, existing between the religious affiliation and the perception shows that Semitic religious groups, namely, Christians (79%) and Muslims (63.33%) perceive God as a living entity. The abstract nature of God is more emphasised by the Hindus (43.33%). It can be attributed to the fact that the Hindu concept and precept of God are in abstract form.

Table No. 5.3.2

Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Religious Affiliation | A living God* | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 48 (32.00%) | 65 (43.33%) | 5 (3.33%) | 32 (21.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslims | 95 (63.33%) | 19 (12.67%) | 36 (24.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christianity | 119 (79.33%) | 21 (14.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 158.72, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.01
The Association is significant.

* Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.3 Occupational Status and the Perception on the Nature of God:

The study reveals that the outlook of people differs according to their occupation. Wide disparity in the perception exists amongst the Manual Labourers, White collar employees and Professionals. People who are engaged in physical labour

are subscribing more to the view of worshipping a living God (68.60%) while the highest percentage of Professionals engaged in soft labour consider God as an abstract entity (25%) (Table No 5.3.3). The difference of thought might be due to the difference in acceptance of suggestion made by others. The manual labourers are under the suggestive influence of others. But the other groups think on their own and come to their own conclusion.

Table No. 5.3.3
Occupational Status and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Occupational Status | A living God * | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 59 (68.60%) | 16 (18.60%) | 9 (10.47%) | 2 (2.33%) | 86 (100%) |
| White collar Employees | 149 (56.44%) | 64 (24.24%) | 29 (10.98%) | 22 (8.33%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 54 (54.00%) | 25 (25.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 15 (15.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.63, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.05

The Association is significant

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.4 Income Status and the Perception on the Nature of God:

From the study it is revealed that the portion of those who consider God as a living God decreases with increase in income. There is a reversal in this pattern when we consider the Rs. 6000 – 9000 income category.

Table No. 5.3.4**Income Status and the Perception on the Nature of God**

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs) | A living God* | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 71 (66.98%) | 18 (16.98%) | 15 (14.15%) | 2 (1.89%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000-6000 | 114 (54.81%) | 48 (23.08%) | 20 (9.62%) | 26 (12.50%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000-9000 | 42 (60.87%) | 21 (30.43%) | 4 (5.80%) | 2 (2.90%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 35 (52.24%) | 18 (26.87%) | 5 (7.46%) | 9 (13.43%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.11, df = 9, Table value = 16.92 P < = 0.05

The Association is significant

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.5: Family size and the Perception on the Nature of God:

The study indicates that the perception differs according to family size. The larger the family, the deeper the faith that “God is a living entity”. As seen in analysis (Table No. 5.3.5), 67.74% of the families with six and more members believe that they are worshipping a live force, which is not a mere construct. Where the family size is between 4 and 6, the strength plummeted to 60.22% and where the number of members in the family is below 4, the percentage has still come down to 55.46%. A reverse trend is seen in the faith of God as an abstract entity.

Table No. 5.3.5**Family size and the Perception on the Nature of God**

| Family size | A living God* | Abstract entity | A Power | Other views | Total |
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|-------|
|-------------|---------------|-----------------|---------|-------------|-------|

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 132 (55.46%) | 65 (27.31%) | 16 (6.72%) | 25 (10.50%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 109 (60.22%) | 36 (19.89%) | 26 (14.36%) | 10 (5.52%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 and above members | 21 (67.74%) | 4 (12.90%) | 2 (6.45%) | 4 (12.90%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 15.05, df = 6, Table Value = 12.59, P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

*Human like entity without physical existence.

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Marital Status and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.4: Relative Importance of Religions:

The study enquired into whether there is any difference in the perception of the people between the essences of different religions. The elicited data was analysed as shown in Table No. 5.4.1. The analysis reveals that the lion's share of the respondents subscribes to the view that all religions are essentially the same (88.67%). Very meagre portions (5.33%) believe that native religion has importance over other editions of religion. Similarly 4.22% believe in the other way round. A negligible portion (1.78%) did not express their opinion.

The analysis in undisputed terms substantiates that Kerala community shows respect to the concept of secularism by showing equal respect to all religions, both native and immigrant.

5.4.1: Religious Affiliation and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions:

Analysis 5.4.1 reveals that 86.67%, 98% and 81.33% respectively of the Hindus, Muslims and Christians believe that essence of all religions is the same. However, in religious matters Muslims are seen more committed to their religious principles. This may be due to the faith that if all the ways lead us to the same destination why can not we strictly follow the path which we are more familiar with. The study reveals that the Muslims support the view to the greatest extent, followed by Hindus and lastly in tandem comes Christians. The details of the analysis are given in Table No. 5.4.1.

Table No. 5.4.1

Religious affiliation and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions

| Religious Affiliation | All religions are alike in their essence | Indigenous religion is important | Immigrant religion is important | Do not know | Total |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 130 (86.67%) | 12 (8.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslims | 147 (98.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (1.33%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 122 (81.33%) | 12 (8.00%) | 14 (9.33%) | 2 (1.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 399 (88.67%) | 24 (5.33%) | 19 (4.22%) | 8 (1.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 31.70 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P <= 0.01

The Association is significant

5.4.2 Marital Status and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions:

Very interestingly, the study revealed that when only 86.73% of married persons opined that all the religions are alike, 97.53% of the unmarried expressed this view. The outlook of the unmarried younger people implies that for them all religions regardless of their trivial differences in rituals are alike in their essence. The youngsters are quiet volatile having no specific conviction. In the case of the married persons they have certain anchorages to which they adhere firmly.

Table No. 5.4.2

Marital Status and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions

| Marital status | All religions are alike in their essence | Indigenous Religion is important | Emigrated Religion is important | Do not know | Total |
|----------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Married | 320 (6.72%) | 23 (6.23%) | 18 (4.88%) | 8 (2.17%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 79 (7.53%) | 1 (1.23%) | 1 (1.23%) | 0 (0.00%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 399 (8.67%) | 24 (5.33%) | 19 (4.22%) | 8 (1.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 7.83 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.5: Increase in Religious Faith:

There is a general feeling that religious faith is increasing. In this study an attempt is made to test the veracity of this notion. Accordingly an analysis as shown in Table No. 5.5.1 was conducted. The analysis indicates that 45.78% of the respondents feel that faith in religion increases. However, the largest portion (49.33%) indicated that the view is true to certain extent. The rest of the respondents (4.89%) expressed their view in the other way round; there is not much growth in the faith. On the whole, the analysis reveals that religious faith is increasing. When things go beyond the control of human beings, they instinctively look unto the unseen power and surrender themselves unto the God's Providence to balance their life.

5.5.1: Gender and Outlook Increase in Religious Faith:

From the study it is found that from among females 98.18% (of which 50.30% very much and 47.88% up to some extent) view that religious belief increases in human beings. At the same time from among males, 93.34% (of which 43.16% very much and 50.18% up to some extent), only view that religious belief augments in human beings contemporarily.

Table No. 5.5.1

Gender and Outlook Increase in Religious Faith

| Gender | Religious belief increases very much | Religious belief increases up to some extent only | Religious belief does not increase | Total |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Female | 83 (50.30%) | 79 (47.88%) | 3 (1.82%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 123 (43.16%) | 143 (50.18%) | 19 (6.67%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 206 (45.78%) | 222 (49.33%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.30 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.5.2: Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Increase in Religious Faith:

From the study it is brought out that 92% (of which 44% very much and 48% to some extent) of Hindus, 99.33% of the Muslims (of which 43.33% very much and 56% up to some extent) and 94% of Christians (of which 50% very much and 44% up to some extent), viewed that religious belief increases. Thus, it is very evident that regardless of religious difference, people feel that religious faith is increasing in society.

Table No. 5.5.2

Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Increase in Religious Faith

| Religious Affiliation | Religious belief increases very much | Religious belief increases up to some extent only | Religious belief does not increase | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|-------|
| Hindu | 66 | 72 | 12 | 150 |

| | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (44.00%) | (48.00%) | (8.00%) | (100%) |
| Muslim | 65 (43.33%) | 84 (56.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 75 (50.00%) | 66 (44.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 206 (45.78%) | 222 (49.33%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.97 df = 4 Table value = 9.46 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.6: Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

On a further probe into the reasons which prompt the people to think that religious faith is on the increase, three factors were pointed out. They were the increase in the strength of worshippers, increase in the collections by way of offerings and increase in the number of pilgrims. 57.33% stated that they consider increase in the worshippers as an indicator of increasing faith of the people. However, for 26% of the respondents, it is the flux of pilgrims which creates the impression. So it is the flooding of worshipers and pilgrims that create the impression that religious faith is increasing.

5.6.1: Gender and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

Gender is assumed to influence the perception on the reasons for increasing religiosity of the people. Analysis of the data supports the postulate. From Table No.5.6.1 it can be seen that 59.30% of the males and 53.94% of the females consider

the thronging of devotees in religious places as an indication of the increase of religiosity of the people. Increase in the strength of pilgrims in various religious centres is considered as an indicator of increase in the faith of the people by 29.09% of the females and 24.21% of the males. Similarly, 15.15% of the females and 9.82% of the males consider increase in the offerings as indication of increase in the faith of the people. So a reverse trend in the outlook is revealed between the two gender groups. That is, where one group shows greater acceptance, the other shows greater rejection.

Table No. 5.6.1
Gender and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith

| Gender | Worshippers increases | Offerings increases | Pilgrims increases | Not applicable | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Females | 89 (53.94%) | 25 (15.15%) | 48 (29.09%) | 3 (1.82%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 169 (59.30%) | 28 (9.82%) | 69 (24.21%) | 19 (6.67%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 258 (57.33%) | 53 (11.78%) | 117 (26.00%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.02 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P<= 0.01

The Association is significant

5.6.2: Religious Affiliation and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

When analysis was carried out to identify the relationship, if any, existing between religious affiliation and the reason for the feeling it was seen that the major segment of all categories feel that the strength of worshippers is increasing and therefore, it is to be presumed that the faith is on the increase. But the strength of different communities who subscribes this view differs considerably. The Muslims came first,

then the Christians and finally the Hindus (69.33%, 53.33% and 49.33% respectively of the group come under the category). The Semitic religions insist on the getting-together of the believers for worshipping God. But for the Hindus such coming-together is not necessary for expressing their faith. So they consider the increase in the offerings as a measure of increase in the faith instead of increase in worshippers.

Table No. 5.6.2

Religious Affiliation and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith

| Religious Affiliation | Worshippers increases | Offerings increases | Pilgrims increases | Not applicable | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 74 (49.33%) | 25 (16.67%) | 39 (26.00%) | 12 (8.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 104 (69.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 39 (26.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 80 (53.33%) | 22 (14.67%) | 39 (26.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 258 (57.33%) | 53 (11.78%) | 117 (26.00%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 26.49 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:

Religious faith by itself can not ensure its everlasting existence. Hence it rubs shoulders with practices. In this study representatives of religious practices were brought under the scanner. The three practices specifically analysed were the habit of visiting religious places, giving offerings and conducting daily prayers.

5.7: The Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

Persons visit religious places with various intentions. All those who visit religious places need not be pious. Some persons go there simply because of inquisitiveness and to see what is going on there and yet some others to make a livelihood by some kind of activities even nefarious, heinous and sleazy. It is revealed in the study that 93.56% of the respondents are in the habit of visiting religious places on one pretext or the other and the rest (6.44%) remain away from such activities and seldom bother to go over there. So this study concludes that religious life is an unavoidable part of Kerala community.

5.7.1: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

The habit of visiting places of worship is differentiated on the basis of religious affiliation. In this matter the Muslims are not that much particular as the other two groups are. While 96.67% of the Christians and 95.33% of the Hindus visit places of worship regularly only 88.67% of the Muslims do so. It is a fact that Muslims are very much confined to the mosque of their denomination and that too situated in their neighbourhood. They have pilgrimage very rarely except Haj. However, the other two groups have many centres of worship far and near in the country/state and many of the

believers are frequenters to such centres. This habit may be reflecting in the responses of the respective group.

Table No. 5.7.1
Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Visiting
Religious Places of Worship

| Religious Affiliation | Visit Religious Places | Do not visit Religious Places | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 143 (95.33%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 133 (88.67%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 145 (96.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 421 (93.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value =9.14 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.7.2. Educational Status and the Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

Further analysis revealed that educational status is associated with the pattern of the behaviour. Lion's share of every group is in the habit of visiting places of worship. But there is variation in the habit according to their educational background. While 94% and 95.19% respectively of School level and College level educated persons visit places of worship, such behaviour is not that much stronger among the Secondary School educated people. In the sample, 87.50% visit places of worship regularly. In

every social matters the medium category of the group concerned behaves in a different way from the lower and upper categories. In this situation, the lower category (school educated) due to their relative innocence follow the social norm of visiting places of worship. In the case of College educated their higher sophistication prompt them to act according to the social norm. However, it is to be presumed that the secondary school educated are more critical and unswayed in the matter. So, lesser portion follow suit of the other categories.

Table No.5.7.2
Educational Status and the Habit of Visiting
Religious Places of Worship

| Educational Status | Visit religious places | Do not visit Religious places | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 94 (94.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 79 (87.50%) | 10 (12.50%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 257 (95.19%) | 13 (4.81%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 421 (93.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.09 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.8: Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The habit of giving offerings to God while participating/leading religious life was another dependent variable analysed in this study. The analysis revealed that 73.33% of the respondents are in the habit of giving offerings and the rest are not (26.76%). So, it is to be concluded that majority of the people are complying with the spiritual and moral outlook that the wealth one possesses is the gift of God and a portion of the possessed should be returned to the supplier (God) for the benefit of the fellow and lower category beings (Table No. 5.8.1).

On further enquiry it was revealed that three background variables, namely, religious affiliation, education and family size was associated with the habit.

5.8.1: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The habit of giving offerings is very much related to the religious background, the analysis Table No. 5.8.1 shows that while overwhelming majority of the Hindus (88%) and Christians (92.67%) uphold the tradition of making offerings of different kinds in religious places only a minority of Muslims (39.33%) follow the habit of the other groups. This behaviour is to be analysed in the background of the Quranic prescription that the sweat on your forehead should produce your food. That wealth acquired without hard work is not worthy for your use. The Muslims may be giving service in the places of worship in various forms instead of giving offerings. Or they may be giving money for the welfare of the deserving among their brethren. But that is not considered as an offering to God.

Table No. 5.8.1

Religious Affiliation and Habit of Giving Offerings to God

| Religious Affiliation | Give offerings | Do not give offerings | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 132 (88.00%) | 18 (12.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 59 (39.33%) | 91 (60.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 139 (92.67%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33%) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 133.84 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.8.2: Income Status and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The investigation carried out shows that the practice of giving offerings to God in religious places is associated with the income level of the people. As per this study (Table No. 5.8.2) the habit of giving offerings increases with increase in the income level. However, the top most income group is an exception. 64.15% of the income category of Rs. <3000, 73.56% of Rs.3000 – 6000, 82.61% of Rs.6000 – 9000 income group give offerings to God in religious places. The corresponding figure in respect of the above Rs.9000 group is coming down to 77.61%. This group may be (Rs.9000 and above) feeling that unidentified payment in the name of offerings is unnecessary and also fearing that this habit would adversely affect their capital formation.

Table No. 5.8.2

Income Status and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God

| Income Status monthly in Rs) | Give offerings | Do not give Offerings | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 68 (64.15%) | 38 (35.85%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000-6000 | 153 (73.56%) | 55 (26.44%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000-9000 | 57 (82.61%) | 12 (17.39%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 52 (77.61%) | 15 (22.39%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33%) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 8.24 df = 3 Table value =7.81 P = 0.05
The Association is significant

5.8.3. Family Size and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The results of the analysis based on family size were quiet according to the expectation. Analysis in Table No. 5.8.3 shows that the larger the family the lesser the habit of giving offerings to God. 82.77% of the small family (below 4 members) give offerings. The corresponding figures in respect of the medium sized and large families are 62.98% and 61.29%. The results can be easily interpreted as the smaller family has better per capita income and it can spare for materially unproductive spending such as offerings to the abstract entity.

Table No. 5.8.3
Family Size and the Habit of Giving Offerings to
Religious Places

| Family size | Give | Do not give | Total |
|-------------|------|-------------|-------|
|-------------|------|-------------|-------|

| | offerings | offerings | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 197 (82.77%) | 41 (17.23%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 114 (62.98%) | 67 (37.02%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 and above members | 19 (61.29%) | 12 (38.71%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33%) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.06 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9: The Habit of Daily Prayer:

Prayer is the humble admission of the inability and infirmity of the Self. The pious are of the opinion that more things are wrought by prayers than the world dreams and that it is the prayer that perpetuates life. Whatever it be, prayers render solace to a seething mind, which is the cogent experience of human beings.

Offering prayers has many dimensions, physical, spiritual, psychological and social. The believers knowingly or unknowingly avail these benefits of prayers from the almighty. Atheists without analysing the positive sides of prayers propagate that they are the fountain heads of blind belief and keep themselves aloof from the practice.

In this study, what is the habit of the population in this matter was analysed. It was seen that offering prayers to God is palatable for an overwhelming majority of the population. As revealed in analysis of Table No. 5.9.1, 90.67% of the respondents are in the habit of rendering prayers, the rest are not in the habit (9.33%).

That is, the people in general subscribe to the belief that humans are powerless before the nature and all the creations are at the mercy of a power, God.

5.9.1: Gender and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Gender shall be a determinant of the habit of praying and on the basis of this provision analysis in Table No. 5.9.1 was carried out. The analysis reveals that the females are more interested to pray to God for his/her blessings. 95.15% of females and 88.07% of the males come under category of those who pray daily. The rest of the groups are not in the habit of daily praying. In our culture, if we look back to history, the female members are more at the helm of spiritual activities. This socialisation process of female members explains the result of the analysis.

Table No. 5.9.1
Gender and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Gender | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Female | 157 (95.15%) | 8 (4.85%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 251 (88.07%) | 34 (11.93%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.19 df = 1 Table value = 6.63 P <= 0.01
The association is significant.

5.9.2: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Religion wise analysis of the data gives support to the presumption that Muslims are more committed to daily praying. For a Musalman to be worthy of his/her name has to pray five times daily. Christians also have to observe seven times prayer routine in a day. In this study the Christians are also very closer to the Muslims. But in

the case of the Hindus a different picture is seen. 82.67% of them pray daily but in comparison with the Muslims and Christians (95.33% and 94% respectively) are far behind. As mentioned in various other contexts, spiritual activities are not a collective affair for Hindus. This freedom allows them to pray in their mind even while engaging themselves in other activities.

Table No. 5.9.2
Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Religious Affiliation | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 124 (82.67%) | 26 (17.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 143 (95.33%) | 7 (4.7%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 141 (94.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 17.17 df = 2 Table value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9.3: Educational Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Among the educational categories, the school educated shows more interest in conducting daily prayer than the Higher Secondary and College educated do. 96% of the first group are in the habit of praying daily. The corresponding figure in the case of the College educated is 91.48%. The least strength group (comparatively) is the Higher Secondary educated one (81.25%). It is seen that usually the middle segment on categorisation in any basis shows distinct behaviour from other segments. The reasons for the closeness of the lower and apex segments need not be the same.

Table No. 5.9.3

Educational Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Educational Status | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 96 (96.00%) | 4 (4.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 65 (81.25%) | 15 (18.75%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 247 (91.48%) | 23 (8.52%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.96 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9.4: Income Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

In the analysis to find out the relationship between income and the habit of conducting daily prayer, if any existing, it is revealed that the lesser the income the more the inclination for conducting daily prayer.

94.34% of the respondents belonging to the lower income group (Rs. <3000) are in the habit of praying daily. The figure shrinks to 82.09% when we consider the highest income group (Rs.9000 and above). In between these two groups there is a gradual reduction from 93.27% (income Rs.3000 – 6000) to 85.51% (income Rs.6000 – 9000). This indicates the difficulty to prosper both in materialism and spirituality.

Table No. 5.9.4

Income Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs) | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|-------------------------------|------------|-------------------|-------|
| Up to 3000 | 100 | 6 | 106 |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| | (94.34%) | (5.66%) | (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 194 (93.27%) | 14 (6.73%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 59 (85.51%) | 10 (14.49%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 and above | 55 (82.09%) | 12 (17.91%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.35 df = 11.35 Table value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Occupation, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

Summary:

In this Chapter, the attitude, beliefs and practices of persons towards religion is analysed. The analysis indicates that religion is more enthusiastically adhered by the lowest and highest age groups. Also it is found that Muslims and Christians have more favourable attitude towards religion. It is also revealed that majority of the school educated have favourable attitude towards religion, comparing to the Higher Secondary and College educated. And it is found that more favourable attitude towards religion is shown by low income group. And the larger family is having greater favour to religion.

It is unravelled that majority of all the age groups opined that God is the unseen force which controls the world. Islam is more firm in their religious conviction and Christians stands next to Muslims only in the matter. On the nature of God, the majority deposes the fact that God is the living God, all perceiving, ubiquitous and yet a human like entity without physical existence. The analysis reveals that the lion's share of the respondents subscribes to the view that the quintessence of all religions is in essence the same.

Indubitably, the religious faith is increasing day-by-day. For the solace and happiness of humans, a soothing balm is the religious faith. The study further reveals that the worshippers are thronged in religious places regardless of their religious denomination, which is the clinching evidence of augmentation of religious faith.

As far as the practice is concerned, it is revealed in the study that majority of persons visit religious places on one reason or the other. Also majority of the people are of the outlook that the wealth one possesses is the gift of God and a portion of the riches one possesses should be offered back unto His feet as a token of expressing a grateful heart to the Omnipotent. It is also revealed that the larger the family, the lesser the habit of giving offerings to God. It can be interpreted that the smaller family has better per capita income and it can spare for materially unproductive spending such as offerings to the abstract entity. It was seen that offering prayers to God is palatable for an overwhelming majority of the population. The people in general subscribe to the belief that humans are powerless before the nature and all the creations are at the mercy of God.

Attitude, Beliefs and Practices
Chapter – 5

Chapter V

ATTITUDE, BELIEFS AND PRACTICES

Attitude Towards Religion:

Attitude is a predisposition of mind that creates favourable or unfavourable orientation to objects (material and non-material). The attitude very much determines the interaction pattern of the individual (or group) with the objects. In this study the researcher has made an attempt to analyse the attitude of the people towards religion. For the purpose, a Likert Scale was constructed and measurements taken. The details of the scale and method of construction were included in the chapter on the Methodology. In this chapter discussions on the analyses of the attitude are given.

5.1: Attitude Towards Religion:

For the purpose of analyses the score received by the respondents are classified into four groups. Score 35-50 is labelled as indifferent attitude towards religion, 50-65 as lukewarm attitude, 65-80 as favourable attitude and 80-95 as highly favourable attitude. The analysis on the level of favour shown to religion based on the score reveals that only 3.78% of the respondents are indifferent to religious life. 30.67% have only lukewarm attitude towards religion. However, 48.22% and 17.33% have respectively favourable and highly favourable attitude towards religion (Table No5.1.1). On an inductive generalisation we may conclude that the people under investigation have favourable or highly favourable attitude to religion. It is not an astonishing fact since being religious is an innate quality of human being. In his/her craving for locating the ultimate reality of human life no institution other than religion can help him/her to this extent.

There are certain views that there is no such an ultimate reality, which unfolds in different manifestation. But human become helpless to explain many secrets of life including birth and death. Though religion may be considered as human made the content of it, namely, spirituality is not mere creation of human. At the most just like dormant spark is fanned to make fire, the slumbering spirituality may be energised by human efforts. So it is the secret of nature that human becomes spiritual being.

Subsidiary analyses to investigate into the relationship between the attitude and the background variables were conducted following the usual pattern. It is seen that variables namely, age, religious affiliation, education, income and family size are associated with the attitude.

5.1.1: Age and Attitude Towards Religion:

Analysis of the data based on the age structure reveals very interesting facts. If we take the 'favourable' and 'highly favourable' responses together the total varies from 67.10% to 79.59% through 57.83% and 62.79%. The figures correspond respectively to <30 years, 30 – 45 years, 45 – 60 years and 60 – 75 years. The analysis shows that religion is more favourably looked upon by the lowest and highest age groups. The inclination of the highest age group may be taken for granted as it is the experience that the elders look upon religion with more respect and fervour. The life of the younger generation is becoming problematic, they are struggling to get education of their choice, job is a far cry, the thirst for material prosperity and independence from older generation is an ever time high. But the realisation of their dreams is elusive. These situations may prompt the youngsters that something metaphysical is there which may be a source of consolation. Thus may be the younger generation falling back on religion.

The lower middle age group (30 – 45 years) is more neutral to religious matters. The analysis shows that 37.41% of them have a lukewarm attitude towards religion. The figures in respect of the other groups are considerably lower than those relating to this group.

Table No. 5.1.1
Age and Attitude Towards Religion

| Age (in years) | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 3 (3.95%) | 22 (28.95%) | 37 (48.68%) | 14 (18.42%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 7 (4.76%) | 55 (37.41%) | 66 (44.90%) | 19 (12.93%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 6 (4.65%) | 42 (32.56%) | 64 (49.61%) | 17 (13.18%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 1 (1.02%) | 19 (19.39%) | 50 (51.02%) | 28 (28.57%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 19.76 df = 9 Table value = 16.92 P <= 0.05

The Association is significant

5.1.2: Religious Affiliation and Attitude Towards Religion:

Attitude towards religion is intimately associated with religious affiliation, it is assumed. As in the previous analysis, Table No.5.1.1 if we combine the favourable groups together, we see that overwhelming majority of both the Muslims and Christians have favourable attitude towards religion (82.67% and 70.66% respectively Table No.5.1.2). Contrary to this, the Hindus coming under this category is a minority (43.37%). Again 48% of the Hindus (the highest segment) is having lukewarm attitude

towards religion. The corresponding figure in respect of the Muslims and Christians are respectively 16% and 28%.

The results indicate that the Semitic religions with its steel frame have the capacity to attract the members to them and keep them adhering to them. In the case of the Hindus the lack of such an organising mechanism is the reason for their lukewarm attitude to religion.

Table No. 5.1.2
Religious Affiliation and Attitude Towards Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly Favourable Score 80– 95 | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 13 (8.67%) | 72 (48.00%) | 58 (38.67%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 2 (1.33%) | 24 (16.00%) | 70 (46.67%) | 54 (36.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 2 (1.33%) | 42 (28.00%) | 89 (59.33%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 93.71 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.1.3: Educational Status and Attitude Towards Religion:

Education is a deciding factor of the attitude – the study indicates. From analysis 5.1.3 we see that majority of the school educated respondents have favourable attitude towards religion (51%). In the case of the other two groups, they are the highest segments (47.50% and 47.41% respectively). The sizable segments among the Higher Secondary and College educated respondents have lukewarm attitude towards religion (35% and 31.85% respectively). Another significant result is that among the different educational groups, comparatively school educated respondents has the highest (25%) favourable fascination for religion. On a consolidation of the results, it may be pointed

out that the lower educated has highest fascination towards religion. The other groups are below them.

Table No.5.1.3
Educational Status and Attitude Towards Religion

| Educational status | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 0 (0.00%) | 24 (24.00%) | 51 (51.00%) | 25 (25.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 2 (2.50%) | 28 (35.00%) | 38 (47.50%) | 12 (15.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 15 (5.56%) | 86 (31.85%) | 128 (47.41%) | 41 (15.13%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.01 df = 6 Table value = 12.39 P < = 0.05

The Association is significant

5.1.4: Income Status and Attitude Towards Religion:

Income is also presumed to be instrumental for the formation of attitude towards anything. Here too, the basis of the analysis is the presumption of income and the attitude towards religion is associated. Analysis 5.1.4 reveals that the assumption is true; the higher income brackets have lesser fascination towards religion. Similarly, the lukewarm attitude increases with increase in income. The highly favourable groups are comparatively larger in the low income brackets (<Rs.3000 and 3000 – 6000).

The results indicate that the material prosperity and affinity towards religion are in opposition.

Table No. 5.1.4
Income Status and Attitude Towards Religion

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 1 (0.94%) | 22 (20.75%) | 57 (53.77%) | 26 (24.53%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 10 (4.81%) | 67 (32.21%) | 92 (44.23%) | 39 (18.75%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 4 (5.80%) | 26 (37.68%) | 33 (47.83%) | 6 (8.70%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 2 (2.99%) | 23 (34.33%) | 35 (52.24%) | 7 (10.45%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 18.45 df = 9 Table value = 16.92 P < = 0.05
The Association is significant

5.1.5: Family Size and Attitude Towards Religion:

The association between family size and the attitude can be easily understood in analysis Table No. 5.1.5. The largest family is having greater favour to religion. 61.29% show favourable attitude and 16.13% high favour towards religion. A greater portion among the small family have lukewarm attitude (34.45%). Further, comparatively a larger segment of the middle size family has very high fascination for religion (23.76%). On the whole the larger family shows more fascination to religion. It may be due to the fact that religion is strong agent of social control. The larger families seek the support to a greater extent from formal agencies like religion. The small family may be capable to socialise its offspring by itself. Or the socialisation may not be so strongly carried out in smaller family as the larger family does (Table No.5.1.5).

Table No. 5.1.5
Family Size and Attitude Towards Religion

| Family size | Indifferent Score 35 – 50 | Lukewarm Score 50 – 65 | Favourable Score 65 – 80 | Highly favourable Score 80 – 95 | Total |
|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 13 (5.46%) | 82 (34.45%) | 113 (47.48%) | 30 (12.61%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 3 (1.66%) | 50 (27.62%) | 85 (46.96%) | 43 (23.76%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 1 (3.23%) | 6 (19.35%) | 19 (61.29%) | 5 (16.13%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 17 (3.78%) | 138 (30.67%) | 217 (48.22%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 15.51 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P < = 0.05
The Association is significant

RELIGIOUS BELIEF:

It can be expected that motley population do have different Beliefs and Practices as far as religion is concerned. They differ in accordance with the cultural and spiritual evolution of the individual. Here an attempt is made in this study to analyse the differences in their religious Beliefs and Practices.

5.2: The Concept of God

The concept of God is different to different persons. It is found in the study that 56.22% uphold the view that God is the unseen force which controls the world and 35.78% visualise God as that which can not be explained in words as it is inexplicable. Another 3.33% see God as the force of the society and yet another 4.67% responded that the concept of God is not applicable to them as they do not believe in any such force called God. This analysis indicates that people look upon God as a supernatural all powerful force.

5.2.1 Age Status and Concept of God:

This study also investigated into the relationship between age status and the outlook. It is revealed that majority of all the age groups opined that God is the unseen force which controls the world. The age group 30 – 45 years adheres more to the view that God is the unseen force (59.86%) which controls the world. Those who are 45 years and above distinguish themselves by showing their unalloyed devotions to God and more among them accept that humans are incapable of explaining what God is. In the first response (unseen force) we see only a revelation of facts. But in the second (can not explain) we feel the mood of a total submission to God. The details of the analysis are given in Table No.5.2.1:

Table No. 5.2.1
Age Status and Concept of God

| Age (in years) | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 42 (55.26%) | 2 (2.63%) | 25 (32.89%) | 7 (9.21%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 88 (59.86%) | 6 (4.08%) | 42 (28.57%) | 11 (7.48%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 70 (54.26%) | 5 (3.88%) | 52 (40.31%) | 2 (1.55%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 53 (54.08%) | 2 (2.04%) | 42 (42.86%) | 1 (1.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 17.25, df = 9, Table value = 16.92, P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

5.2.2: Religious Affiliation and Concept of God.

Wide disparity is seen in the opinion of the respondents according to their religious affiliation. It is found that 62.67% of Muslims consider God as unseen force which controls the world, while 56.67% of Christians and 49.33% of Hindus subscribe to

the view. It means amongst the Semitic religions Islam is more firm in their religious conviction and Christians stands next to Muslims in the matter. However, it can be seen in Table No.5.2.2 that 37.33% each of the Hindus and Christians and 32.67% of the Muslims consider that God can not be explained.

Table No. 5.2.2
Religious Affiliation and Concept of God

| Religious Affiliation | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 74 (49.33%) | 9 (6.00%) | 56 (37.33%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 94 (62.67%) | 1 (0.67%) | 49 (32.67%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 85 (56.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 56 (37.33%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 13.10, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.2.3: Educational Status and the Concept of God.

It is assumed that there is difference between different educational groups on the concepts of God. From the Table No. 5.2.3 it can be seen that the view that God is an unseen force is more firm among the lesser educated group. Around 59% of Secondary and Higher Secondary educated category uphold the view. The corresponding figure in the case of the College educated is 54.44%. It shows the College educated are more savvy and discerning, compared to the school educated. While 38.89% of the College educated preferred to stick on to the opinion that God can not be explained in words, a lesser portion only of the School level concur with this ideology.

Table No. 5.2.3
Educational Status and Concept of God

| Educational Status | Unseen force | Force of society | Cannot explain | Not applicable (no God) | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 59 (59.00%) | 3 (3.00%) | 36 (36.00%) | 2 (2.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 47 (58.75%) | 6 (7.50%) | 20 (25.00%) | 7 (8.75%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 147 (54.44%) | 6 (2.22%) | 105 (38.89%) | 12 (4.44%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 253 (56.22%) | 15 (3.33%) | 161 (35.78%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 13.32, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, P <= 0.05
The association is significant.

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Occupation, Income, Marital status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here

5.3: Nature of God:

Another index which was selected to reveal the religious ideologies was the perception on the nature of God.

The analysis (Table 5.3.1) reveals that 58.22% of the respondents believe that God is 'a living one', human like entity without physical existence. It is also seen that 23.33% do not ascribe any human characteristics to God but consider it as an abstract

entity. It is rather a construct of human mind. Another 9.78% feel that it is the embodiment of power in a single entity whose morphology is not known. The rest 8.67% considers God exists in manifold forms, a separate God for every separate event in the world and such gods are invisible to human beings.

The analysis highlights that a majority of the people view God as a power which has human characteristics without physical existence.

5.3.1: Age Status and Perception on the Nature of God:

Analysis on the relationship between age and perception on the nature of God reveals that the older people have more faith in the 'Living Nature of God'. Among the 45 – 60 and 60 – 75 years age groups, 58.14% and 66.33% respectively believe that God is a living God. It shows that as the age advances, the belief in God as a live entity also gets strengthened as seen in Table No. 5.3.1 below:

Table No.5.3.1
Age Status and Perception on the Nature of God

| Age (in years) | A living God* | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 42 (55.26%) | 20 (26.32%) | 11 (14.47%) | 3 (3.95%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 80 (54.42%) | 37 (25.17%) | 9 (6.12%) | 21 (14.29%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 75 (58.14%) | 34 (26.36%) | 10 (7.75%) | 10 (7.75%) | 129 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 21.20, df = 9, Table value = 16.92 P <= 0.05

The association is significant.

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.2: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Nature of God:

Analysis to reveal the relationship if any, existing between the religious affiliation and the perception shows that Semitic religious groups, namely, Christians (79%) and Muslims (63.33%) perceive God as a living entity. The abstract nature of God is more emphasised by the Hindus (43.33%). It can be attributed to the fact that the Hindu concept and precept of God are in abstract form.

Table No. 5.3.2
Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Religious Affiliation | A living God* | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 48 (32.00%) | 65 (43.33%) | 5 (3.33%) | 32 (21.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslims | 95 (63.33%) | 19 (12.67%) | 36 (24.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christianity | 119 (79.33%) | 21 (14.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 158.72, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, $P < 0.01$

The Association is significant.

* Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.3 Occupational Status and the Perception on the Nature of God:

The study reveals that the outlook of people differs according to their occupation. Wide disparity in the perception exists amongst the Manual Labourers, White collar employees and Professionals. People who are engaged in physical labour are subscribing more to the view of worshipping a living God (68.60%) while the highest percentage of Professionals engaged in soft labour consider God as an abstract entity (25%) (Table No 5.3.3). The difference of thought might be due to the difference in

acceptance of suggestion made by others. The manual labourers are under the suggestive influence of others. But the other groups think on their own and come to their own conclusion.

Table No. 5.3.3
Occupational Status and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Occupational Status | A living God * | Abstract entity | A power | Other views | Total |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 59 (68.60%) | 16 (18.60%) | 9 (10.47%) | 2 (2.33%) | 86 (100%) |
| White collar Employees | 149 (56.44%) | 64 (24.24%) | 29 (10.98%) | 22 (8.33%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 54 (54.00%) | 25 (25.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 15 (15.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.63, df = 6, Table value = 12.59, $P \leq 0.05$

The Association is significant

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.4 Income Status and the Perception on the Nature of God:

From the study it is revealed that the portion of those who consider God as a living God decreases with increase in income. There is a reversal in this pattern when we consider the Rs. 6000 – 9000 income category.

Table No. 5.3.4
Income Status and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Income Status (Monthly in | A living | Abstract entity | A power | Other | Total |
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------|---------|-------|-------|
|---------------------------|----------|-----------------|---------|-------|-------|

| Rs) | God* | | | views | |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 71 (66.98%) | 18 (16.98%) | 15 (14.15%) | 2 (1.89%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000-6000 | 114 (54.81%) | 48 (23.08%) | 20 (9.62%) | 26 (12.50%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000-9000 | 42 (60.87%) | 21 (30.43%) | 4 (5.80%) | 2 (2.90%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 35 (52.24%) | 18 (26.87%) | 5 (7.46%) | 9 (13.43%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.11, df = 9, Table value = 16.92 P< = 0.05

The Association is significant

*Human like entity without physical existence.

5.3.5: Family size and the Perception on the Nature of God:

The study indicates that the perception differs according to family size. The larger the family, the deeper the faith that “God is a living entity”. As seen in analysis (Table No. 5.3.5), 67.74% of the families with six and more members believe that they are worshipping a live force, which is not a mere construct. Where the family size is between 4 and 6, the strength plummeted to 60.22% and where the number of members in the family is below 4, the percentage has still come down to 55.46%. A reverse trend is seen in the faith of God as an abstract entity.

Table No. 5.3.5

Family size and the Perception on the Nature of God

| Family size | A living God* | Abstract entity | A Power | Other views | Total |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 132 (55.46%) | 65 (27.31%) | 16 (6.72%) | 25 (10.50%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 109 (60.22%) | 36 (19.89%) | 26 (14.36%) | 10 (5.52%) | 181 (100%) |

| | | | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| 6 and above members | 21 (67.74%) | 4 (12.90%) | 2 (6.45%) | 4 (12.90%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 262 (58.22%) | 105 (23.33%) | 44 (9.78%) | 39 (8.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 15.05, df = 6, Table Value = 12.59, P <= 0.05

The association is significant.

*Human like entity without physical existence.

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Marital Status and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.4: Relative Importance of Religions:

The study enquired into whether there is any difference in the perception of the people between the essences of different religions. The elicited data was analysed as shown in Table No. 5.4.1. The analysis reveals that the lion's share of the respondents subscribes to the view that all religions are essentially the same (88.67%). Very meagre portions (5.33%) believe that native religion has importance over other editions of religion. Similarly 4.22% believe in the other way round. A negligible portion (1.78%) did not express their opinion.

The analysis in undisputed terms substantiates that Kerala community shows respect to the concept of secularism by showing equal respect to all religions, both native and immigrant.

5.4.1: Religious Affiliation and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions:

Analysis 5.4.1 reveals that 86.67%, 98% and 81.33% respectively of the Hindus, Muslims and Christians believe that essence of all religions is the same. However, in religious matters Muslims are seen more committed to their religious principles. This may be due to the faith that if all the ways lead us to the same

destination why can not we strictly follow the path which we are more familiar with. The study reveals that the Muslims support the view to the greatest extent, followed by Hindus and lastly in tandem comes Christians. The details of the analysis are given in Table No. 5.4.1.

Table No. 5.4.1

Religious affiliation and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions

| Religious Affiliation | All religions are alike in their essence | Indigenous religion is important | Immigrant religion is important | Do not know | Total |
|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 130 (86.67%) | 12 (8.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslims | 147 (98.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (1.33%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 122 (81.33%) | 12 (8.00%) | 14 (9.33%) | 2 (1.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 399 (88.67%) | 24 (5.33%) | 19 (4.22%) | 8 (1.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 31.70 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.4.2 Marital Status and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions:

Very interestingly, the study revealed that when only 86.73% of married persons opined that all the religions are alike, 97.53% of the unmarried expressed this view. The outlook of the unmarried younger people implies that for them all religions regardless of their trivial differences in rituals are alike in their essence. The youngsters are quiet volatile having no specific conviction. In the case of the married persons they have certain anchorages to which they adhere firmly.

Table No. 5.4.2

Marital Status and Perception on Relative Importance of Religions

| Marital status | All religions are alike in their essence | Indigenous Religion is important | Emigrated Religion is important | Do not know | Total |
|----------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------|
|----------------|--|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|-------|

| | | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Married | 320 (6.72%) | 23 (6.23%) | 18 (4.88%) | 8 (2.17%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 79 (7.53%) | 1 (1.23%) | 1 (1.23%) | 0 (0.00%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 399 (8.67%) | 24 (5.33%) | 19 (4.22%) | 8 (1.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 7.83 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.5: Increase in Religious Faith:

There is a general feeling that religious faith is increasing. In this study an attempt is made to test the veracity of this notion. Accordingly an analysis as shown in Table No. 5.5.1 was conducted. The analysis indicates that 45.78% of the respondents feel that faith in religion increases. However, the largest portion (49.33%) indicated that the view is true to certain extent. The rest of the respondents (4.89%) expressed their view in the other way round; there is not much growth in the faith. On the whole, the analysis reveals that religious faith is increasing. When things go beyond the control of human beings, they instinctively look unto the unseen power and surrender themselves unto the God's Providence to balance their life.

5.5.1: Gender and Outlook Increase in Religious Faith:

From the study it is found that from among females 98.18% (of which 50.30% very much and 47.88% up to some extent) view that religious belief increases in human beings. At the same time from among males, 93.34% (of which 43.16% very

much and 50.18% up to some extent), only view that religious belief augments in human beings contemporarily.

Table No. 5.5.1

Gender and Outlook Increase in Religious Faith

| Gender | Religious belief increases very much | Religious belief increases up to some extent only | Religious belief does not increase | Total |
|--------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Female | 83 (50.30%) | 79 (47.88%) | 3 (1.82%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 123 (43.16%) | 143 (50.18%) | 19 (6.67%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 206 (45.78%) | 222 (49.33%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.30 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.5.2: Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Increase in Religious Faith:

From the study it is brought out that 92% (of which 44% very much and 48% to some extent) of Hindus, 99.33% of the Muslims (of which 43.33% very much and 56% up to some extent) and 94% of Christians (of which 50% very much and 44% up to some extent), viewed that religious belief increases. Thus, it is very evident that regardless of religious difference, people feel that religious faith is increasing in society.

Table No. 5.5.2

Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Increase in Religious Faith

| Religious Affiliation | Religious belief increases very much | Religious belief increases up to some extent only | Religious belief does not increase | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 66 (44.00%) | 72 (48.00%) | 12 (8.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 65 (43.33%) | 84 (56.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 75 | 66 | 9 | 150 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (50.00%) | (44.00%) | (6.00%) | (100%) |
| Total | 206 (45.78%) | 222 (49.33%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.97 df = 4 Table value = 9.46 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.6: Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

On a further probe into the reasons which prompt the people to think that religious faith is on the increase, three factors were pointed out. They were the increase in the strength of worshippers, increase in the collections by way of offerings and increase in the number of pilgrims. 57.33% stated that they consider increase in the worshippers as an indicator of increasing faith of the people. However, for 26% of the respondents, it is the flux of pilgrims which creates the impression. So it is the flooding of worshipers and pilgrims that create the impression that religious faith is increasing.

5.6.1: Gender and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

Gender is assumed to influence the perception on the reasons for increasing religiosity of the people. Analysis of the data supports the postulate. From Table No.5.6.1 it can be seen that 59.30% of the males and 53.94% of the females consider the thronging of devotees in religious places as an indication of the increase of religiosity of the people. Increase in the strength of pilgrims in various religious centres is considered as an indicator of increase in the faith of the people by 29.09% of the females

and 24.21% of the males. Similarly, 15.15% of the females and 9.82% of the males consider increase in the offerings as indication of increase in the faith of the people. So a reverse trend in the outlook is revealed between the two gender groups. That is, where one group shows greater acceptance, the other shows greater rejection.

Table No. 5.6.1
Gender and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith

| Gender | Worshippers increases | Offerings increases | Pilgrims increases | Not applicable | Total |
|---------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Females | 89 (53.94%) | 25 (15.15%) | 48 (29.09%) | 3 (1.82%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 169 (59.30%) | 28 (9.82%) | 69 (24.21%) | 19 (6.67%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 258 (57.33%) | 53 (11.78%) | 117 (26.00%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.02 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.6.2: Religious Affiliation and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith:

When analysis was carried out to identify the relationship, if any, existing between religious affiliation and the reason for the feeling it was seen that the major segment of all categories feel that the strength of worshipers is increasing and therefore, it is to be presumed that the faith is on the increase. But the strength of different communities who subscribes this view differs considerably. The Muslims came first, then the Christians and finally the Hindus (69.33%, 53.33% and 49.33% respectively of the group come under the category). The Semitic religions insist on the getting-together of the believers for worshipping God. But for the Hindus such coming-together is not

necessary for expressing their faith. So they consider the increase in the offerings as a measure of increase in the faith instead of increase in worshippers.

Table No. 5.6.2

Religious Affiliation and Indicators of Increase in Religious Faith

| Religious Affiliation | Worshippers increases | Offerings increases | Pilgrims increases | Not applicable | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 74 (49.33%) | 25 (16.67%) | 39 (26.00%) | 12 (8.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 104 (69.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 39 (26.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 80 (53.33%) | 22 (14.67%) | 39 (26.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 258 (57.33%) | 53 (11.78%) | 117 (26.00%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 26.49 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES:

Religious faith by itself can not ensure its everlasting existence. Hence it rubs shoulders with practices. In this study representatives of religious practices were brought under the scanner. The three practices specifically analysed were the habit of visiting religious places, giving offerings and conducting daily prayers.

5.7: The Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

Persons visit religious places with various intentions. All those who visit religious places need not be pious. Some persons go there simply because of inquisitiveness and to see what is going on there and yet some others to make a livelihood by some kind of activities even nefarious, heinous and sleazy. It is revealed in the study that 93.56% of the respondents are in the habit of visiting religious places on one pretext or the other and the rest (6.44%) remain away from such activities and seldom bother to go over there. So this study concludes that religious life is an unavoidable part of Kerala community.

5.7.1: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

The habit of visiting places of worship is differentiated on the basis of religious affiliation. In this matter the Muslims are not that much particular as the other two groups are. While 96.67% of the Christians and 95.33% of the Hindus visit places of worship regularly only 88.67% of the Muslims do so. It is a fact that Muslims are very much confined to the mosque of their denomination and that too situated in their neighbourhood. They have pilgrimage very rarely except Haj. However, the other two groups have many centres of worship far and near in the country/state and many of the believers are frequenters to such centres. This habit may be reflecting in the responses of the respective group.

Table No. 5.7.1
Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Visiting
Religious Places of Worship

| Religious Affiliation | Visit Religious Places | Do not visit Religious Places | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 143 (95.33%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 133 (88.67%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 145 (96.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 421 (93.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value =9.14 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

5.7.2. Educational Status and the Habit of Visiting Religious Places of Worship:

Further analysis revealed that educational status is associated with the pattern of the behaviour. Lion's share of every group is in the habit of visiting places of worship. But there is variation in the habit according to their educational background. While 94% and 95.19% respectively of School level and College level educated persons visit places of worship, such behaviour is not that much stronger among the Secondary School educated people. In the sample, 87.50% visit places of worship regularly. In every social matters the medium category of the group concerned behaves in a different way from the lower and upper categories. In this situation, the lower category (school educated) due to their relative innocence follow the social norm of visiting places of worship. In the case of College educated their higher sophistication prompt them to act according to the social norm. However, it is to be presumed that the secondary school

educated are more critical and unswayed in the matter. So, lesser portion follow suit of the other categories.

Table No.5.7.2
Educational Status and the Habit of Visiting
Religious Places of Worship

| Educational Status | Visit religious places | Do not visit Religious places | Total |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 94 (94.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 79 (87.50%) | 10 (12.50%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 257 (95.19%) | 13 (4.81%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 421 (93.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.09 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

5.8: Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The habit of giving offerings to God while participating/leading religious life was another dependent variable analysed in this study. The analysis revealed that 73.33% of the respondents are in the habit of giving offerings and the rest are not (26.76%). So, it is to be concluded that majority of the people are complying with the spiritual and moral outlook that the wealth one possesses is the gift of God and a portion

of the possessed should be returned to the supplier (God) for the benefit of the fellow and lower category beings (Table No. 5.8.1).

On further enquiry it was revealed that three background variables, namely, religious affiliation, education and family size was associated with the habit.

5.8.1: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The habit of giving offerings is very much related to the religious background, the analysis Table No. 5.8.1 shows that while overwhelming majority of the Hindus (88%) and Christians (92.67%) uphold the tradition of making offerings of different kinds in religious places only a minority of Muslims (39.33%) follow the habit of the other groups. This behaviour is to be analysed in the background of the Quranic prescription that the sweat on your forehead should produce your food. That wealth acquired without hard work is not worthy for your use. The Muslims may be giving service in the places of worship in various forms instead of giving offerings. Or they may be giving money for the welfare of the deserving among their brethren. But that is not considered as an offering to God.

Table No. 5.8.1

Religious Affiliation and Habit of Giving Offerings to God

| Religious Affiliation | Give offerings | Do not give offerings | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 132 (88.00%) | 18 (12.00%) | 150 (100%) |

| | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Muslim | 59 (39.33%) | 91 (60.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 139 (92.67%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33%) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 133.84 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.8.2: Income Status and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The investigation carried out shows that the practice of giving offerings to God in religious places is associated with the income level of the people. As per this study (Table No. 5.8.2) the habit of giving offerings increases with increase in the income level. However, the top most income group is an exception. 64.15% of the income category of Rs. <3000, 73.56% of Rs.3000 – 6000, 82.61% of Rs.6000 – 9000 income group give offerings to God in religious places. The corresponding figure in respect of the above Rs.9000 group is coming down to 77.61%. This group may be (Rs.9000 and above) feeling that unidentified payment in the name of offerings is unnecessary and also fearing that this habit would adversely affect their capital formation.

Table No. 5.8.2

Income Status and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God

| Income Status monthly in Rs) | Give offerings | Do not give Offerings | Total |
|------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 68 (64.15%) | 38 (35.85%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000-6000 | 153 (73.56%) | 55 (26.44%) | 208 (100%) |

| | | | |
|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------|
| 6000-9000 | 57 (82.61%) | 12 (17.39%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 52 (77.61%) | 15 (22.39%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33 %) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 8.24 df = 3 Table value =7.81 P = 0.05
The Association is significant

5.8.3. Family Size and the Habit of Giving Offerings to God:

The results of the analysis based on family size were quiet according to the expectation. Analysis in Table No. 5.8.3 shows that the larger the family the lesser the habit of giving offerings to God. 82.77% of the small family (below 4 members) give offerings. The corresponding figures in respect of the medium sized and large families are 62.98% and 61.29%. The results can be easily interpreted as the smaller family has better per capita income and it can spare for materially unproductive spending such as offerings to the abstract entity.

Table No. 5.8.3
Family Size and the Habit of Giving Offerings to
Religious Places

| Family size | Give offerings | Do not give offerings | Total |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 197 (82.77%) | 41 (17.23%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 114 (62.98%) | 67 (37.02%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 and above | 19 | 12 | 31 |

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| members | (61.29%) | (38.71%) | (100%) |
| Total | 330 (73.33%) | 120 (26.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.06 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9: The Habit of Daily Prayer:

Prayer is the humble admission of the inability and infirmity of the Self. The pious are of the opinion that more things are wrought by prayers than the world dreams and that it is the prayer that perpetuates life. Whatever it be, prayers render solace to a seething mind, which is the cogent experience of human beings.

Offering prayers has many dimensions, physical, spiritual, psychological and social. The believers knowingly or unknowingly avail these benefits of prayers from the almighty. Atheists without analysing the positive sides of prayers propagate that they are the fountain heads of blind belief and keep themselves aloof from the practice.

In this study, what is the habit of the population in this matter was analysed. It was seen that offering prayers to God is palatable for an overwhelming majority of the population. As revealed in analysis of Table No. 5.9.1, 90.67% of the respondents are in the habit of rendering prayers, the rest are not in the habit (9.33%). That is, the people in general subscribe to the belief that humans are powerless before the nature and all the creations are at the mercy of a power, God.

5.9.1: Gender and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Gender shall be a determinant of the habit of praying and on the basis of this provision analysis in Table No. 5.9.1 was carried out. The analysis reveals that the

females are more interested to pray to God for his/her blessings. 95.15% of females and 88.07% of the males come under category of those who pray daily. The rest of the groups are not in the habit of daily praying. In our culture, if we look back to history, the female members are more at the helm of spiritual activities. This socialisation process of female members explains the result of the analysis.

Table No. 5.9.1
Gender and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Gender | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|--------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Female | 157 (95.15%) | 8 (4.85%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 251 (88.07%) | 34 (11.93%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.19 df = 1 Table value = 6.63 P <= 0.01
The association is significant.

5.9.2: Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Religion wise analysis of the data gives support to the presumption that Muslims are more committed to daily praying. For a Musalman to be worthy of his/her name has to pray five times daily. Christians also have to observe seven times prayer routine in a day. In this study the Christians are also very closer to the Muslims. But in the case of the Hindus a different picture is seen. 82.67% of them pray daily but in comparison with the Muslims and Christians (95.33% and 94% respectively) are far behind. As mentioned in various other contexts, spiritual activities are not a collective affair for Hindus. This freedom allows them to pray in their mind even while engaging themselves in other activities.

Table No. 5.9.2
Religious Affiliation and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Religious Affiliation | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 124 (82.67%) | 26 (17.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 143 (95.33%) | 7 (4.7%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 141 (94.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 17.17 df = 2 Table value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9.3: Educational Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

Among the educational categories, the school educated shows more interest in conducting daily prayer than the Higher Secondary and College educated do. 96% of the first group are in the habit of praying daily. The corresponding figure in the case of the College educated is 91.48%. The least strengthly group (comparatively) is the Higher Secondary educated one (81.25%). It is seen that usually the middle segment on categorisation in any basis shows distinct behaviour from other segments. The reasons for the closeness of the lower and apex segments need not be the same.

Table No. 5.9.3
Educational Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Educational Status | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|--------------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 96 (96.00%) | 4 (4.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher | 65 | 15 | 80 |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Secondary | (81.25%) | (18.75%) | (100%) |
| College | 247 (91.48%) | 23 (8.52%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.96 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

5.9.4: Income Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer:

In the analysis to find out the relationship between income and the habit of conducting daily prayer, if any existing, it is revealed that the lesser the income the more the inclination for conducting daily prayer.

94.34% of the respondents belonging to the lower income group (Rs. <3000) are in the habit of praying daily. The figure shrinks to 82.09% when we consider the highest income group (Rs.9000 and above). In between these two groups there is a gradual reduction from 93.27% (income Rs.3000 – 6000) to 85.51% (income Rs.6000 – 9000). This indicates the difficulty to prosper both in materialism and spirituality.

Table No. 5.9.4

Income Status and the Habit of Daily Prayer

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs) | Pray daily | Do not pray daily | Total |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 100 (94.34%) | 6 (5.66%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 194 (93.27%) | 14 (6.73%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 59 (85.51%) | 10 (14.49%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 and | 55 | 12 | 67 |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| above | (82.09%) | (17.91%) | (100%) |
| Total | 408 (90.67%) | 42 (9.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value =11.35 df = 11.35 Table value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Occupation, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

Summary:

In this Chapter, the attitude, beliefs and practices of persons towards religion is analysed. The analysis indicates that religion is more enthusiastically adhered by the lowest and highest age groups. Also it is found that Muslims and Christians have more favourable attitude towards religion. It is also revealed that majority of the school educated have favourable attitude towards religion, comparing to the Higher Secondary and College educated. And it is found that more favourable attitude towards religion is shown by low income group. And the larger family is having greater favour to religion.

It is unravelled that majority of all the age groups opined that God is the unseen force which controls the world. Islam is more firm in their religious conviction and Christians stands next to Muslims only in the matter. On the nature of God, the majority deposes the fact that God is the living God, all perceiving, ubiquitous and yet a human like entity without physical existence. The analysis reveals that the lion's share of

the respondents subscribes to the view that the quintessence of all religions is in essence the same.

Indubitably, the religious faith is increasing day-by-day. For the solace and happiness of humans, a soothing balm is the religious faith. The study further reveals that the worshippers are thronged in religious places regardless of their religious denomination, which is the clinching evidence of augmentation of religious faith.

As far as the practice is concerned, it is revealed in the study that majority of persons visit religious places on one reason or the other. Also majority of the people are of the outlook that the wealth one possesses is the gift of God and a portion of the riches one possesses should be offered back unto His feet as a token of expressing a grateful heart to the Omnipotent. It is also revealed that the larger the family, the lesser the habit of giving offerings to God. It can be interpreted that the smaller family has better per capita income and it can spare for materially unproductive spending such as offerings to the abstract entity. It was seen that offering prayers to God is palatable for an overwhelming majority of the population. The people in general subscribe to the belief that humans are powerless before the nature and all the creations are at the mercy of God.

Religion and Social Welfare
Chapter – 6

Chapter – VI

RELIGION AND SOCIAL WELFARE

Religion when practiced in its true sense makes the Individual and the Society very pious natured and the ambience becomes very salubrious for a happy living. In this chapter the focus of the analyses is on this aspect of religion.

6.1: Religion and Brotherhood:

All religions preach to promote universal brotherhood. That is, love others in the way one loves oneself. This is because religion is upholding the philosophy of manifestation of God in different forms. In all the human beings the same spirit of God prevails. So no two persons are different, though there can have morphological variations. This is the principle of unification of humans in God.

Virtually, in Society there occurs an esprit-de-corps mentality which brings about high rate of cooperation among members of the community.

In this study an enquiry was conducted to reveal the people's perception on the unification power of religion.

Analysis of the data (Table No. 6.1.1) shows that 36.89% of the respondents strongly believe that religion is a cementing factor of society. Another 32.45% are not so strong in their faith in the matter but still then no confusion or negative opinion. However, 16% have disagreement with the perspective and 4.22% very strong in their disagreement 10.44% refused to give an opinion either positively or negatively.

Therefore, the results imply that religion is a strong cementing factor of society. Emile Durkheim while analysing the functions of religion in society has pointed out that it is a strong factor for bringing the shattered society together. So, the result of this analysis is corroboration to the philosophy of the eminent French philosopher.

6.1.1: Gender and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

Gender based analysis of the data revealed that there is association between the variables. It is seen that the males are more emphasising this power of religion than the females do. While only 28.48% of the females strongly believe that religion is a unifying agent, 41.75% of the males subscribe to the view. Comparison of other responses could easily establish the result identified earlier. The results give us the impression that the females are more looking at religion as something God created and it is the spiritual experience of the individual that is important to it and not the temporal aspect of unifying people. Or the females are lesser supporters to the view that religion is eminently social (Durkheim).

Table no. 6.1.1
Gender and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Gender | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Female | 47 (28.48%) | 68 (41.21%) | 34 (20.61%) | 4 (2.42%) | 12 (7.27%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 119 (41.75%) | 78 (27.37%) | 38 (13.33%) | 15 (5.26%) | 35 (12.28%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 19.12 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P <= 0.01

The Association is significant

6.1.2: Age and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

An enquiry into the relationship between age and the perception shows that there is a general trend of seeing religion as a unifying force to a greater extent

among the older people. However, the lower middle age group is an exception (30-45). This reversal in the case of this group is difficult to explain without further probing. The reason behind the general trend might be due to the fact that during earlier period religion was a harbinger of peace and social unity rather than a dividing agent. But now the arena has totally changed and so the younger people are more doubtful about the unifying force of religion.

Table no. 6.1.2

Age and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Age (in years) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 28 (36.84%) | 28 (36.84%) | 10 (13.16%) | 2 (2.63%) | 8 (10.53%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 35 (23.81%) | 51 (34.69%) | 33 (22.45%) | 8 (5.44%) | 20 (13.61%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 49 (37.98%) | 39 (30.23%) | 21 (16.28%) | 6 (4.65%) | 14 (10.85%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 54 (55.10%) | 28 (28.57%) | 8 (8.16%) | 3 (3.06%) | 5 (5.10%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 30.42 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.1.3: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

Analysis in Table No. 6.1.3 indicates that the Muslims feel religion as more a unifying agent. The feeling is least among the Hindus. The agreeing group is constituted among the Hindus by only 40% (16% + 24% = 40%) of the respondents. The corresponding figure in the case of the Muslims is 86%. Close to the Muslims come Christians (82%). But the strongly agreeing group among the Christians is very weak compared to the Muslims. In the case of the Hindus another feature also is note worthy;

20.67% do not reveal their perceptions. This faction among the other two groups is very meagre.

The concept of religion for Hindus is that it facilitates the “Moksha” of the individual, which is the ultimate aim of human life. So no question of collectivity comes in the minds of Hindus when they think about religion. It is only an individual affair. In the case of revealed religions, the basic norm is that religion is a unifying agent of the group. Group life is the central idea of revealed religion. The reference point of Hindu Religion is the universe as a whole, not any group as in the case of Semitic Religions.

Table no. 6.1.3

Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 24 (16.00%) | 36 (24.00%) | 45 (30.00%) | 14 (9.33%) | 31 (20.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 81 (54.00%) | 48 (32.00%) | 11 (7.33%) | 0 (0.00%) | 10 (6.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 61 (40.67%) | 62 (41.33%) | 16 (10.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 104.19 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.1.4: Educational Status and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

The analysis under this section indicates that the educational background of the people influences them to perceive religion in a particular manner. The lower the educational attainment, the stronger the feeling that religion is a unifying force in society. Critical thinking of people is increased as they go up in the acquisition of knowledge. Since the critical thinking is greater among the better educated, they go for other agencies

which exist in empirical reality and unify people and not before abstract entities like god and god's abode – the religion.

Table no 6.1.4

Educational Status and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Educational Status | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 46 (46.00%) | 39 (39.00%) | 7 (7.00%) | 2 (2.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 31 (38.75%) | 26 (32.50%) | 11 (13.75%) | 1 (1.25%) | 11 (13.75%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 89 (32.96%) | 81 (30.00%) | 54 (20.00%) | 16 (5.93%) | 30 (11.11%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (6.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 20.83 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.1.5: Income Status and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

The assumption that income status and the perception are associated was tested as shown in Table No. 6.1.5. The analysis reveals that there is very firm association between the variables. The agreement to the perception that religion is unifying agency of people is very high in the lowest income group (Rs. Below 3000/-). The two middle categories show comparatively very low agreement. When we take the case of the highest income group the agreement becomes stronger, though it does not come to the level shown by the lowest income category. The opinion of the two social poles may be seen as an example of belief patterns of the two categories in all matters. The lowest economic group, once accept a principle, it becomes firm and stronger with the idea. This behaviour helps the group become integrated. A similar explanation may be given to the response of the highest income group too. There are many doubting Thomases

among the middle income groups, which scatter the polarisation and strengthening of the group around a philosophy or principle.

Table no. 6.1.5

Income Status and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Income status (monthly in Rs.) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 58 (54.72%) | 34 (32.08%) | 9 (8.49%) | 1 (0.94%) | 4 (3.77%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 -6000 | 60 (28.85%) | 66 (31.73%) | 42 (20.19%) | 12 (5.77%) | 28 (13.46%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 20 (28.99%) | 23 (33.33%) | 14 (20.29%) | 4 (5.80%) | 8 (11.59%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 28 (41.79%) | 23 (34.33%) | 7 (10.45%) | 2 (2.99%) | 7 (10.45%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi – square value = 33.56 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.1.6: Family Size and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

Family size and the perception on the topic are associated as seen in Table No. 6.1.6. When we consider the ‘agreeing’ group (strongly and normally) together a clear pattern can be seen. That is 59% of the small families having members below 4 and 80% (approximately) each of the medium size (4 – 6 members) and large size (6 members and above) agree with the view that religion is a unifying agency of society. This shows that the faith in the unifying power of religion is more among the larger families. In larger families the observances of religious practices may be more than that

in small families. So is the case in celebrating religious festivities. In larger families, there is more interest to make decorations, food etc. and conduct ceremonies in connection with religious festivals. In the case of small families they either skip such celebrations or get articles for such celebration in ready made forms. So, the feeling of integration is greater in larger families. This self experience prompts them to view religion as a better unifying agency.

Table no. 6.1.6

Family Status and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion

| Family size | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 70 (29.41%) | 72 (30.25%) | 51 (21.43%) | 12 (5.04%) | 33 (13.87%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 87 (48.07%) | 58 (32.04%) | 20 (11.05%) | 7 (3.87%) | 9 (4.97%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 9 (29.03%) | 16 (51.61%) | 1 (3.23%) | 0 (0.00%) | 5 (16.13%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.45%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 35.00 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.1.7: Attitude Towards Religion and the Perception on the Unifying Power of Religion:

An enquiry into the relationship between the attitude and outlook on the unifying power of religion supported the existence of the relationship. The pattern of clustering of the data clearly reveals that those who have greater favour to religion are strong supporters of the view that religion is a unifying agency of society. It can be seen that 83.33% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the unifying power of religion. The figure is only 11.76% in the case of

indifferent group, 7.25% in the case of “Lukewarm” attitude group and 41.01% of the favourable attitude group.

Table No. 6.1.7
Attitude towards Religion and the Perception on the
Unifying Power of Religion

| Attitude | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 2 (11.76%) | 1 (5.88%) | 4 (23.53%) | 4 (23.53%) | 6 (35.29%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 10 (7.25%) | 44 (31.88%) | 49 (35.51%) | 9 (6.52%) | 26 (18.84%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 89 (41.01%) | 90 (41.47%) | 19 (8.76%) | 6 (2.76%) | 13 (5.99%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 65 (83.33%) | 11 (14.10%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 2 (2.56%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 166 (36.89%) | 146 (32.44%) | 72 (16.00%) | 19 (4.22%) | 47 (10.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 201.91 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P< =0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Occupation, Marital Status and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.2: Promotion of Charity:

Mitigation of sufferings of beings particularly humans, is one of the major deeds of religion. The deeds oriented towards this end have no profit or any gain motive. That is, what is the concept of “Nishkama Karma” of Indian tradition. Universally this is the concept of charity. This is practiced by alms giving, running

charity institutions for the various needy categories of humans and other species or even helping the needy categories in various ways. In this study the outlook of the people regarding the charity promoting role of religion was analysed. The analysis revealed that 56.89% of the respondents have very high appreciation for the charity shown by religion in contemporary society. Another 39.89% moderately appreciate the profile of religion and only a negligible portion (3.11%) has negative opinion on the religion in this regard. 1.11% of the respondent did not react to this topic of debate. So we have no difficulty to conclude that religion is showing its humane quality in contemporary social situations.

Subsidiary analyses to reveal the association between the sociological background and the perception revealed that only Religious background of the people is showing association with the perception.

6.2.1: Religious Affiliation and Promotion of Charity:

The analysis (Table No. 6.2.1) indicates that 72% of the Muslims, 52% of the Christians and 46.67% of the Hindus believe that religion promotes charity to a very great extent. The perception of the Muslims is unalloyed. The Christians come next and Hindus third and closer to the Christians. Though all the three groups have all praise for charity according to their ideologies in real life situation charity is very much practiced by Muslim community. For instance, during the lent period of the community, ‘Sakkath’ giving is a must to get the blessings of the Almighty. These types of practices seen in real life situation may be influencing them to express their view that religion is showing charity with all its heart and mind in contemporary society.

Table No. 6.2.1
Religious affiliation and Promotion of Charity

| Religious Affiliation | Promotes very great extent | Promote certain extent | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 70 (46.67%) | 65 (43.33%) | 7 (4.67%) | 4 (2.67%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 108 (72.00%) | 39 (26.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 2 (1.33%) | 0 (0.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 78 (52.00%) | 71 (47.33%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 256 (56.89%) | 175 (38.89%) | 8 (1.78%) | 6 (1.33%) | 5 (1.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 39.28% df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.2.2: Attitude Towards Religion and Promotion of Charity:

Similar results as those seen in analysis 6.1.7 were received when tested the relationship between the attitude and opinion regarding the role of religion in promoting charity – the level of positive attitude towards religion and agreement with the opinion that religion is an agency for promoting charity. It can be seen that 93.59% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of promotion of charity.

Table No. 6.2.2
Attitude Towards Religion and Promotion of Charity

| Attitude | Promotes very great extent | Promote certain extent | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|--------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 2 (11.76%) | 7 (41.18%) | 3 (1.65%) | 2 (11.76%) | 3 (17.65%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 50 (36.23%) | 79 (57.25%) | 4 (2.90%) | 3 (2.17%) | 2 (1.45%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 131 (60.37%) | 84 (38.71%) | 1 (0.46%) | 1 (0.46%) | 0 (0.00%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 73 (93.59%) | 5 (6.41%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 256 | 175 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 450 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| | (56.89%) | (38.89%) | (1.78%) | (1.33%) | (1.11%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|---------|---------|---------|--------|

Chi-square value = 159.21 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.3: Promotion of Cleanliness:

While Durkheim defines religion, he has pointed out that religion is the beliefs and practices related to things sacred. Sacred objects are naturally pure and clean. When we extend the concept of purity and cleanliness, we could say that religious life itself is a purificatory process of physical, mental and spiritual activities of human beings. Hence we may say that religion is capable of promoting cleanliness of physical, social, psychic and spiritual environment of a society. On the basis of this perspective the outlook of the people regarding this aspect of religion was analysed in this study.

When the elicited data was analysed it was seen that 74.22% of the respondents support the view that religion helps to create cleanliness in human life. 13.33% however, do not agree with the outlook. Another 12.45% did not express any opinion. From this analysis it is revealed that religion has the capacity to promote cleanliness in human life. In primitive forms of religion, certain unhealthy and unclean activities like killing of animals, use of drugs and even activities which vitiate the cleanliness of the physical surroundings might have taken place. This might also be the reason for the 'no response' from 12.45% of the respondents.

6.3.1: Age and Opinion about the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness:

Enquiry into the influence of age status on the opinion reveals that relatively, the young and old age groups have stronger opinion that religion has the capacity to bring about cleanliness in human life. 75% of the young age group (below 30 years) and 78.57% of the old age group (60 -75 years) support the view that religion is

capable of creating cleanliness in the physical, social and psychic lives of human beings. 65.51% of the 30 – 45 years and 68.99% of the 45 – 60 years groups also subscribe to the view. Presently the religious observances are not practiced with that much of reverence and fervour or with the expected standard of purity as the case in the past. It is to be presumed that the middle age group has neither proper practical experience of this profile of religion nor analytical approach to understand the property. However, the younger age group may be analytically coming to the conclusion that religion is a cleanliness maintaining agent in human life. The older age group might have experienced the purity during their childhood days when religion was practiced with utmost care for purity and cleanliness.

Table no. 6.3.1
Age and Opinion about the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness

| Age (in years) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 30 (39.47%) | 27 (35.53%) | 8 (10.53%) | 5 (6.58%) | 6 (7.89%) | 76 (100%) |
| 31 – 45 | 45 (30.61%) | 66 (44.90%) | 13 (8.84%) | 2 (1.36%) | 21 (14.29%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 45 (34.88%) | 44 (34.11%) | 15 (11.63%) | 3 (2.33%) | 22 (17.05%) | 129 (100%) |
| 61 – 75 | 51 (52.04%) | 26 (26.53%) | 10 (10.20%) | 4 (4.08%) | 7 (7.14%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 171 (38.00%) | 163 (36.22%) | 46 (10.22%) | 14 (3.11%) | 56 (12.45%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 24.88 df = 12 Table value = 21.03 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.3.2: Religious Affiliation and Opinion about the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness:

Among the religious groups the outlook differs considerably. The Muslims are strong supporters of the view that religion is a cleanliness maintaining agent.

60% of them strongly believe that this is a fact and 27.33% have moderate agreement with the perspective. The corresponding segments among the Hindus are 29.33% and 32% and among the Christians, 24.67% and 49.33%. The responses among these two latter groups' have similarities. 14.67% and 16% respectively of the groups have refused to express their opinion.

The Muslims are very strictly instructed by their religion as to the level of personal hygiene that is to be maintained particularly when performing prayers. For instance, in Mosque ablutionary washing of body parts is customary for Muslims before prayers. The females wear special dresses even during prayers. The religious rite of circumcision also can be considered as the cleanliness maintaining practice. In short, these experiences have significant effect on the perspective of the members in this matter.

In the case of the other two communities there is no dictates of religion on the matter. In the case of Christian community particularly, the persuasive or compulsive prescriptions regarding body hygiene are lacking. They are left to the conscience of the believers.

Table no. 6.3.2
Religious Affiliation and Opinion about the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness

| Religious Affiliation | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 44 (29.33%) | 48 (32.00%) | 28 (18.67%) | 8 (5.33%) | 22 (14.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 90 (60.00%) | 41 (27.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 10 (6.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 37 (24.67%) | 74 (49.33%) | 12 (8.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 24 (16.00%) | 150 (100%) |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Total | 171 (38.00%) | 163 (36.22%) | 46 (10.22%) | 14 (3.11%) | 56 (12.45%) | 450 (100%) |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|

Chi-square value = 66.80 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01

The Association is significant

6.3.3: Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness:

Whether the attitude has any influence on the opinion regarding the role played by religion in maintaining personal and environmental cleanliness was another question that was dealt with in the study. Results show that there is an inextricable relationship between the two factors. Taking up the two responses, namely, agree and strongly agree and analysing the patterns the support of the view that those who are more favourable to religion are greater supporters to the view that religion can augment cleanliness is confirmed. Under the strongly agree group comes 93.59% of those who have highly favourable attitude. Further, 33.64% of those who have favourable attitude come under the strongly agreeing group. Finally, we would say that the attitude towards religion has much influence in discerning the positive aspects of religious life.

Table No.6.3.3
Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Power of Religion to Promote Cleanliness

| Attitude | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 1 (5.88%) | 4 (23.53%) | 4 (23.53%) | 2 (11.76%) | 6 (35.29%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 24 (17.39%) | 61 (44.20%) | 21 (15.22%) | 4 (2.90%) | 28 (20.29%) | 138 (100%) |
| favourable | 73 (33.64%) | 94 (43.32%) | 20 (9.22%) | 8 (3.69%) | 22 (10.14%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 73 (93.59%) | 4 (5.13%) | 1 (1.28%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 171 | 163 | 46 | 14 | 56 | 450 |

| | | | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|
| | (38.00%) | (36.22%) | (10.22%) | (3.11%) | (12.44%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|----------|---------|----------|--------|

Chi-square value = 155.56 df = 12 Table value = 21.00 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family Size and Residential Status, was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.4: Promotion of Human Love:

All Religions preach to love others and do no harm. But recently religions, due to its material interests have become divisive force and hence a threat to humanism. In this context this study investigated to the perspectives of the people on the topic.

Analysis of data reveals that overwhelming majority of the people have faith in the humane outlook of religion. Only 12.66% of the respondents either expressed their negative outlook on the function of religion or kept silent. The rest responded that religion fosters human love and brotherhood.

6.4.1: Gender and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love:

Analysis on the basis of gender indicates that almost equal proportion of the females (84.84%) and the males (84.77%) subscribe to the view that religion promotes human love. However, the depth of the feeling is very high among the males. 61.75% of the males and 45.45% of the females do strongly believe that religion has this capacity.

Usually the females are looked upon as having more appreciation for religion. But in this context a contradiction is seen. That is, the faith in the power of

religion in the matter is greater among male members of the society. Females may be more in the habit of constructing meaning for human behaviour than males do. Females are more oriented to practice religion for their spiritual realisation than to look at the sociological implication of religious life.

Table no. 6.4.1
Gender and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love

| Gender | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Female | 75 (45.45%) | 65 (39.39%) | 10 (6.06%) | 3 (1.82%) | 12 (7.27%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 176 (61.75%) | 77 (27.02%) | 19 (6.67%) | 4 (1.40%) | 9 (3.16%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 251 (55.78%) | 142 (31.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 7 (1.55%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 14.02 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P < = 0.01

The Association is significant

6.4.2: Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love:

On an analysis as shown in Table No. 6.4.2, it is revealed that the outlook of the respondents differ according to their religious affiliation. Majority of the two religious groups, Muslims and Christians (68.67% and 52.67% respectively) showed deep faith in this function of religions. The corresponding figure in respect of the Hindus is only 46%. The variation in the outlook might be due to the fact that, “getting together in the name of God” is the central overt activity of these two revealed Religions. In the case of Hindus such get-together for worship is not prescribed. It is carried out as a personal affair. Only for fairs and festivals, the Hindus get-together. Get-togethers are situations which promote brotherhood and loving one another.

Table no. 6.4.2
Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love

| Religious Affiliation | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 69 (46.00%) | 44 (29.33%) | 19 (12.67%) | 6 (4.00%) | 12 (8.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 103 (68.67%) | 43 (28.67%) | 2 (1.33%) | 1 (0.67%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 79 (52.67%) | 55 (36.67%) | 8 (5.33%) | 0 (0.00%) | 8 (5.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 251 (55.78%) | 142 (31.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 7 (1.55%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 42.27 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.4.3: Income Status and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love:

Income status of the people affects their outlook in this matter, which is to be inferred when we conclude inductively from the analysis given in Table No. 6.4.3. Among the lowest income group (below Rs.3000/-) the opinion is the strongest. 63.21% very strongly agree to the view that religion is capable of bringing about brotherhood. 30.19% even though do not express such deep faith are of the opinion that religion has such a profile. Among the upper most two groups, the opinion is almost the same but somewhat lesser than that of the lowest income group. The opinion is comparatively the least (but only comparatively) among the upper lower income group (Rs.3000 – 6000). In all religious groups the lower stratum is getting financial and other material benefits either from their respective groups or from other groups even. So such helps prompt them to see the humane quality of religion. The Christian and Muslim groups have been following the good conduct of assisting the poor. Recently Hindu religious groups also have started such programmes.

Table no. 6.4.3
Income Status and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love

| Income status (monthly in Rs) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 67 (63.21%) | 32 (30.19%) | 3 (2.83%) | 1 (0.94%) | 3 (2.83%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 104 (50.00%) | 77 (37.02%) | 14 (6.73%) | 2 (0.96%) | 11 (5.29%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 41 (59.42%) | 14 (20.29%) | 7 (10.14%) | 1 (1.45%) | 6 (8.70%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 39 (58.21%) | 19 (28.36%) | 5 (7.46%) | 3 (4.48%) | 1 (1.49%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 251 (55.78%) | 142 (31.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 7 (1.55%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 26.50 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.4.4: Attitude towards Religion and the Outlook on the Promotion of Human Love:

Attitude towards religion and the perception on the power of religion in promoting human love are associated – it was assumed. On the basis of the assumption an analysis as shown in Table No. 6.4.4 was carried out. The analysis reveals that the greater the positive attitude towards religion, the stronger the appreciation for the power of religion to promote human love. In the Table we see that only 5.88% of the indifferent group express that religion has very high power to promote human love. The figure scales up to 94.87% as we come to those who have highly favourable attitude towards religion. 30.43% of the “Lukewarm” and 61.75% of the favourable group subscribe strongly to the view that religion is an agent of human love.

Table No. 6.4.4
Attitude Towards Religion and the Outlook on the
Promotion of Human Love

| Attitude | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 1 (5.88%) | 4 (23.53%) | 4 (23.53%) | 2 (11.76%) | 6 (35.29%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 42 (30.43%) | 57 (41.30%) | 20 (14.49%) | 4 (2.90%) | 15 (10.87%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 134 (61.75%) | 78 (35.94%) | 5 (2.30%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 74 (94.87%) | 3 (3.58%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (1.28%) | 0 (0.00%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 251 (55.78%) | 142 (31.56%) | 29 (6.44%) | 7 (1.56%) | 21 (4.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 179.14 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Marital status, Family Size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.5: Contentment with Life:

“Simple Life and High Principles” are the prescriptions of almost all religion for their followers. Therefore, one who tries to practice religion is able to become contented with practical life where many of ones desires remain unfulfilled. So, ultimately, religion may be considered as an agency which brings forth contentment with life.

43.56% of the respondents of this study have strong agreement with this view and another 34% have somewhat concurrence. The rest of them (22.44%) have either disagreement or no opinion. So from this study we shall conclude that religion helps to lead a contented life.

Enquiries were also conducted into the nature of association between the perspective and the sociological variables. Those analyses which revealed positive results are discussed in the following sections.

6.5.1: Age Status and Contentment with Life:

The association between age and the opinion is clearly revealed; the agreement to the outlook increases with increase in age. An explanation to this straight relationship is not very difficult. As everybody knows, as people getting older attachment to religion becomes stronger. They could better feel the consolation that religions supplies to carry forward with the increasing miseries of older age.

Table no. 6.5.1
Age Status and Contentment with Life

| Age Status (in years) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 26 (34.21%) | 27 (35.53%) | 10 (13.16%) | 5 (6.58%) | 8 (10.53%) | 76 (100%) |
| 31-45 | 49 (33.33%) | 60 (40.82%) | 15 (10.20%) | 5 (3.40%) | 18 (12.24%) | 147 (100%) |
| 46-60 | 59 (45.74%) | 40 (31.01%) | 11 (8.53%) | 5 (3.88%) | 14 (10.85%) | 129 (100%) |
| 61-75 | 62 (63.27%) | 26 (26.53%) | 5 (5.10%) | 2 (2.04%) | 3 (3.06%) | 98 (100%) |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total | 196 (43.56%) | 153 (3.004%) | 41 (9.11%) | 17 (3.78%) | 43 (9.55%) | 450 (100%) |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|

Chi-square value = 29.44 df = 12 Table value=26.22 P <= 0.01

The Association is significant

6.5.2: Religious Affiliation and Contentment with Life:

Religious background of the people has strong association with the view – analysis contained in Table No. 6.5.2 indicates. It can be seen that the outlook is most subscribed to by the Muslims, then comes Christians and finally Hindus. One important feature that is to be noted is that majority (58.67%) of the Muslims very strongly agree to the vision that religion can give contentment with life for people. Among the Christians, equal portions come under very strong and somewhat strong supporters of the view (40.67% each). But in the case of the Hindus the very strong supports are only 31.33% which is lesser than the somewhat strong supporters. For giving an explanation the two Semitic religious groups may be taken together. The preaching of the texts of both the groups are very much centred around the method of arresting worries relating to mundane matters. So, more of the followers of the groups are benefited by the religious philosophies. In the case of Hindu religion, the social and personal aspects are not directly revealed. Instead, it is dealing with such philosophical and abstract thinking as the meaning of human life, the ultimate aim of human existence. So, the common followers of this religion may not feel the consoling and contentment inculcation aspects of religion.

Table no. 6.5.2
Religious Affiliation and Contentment with Life

| Religious Affiliation | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 47 (31.33%) | 54 (36.00%) | 20 (13.33%) | 12 (8.00%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 88 (58.67%) | 38 (25.33%) | 9 (6.00%) | 5 (3.33%) | 10 (6.67%) | 150 (100%) |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|---------------|
| Christian | 61 (40.67%) | 61 (40.67%) | 12 (8.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 16 (10.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 196 (43.56%) | 153 (34.00%) | 41 (9.11%) | 17 (3.78%) | 43 (9.55%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 38.30 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.5.3: Income Status and Contentment with Life:

The doubt whether income and the contentment with life are related or not is the basis of the analysis contained in Table No. 6.5.3. If we take the strongly supporting and supporting group together, it can be seen that 88.68% of the lowest income group (Rs. <3000), 75% of the Rs. 3000 – 6000 group, 78.27% of the Rs. 6000 – 9000 group and 67.16% of the Rs.9000/- and above group are of the view that religion creates contentment in life. That is, as the income status increases the strength of the opinion decreases. The result may very rationally be interpreted; all religion profess that poor is to be protected. In the philosophy of certain religions, even if the poor are not getting justice in this worldly life, God will reverse the sufferings /enjoyments of these groups when they die and enter into the life of eternity. These kinds of perspectives and preaching of religions may be ensconcing such types of opinion in the lower stratum of the economic hierarchies.

Table no. 6.5.3
Income Status and Contentment with Life

| Income status (monthly in Rs.) | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 54 (50.94%) | 40 (37.74%) | 4 (3.77%) | 1 (0.94%) | 7 (6.60%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 80 (38.46%) | 76 (36.54%) | 25 (12.02%) | 8 (3.85%) | 19 (9.13%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 34 | 20 | 4 | 2 | 9 | 69 |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (49.28%) | (28.99%) | (5.80%) | (2.90%) | (13.04%) | (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 28 (41.79%) | 17 (25.37%) | 8 (11.94%) | 6 (8.96%) | 8 (11.94%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 196 (43.56%) | 153 (34.00%) | 41 (9.11%) | 17 (3.78%) | 43 (9.55%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 22.04 df = 12 Table value = 21.03 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.5.4: Attitude towards Religion and Contentment with Life:

A detailed analysis of the data unquestionably supports that the attitude towards religion and the capacity of religion to create contentment with life are associated. Those who have stronger attitude towards religion are stronger believers of the capacity of religion in this matter. 93.59% of the respondents who have highly favourable attitude are strong believers that religion inculcates contentment with life in people.

Table No. 6.5.4
Attitude towards Religion and Contentment with Life

| Attitude | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 1 (5.88%) | 2 (11.76%) | 5 (29.41%) | 3 (17.65%) | 6 (35.29%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 25 (18.12%) | 50 (36.23%) | 26 (18.84%) | 8 (5.80%) | 29 (21.01%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 97 (44.70%) | 96 (44.24%) | 10 (4.61%) | 6 (2.76%) | 8 (3.69%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 73 (93.59%) | 5 (6.41%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 196 (43.56%) | 153 (34.00%) | 41 (9.11%) | 17 (3.78%) | 43 (9.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 191.44 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Occupation, Marital Status, Family Size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.6: Religion and Social Control:

In all well functioning society we can see a balance between individual freedom and social control. This balance is attained when members of society think reflexively about the importance of maintaining individual freedom and social welfare and act accordingly. For creating such type of reflexive thinking informal agencies of social regulation are necessary. From very old days religion is considered as capable of regaining individuals' conducts and ensuring collective welfare. For this study the perception of the people on the role of religion in this regard was analysed. The analysis supports the assumption (Table No. 6.6.1). 63.11% support the view that religion is an agency of social control and 18.67% disagree with the perceptive. One important result is to be noticed is that among the supporting group only 28.89% are strong supporters and the rest (34.22%) have a lukewarm approach. 18.22% of the respondents did not give any response. When further probing was made, as to why so many refusals, it was revealed indirectly that many of them have negative opinion. But for fear of the wrath of their religious groups, they uphold such an approach. These results indicate that the people of Kerala have many reservations in projecting religion as a strong agency of social control. Now-a-days Religion has become an instrument for securing parochial interest of individuals and groups. Therefore, now people are somewhat reluctant to project religion as a pious thinking gamut and actions attached thereto. So it is difficult to look upon religion as a strong agency of social control.

6.6.1: Religious Affiliation and the Role of Religion as an Agency of Social Control:

Enquiries reveal that religious background of the people and their perception on the social control capacity of religion are associated (Table No.6.6.1). 50% of the Muslims are of strong opinion that religion is a strong social control agency. Such opinion has been expressed by only 24% of the Christians and 12.67% of the Hindus. The dominant group of the Christians (44% of the group) considers that religion has such a capacity, but it is not very strong. Comparatively, larger portions of the Hindus do not acknowledge the social control role of religion.

Another projecting feature of the responses is that a large portion of the Hindus (25.33%) abstained from expressing their opinion. On a consolidation of the results we shall conclude that the Muslims consider religion as a strong agency of social control. The Hindus are least concerned about this function of religion. The Christians come in between the other two communities. It is well known that the edicts of Islamic religion have great disciplining power over the group and in Islamic countries they are the fountain head of enforcing laws. For Christians also the church has great disciplining power.

More over, the foundation of the two Semitic religions is “Uniting in Jesus/Allah”. That is, individualistic tendencies that are detrimental to the collectivity are ultimately controlled to the maximum by religion and by this the social integration is achieved. This function will be always in the minds of the followers of the Semitic religions. In contrast, the case of Hindus is very different. The getting-together aspect of religion is not there in the essence of the religious philosophies. But religion is very

much in the domain of individuals. Hence the conscience of the group is not much committed to the uniting aspect. However, recently the group is also forming organisations which may be prompting a minority to think about the social control aspect of religious life.

Table no. 6.6.1
Religious Affiliation and the Role of Religion as an Agency of Social Control

| Religious Affiliation | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 19 (12.67%) | 44 (29.33%) | 32 (21.33%) | 17 (11.33%) | 38 (25.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 75 (50.00%) | 44 (29.33%) | 9 (6.00%) | 3 (2.00%) | 19 (12.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 36 (24.00%) | 66 (44.00%) | 17 (11.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 25 (16.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 130 (28.89%) | 154 (34.22%) | 58 (12.89%) | 26 (5.78%) | 82 (18.22%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square = 77.88 df = 8 Table Value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.6.2: Family Size and the Role of Religion as an Agency of Social Control:

The pattern of interaction and the perception on the social processes of members of family may vary according to its composition and strength. Hence in this study an enquiry conducted reveals that the assumption is valid. From Table No. 6.6.2 it can be seen that as the family size increases, the opinion that religion is an agent of social control also simultaneously increase. 52.52% of the small size families, 72.93% of the medium size families and 87.09% of the large families agree to the social control function of Religion to various degrees (the “strongly agree” and “agree” groups are taken together). In small family it may be easy for controlling the members by itself.

But in larger family it has to fall back on other agencies too to control its members. So such families look upon religion as the most effective informal agency for social control to execute the responsibility.

Table no. 6.6.2
Family Size and the Role of Religion as an
Agency of Social Control

| Family size | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 Members | 50 (21.01%) | 75 (31.51%) | 43 (18.07%) | 16 (6.72%) | 54 (22.69%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 69 (38.12%) | 63 (34.81%) | 15 (8.29%) | 9 (4.97%) | 25 (13.81%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 11 (35.48%) | 16 (51.61%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (3.23%) | 3 (9.68%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 130 (28.89%) | 154 (34.22%) | 58 (12.89%) | 26 (5.78%) | 82 (18.22%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square value = 32.81 df = 8 Table Value = 20.09 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.6.3: Attitude towards Religion and the Role of Religion as an Agency of Social Control:

Investigation into the relationship between the level of the attitude and the power of religion to control society gives the same results as in all other analyses relating to them – the stronger the positive attitude the greater the faith in religion as an agency for social control. It can be seen that 84.62% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the social control function of religion. The details of statistical analysis are shown in Table No.6.6.3.

Table No. 6.6.3
Attitude towards Religion and the Role of Religion as an
Agency of Social Control

| Attitude | Strongly agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 1 (5.88%) | 0 (0.00%) | 7 (41.18%) | 2 (11.76%) | 7 (41.18%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 7 (5.07%) | 43 (31.16%) | 27 (19.57%) | 14 (10.14%) | 47 (34.06%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 56 (25.81%) | 100 (46.08%) | 24 (11.06%) | 10 (4.61%) | 27 (12.44%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 66 (84.62%) | 11 (14.10%) | 0 (0.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 1 (1.28%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 130 (28.89%) | 154 (34.22%) | 58 (12.89%) | 26 (5.78%) | 82 (18.22%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi square value = 215.86 df = 12 Table Value = 26.22 P<= 0.01
 The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status and Residential Status was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.7: Religion and Social Stability:

Society is floating in the minds of its individual members. Any floating body, in the absence of proper anchor, will swing this way or that way and hobble rendering its stable existence a far cry. To prevent the instability of society anchorages by many social Institutions, inter alia religion is used.

In this study enquiries about the role of religion in bringing about social stability were carried out. The primary analysis on the theme shows that religion has very great role to play in bringing about social stability. 68.22% of the respondents have expressed their opinion in this manner.

It is found in the study that 26.22% believe that the institution can play some role in this matter. So, in toto 94.44% of the respondents are of the view that religion plays a role in creating and maintaining social stability. Only a negligible portion (5.56%) of them stated that religion has nothing to do with the stability of the Society.

Subsidiary analyses conducted to study the relationship between the various sociological variables indicate that variable such as Age, Religious Affiliation, Education, Occupation and Family Size are associated with the perspectives.

6.7.1: Age Status and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

Analysis of the data based on the age status reveals that at the upper age brackets the opinion that religion is very important in maintaining social stability is stronger. At the lower levels the opinion that the Institution has somewhat role dominates (Table No. 6.7.1). In the results there is nothing new to be interpreted. The older generation's affectivity to religion is revealed. They believe that not only the spiritual need of the individual but also the social stability of the group is also taken care of by religions.

Table no. 6.7.1
Age Status and Opinion on the Role of Religion in
Creating Social Stability

| Age (in years) | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|-------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 48 (63.16%) | 23 (30.26%) | 5 (6.58%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 94 (63.95%) | 45 (30.61%) | 8 (5.44%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 84 (65.12%) | 35 (27.13%) | 10 (7.75%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 81 (82.65%) | 15 (15.31%) | 2 (2.04%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.35 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P < 0.05
The Association is significant

6.7.2: Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

How does the religious affiliation of the people affects the opinion on religion was analysed and it is shown in Table No.6.7.2. The analysis clearly indicates that religious background is a strong determinant of the opinion. As in many former situations here also the two Semitic Religions (Islam and Christianity) come closer in their opinion. An overwhelming 85.33% of the Muslims are of the opinion that Religion is an agent of creating social stability. 69.33% of the Christians also subscribe to the opinion. However, in the case of Hindus the corresponding figure is only 50%. 13.33% of the Hindus see no role for religion in bringing about social stability. In the case of the Muslims and Christians the figures are respectively 0.67% and 2.67%, negligible portions. The possible reason for this diverse perception is given under analysis Table No. 6.6.1, where we highlighted the fact that the steel frame of the Semitic Religions is “getting together” physically and mentally. In the case of the Muslims, it is very strong

than in the case of Christians. The Hindus earlier practiced religion in the personal domain without gathering around some motif physically or mentally.

Table no. 6.7.2
Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Role of
Religion in Creating Social Stability

| Religious affiliation | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 75 (50.00%) | 55 (36.67%) | 20 (13.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 128 (85.33%) | 21 (14.00%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 104 (69.33%) | 42 (28.00%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 53.77 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.7.3: Educational Status and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

Coming to the relationship between education and the perception, it is seen that the lesser educated people are stronger in their support to religion as an agency for fostering social stability. While 79% of the Pre-SSLC people opine that religion is capable of creating stability in society, the corresponding figures in case of Higher Secondary and College educated groups are respectively 67.50% and 64.44%. Those who believe that Religion has no role in the matter is constituted by 7.41% of the College educated respondents, 3% from the Pre-SSLC group and 2.50% from the Higher

Secondary level. The critical thinking of the higher educated people may be stronger which help them to identify the destabilising activities of Religion and this in turn create scepticism on the role of religion in the context.

Table no.6.7.3
Educational Status and Opinion on the Role of
Religion in Creating Social Stability

| Educational Status | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|--------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 79 (79.00%) | 18 (18.00%) | 3 (3.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 54 (67.50%) | 24 (30.00%) | 2 (2.50%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 174 (64.44%) | 76 (28.15%) | 20 (7.41%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.86 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.7.4: Occupational Status and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

Occupation wise analysis of the data indicates that the manual labourers are very strong in their support to religion on this account. The professionals are at the lowest rung and the White Collar Employees come in between the two other categories. Manual labourers may be closer to the common people's life than the other two categories are. They interact with religion, both spiritually and socially in a better way and this life experiences create greater appreciation for religion in this regard. Perhaps, the professionals are distancing themselves from religion and this creates lesser recognition for religion in them.

Table no. 6.7.4
Occupational Status and Opinion on the Role of
Religion in Creating Social Stability

| Occupational Status | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 70 (81.40%) | 14 (16.28%) | 2 (2.33%) | 86 (100%) |
| White collar employees | 177 (67.05%) | 73 (27.65%) | 14 (5.30%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 60 (60.00%) | 31 (31.00%) | 9 (9.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.33 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P< = 0.05
The Association is significant

6.7.5: Family Size and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

The morphology and functioning of families differ on the basis of the number of members. These factors shall decide the perception of people regarding the support got from the community and its various social intuitions. In this background we have enquired into the relationship between the family size and the perception regarding the capacity of religion to create social stability.

The analysis of data relating to the theme reveals that the larger families are stronger in their opinion that religion is an efficient agency for inculcating stability in society. As revealed in Table No. 6.7.5, while 60.92% of the small families (number of members, 4 or less) ascribe greater role to religion in the creation of social stability.

This figure goes up to 76.24% when we come to medium size family (4 – 6 members) and 77.42% when we come to large size families.

Why the smaller families take lightly the role of religion in the matter (comparatively only) is a moot question to be deliberated over. It may be easier for small families to socialise their youngsters by themselves. Similarly, the younger members may have great influence on the parents or older members. This inter-generational integration gives greater stability to the family without the influence of external agents including religion. The case of larger families may be different in the sense that they have to fall back on agencies like religion for socialising their members. Ultimately, the families see religion as a reliable agency for social stability.

Table no. 6.7.5
Family Size and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability

| Family size | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 members | 145 (60.92%) | 75 (31.51%) | 18 (7.56%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 138 (76.24%) | 37 (20.44%) | 6 (3.31%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 24 (77.42%) | 6 (19.35%) | 1 (3.23%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value =13.02 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.7.6: Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion on the Role of Religion in Creating Social Stability:

Attitude category based analysis of the outlook reveals that the variables are associated. 41.18% of those who are indifferent to religion feel that the institution has no role in stabilising society. The figure increases to 50.72% when come to the “Lukewarm” category. The strength becomes 74.19% in the case of those who have favourable attitude towards religion. There is a sudden increase in the figure to 88.46% when we reach the “highly favourable” category. In short, the faith in the role of religion is very much depending on the attitude. The conclusion is further confirmed by the fact that 23.53% of the “indifferent category” feels that religion has no role at all in the matter. The corresponding figure in the case of other attitude categories does not cross the figure of 8%. It can be inferred that 88.46% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters that religion has great role in creating social stability in the society.

Table No. 6.7.6
Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion on the Role of
Religion in Creating Social Stability

| Attitude | Religion has great role | Religion has some role | Religion has no role | Total |
|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 7 (41.18%) | 6 (35.29%) | 4 (23.53%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 70 (50.72%) | 57 (41.30%) | 11 (7.97%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 161 (74.19%) | 47 (21.66%) | 9 (4.15%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 69 (88.46%) | 8 (10.26%) | 1 (1.28%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 307 (68.22%) | 118 (26.22%) | 25 (5.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 50.32 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Income, Marital Status and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

6.8: Religion and Spread of Education:

From ancient past onwards Religion was participating in the task of educating society. Prior to the spread of modern education, *Padasalas* and *Madrasas* were respectively responsible for educating the Hindu and Muslim communities. By the exodus of British rule and spread of English education, the Christian community also rubbed shoulders with other communities in this task. Now the three communities are running educational Institutions of various types, though the missionary zeal they had been showing in the past is not seen.

In this back ground, an enquiry was carried out to assess the extent of appreciation the people have for the role played by Religious organisation in this regard. The analysis reveals that 56.67% of the respondents have great appreciation for the role played by religion. Another 30% stated that they have some what good appreciation. Only 13.33% have no appreciation for the work done by religion for the spread of education. When we consolidate the results it is to be stated that religion is an effective agency for spreading education (Table No. 6.8.1).

6.8.1: Age Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the Religion in the Spread of Education:

Age wise analysis of the data indicates that majority of all the age groups considered, except the lower middle age group, expressed very high appreciation for the good work done by religion in the spread of education in the Society. In the case of lower

middle age group 45.58% only expressed very high appreciation. 39.46% of them are not that much pleased with the work done by the Institution. One more result about this group is that those stated that the work is not appreciable are almost proportional to the segment of other age groups. A further perusal of the results shows that the appreciation is grater at the upper strata.

While 59.21% of the lowest group and 60.47% of the lower – upper (45 – 60) group highly appreciate religion’s role the corresponding figure in the case of the uppermost group (60 – 75) soar up to 66.33%.

The results imply that in the past religious groups had undertaken selfless and highly committed actions for the propagation of good education. The role played in the past remains ever green in the minds o the older people. But recently, the profit motive over takes the missionary zeal of religion in the matter and that is reflected in the response of the younger members of the Society. It is known to everyone that by the popularisation of the self financing educational Institution, education has become a business and not a service.

Table no. 6.8.1
Age Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the
Religion in the Spread of Education

| Age (in years) | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 45 (59.21%) | 20 (26.32%) | 11 (14.47%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 67 (45.58%) | 58 (39.46%) | 22 (14.97%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 78 (60.47%) | 33 (25.58%) | 18 (13.95%) | 129 (100%) |

| | | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 60 – 75 | 65 (66.33%) | 24 (24.49%) | 9 (9.18%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.45 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.8.2: Religious Affiliation and Appreciation for the Role Played by the Religion in the Spread of Education:

One projecting result of the analysis of the data based on Religious Affiliation is that the Hindus keep themselves aloof from the main stream opinion of the respondents. Only 30.67% of the group expressed that they have great appreciation for the work done by Religion in the promotion of education. The corresponding figures in respect of the Muslims and Christians are 70.67% and 68.67% respectively. 28.67% of the Hindus do not express any appreciation in the work of Religion in this matter. The figures in respect of the Muslims are 7.33% and 4% respectively.

What shall be the possible reason for the division of opinion between Hindu Religious groups and Semitic Religious groups is a pertinent question here. As everybody acknowledges, in the spread of modern education the Christian community has been taking pioneering efforts. Of late, the Muslims also came to the scene. Investment and enthusiasm shown by Hindu community is comparatively less. However, recently certain revival movements of Hindu Religion also are taking part in the promotion of modern education in this part of the country. It is to be inferred that the Semitic groups are feeling self esteem in the work done in this matter. This is particularly because most of the Institutions are owned by the communities and not by individual members. In the case of Hindus, such an esteem may not be existing among the members because they could not create such an esprit-de-corps.

Table no. 6.8.2
Religious Affiliation and Appreciation for the Role Played by the
Religion in the Spread of Education

| Religious Affiliation | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 46 (30.67%) | 61 (40.67%) | 43 (28.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 106 (70.67%) | 33 (22.00%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 103 (68.67%) | 41 (27.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 76.44% df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P <= 0.05
 The Association is significant

6.8.3: Educational Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the Religion in the Spread of Education:

An enquiry into the association of the outlook with the educational status reveals that the respondents with lower educational status are more attracted by the efforts taken by Religion in the spread of education. As revealed in analysis Table No.6.8.3, while 69% of the below SSLC educated respondents highly appreciate the Religion in this context, only 51.25% of the HSSLC and 53.70% of the College educated respondents come under this group. 16.25% of the former and 15.19% of the latter groups refuse to recognise the role of religions in this regard. The figure in respect of below SSLC group is only 6%.

The below SSLC group may be assessing the service (work) rendered by religion in the field in terms of the number of educational Institutions functioning under

the aegis of the organisation and the number of persons benefited out of them. They may not look at the functioning of the system critically in the sense that the power and money involved in it. But the post SSLC educated groups are analysing the money and power transactions in the functioning of the system, especially in the so called self-financing professional system and deemed to be a University Organisation. This type of analysis creates a divide in the outlook of the school and post school educated categories.

Table no.6.8.3
Educational Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the
Religion in the Spread of Education

| Educational Status | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|--------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 69 (69.00%) | 25 (25.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 41 (51.25%) | 26 (32.50%) | 13 (16.25%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 145 (53.70%) | 84 (31.11%) | 41 (15.19%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.87 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.8.4: Occupational Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the Religion in the Spread of Education:

Occupational difference can create difference in the perception of people on the role played by religion and the appreciation shown by them towards the work done in the area of educating people – the study reveals. In analysis (Table No. 6.8.4), it is revealed that 72.09% of the Manual Labourers (very high majority) and 54.92% of the White Collar employees (mere majority) have great appreciation for the work done by religion in the spread of education. In the case of the professionally educated, the group

having the outlook comes only to 48% (below the majority line). Those who do not appreciate the role of Religion among the Manual Labourers category are constituted by only 5.81%. But the figures in respect of the White Collar employees and professionals are respectively 14.77% and 16%.

Generally the Manual Labourers consists of the lower educated categories (usually the school educated). In the case of others, they are higher educated. So the explanation given under the previous analysis (Table No. 6.8.3) may be applicable here too. In the case of professional education, particularly Medical and Engineering, Religion run Institutions show no service mindedness. The Institutions are anything like business organisations.

Table no. 6.8.4
Occupational Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the
Religion in the Spread of Education

| Occupational Status | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 62 (72.09%) | 19 (22.09%) | 5 (5.81%) | 86 (100%) |
| White collar employees | 145 (54.92%) | 80 (30.30%) | 39 (14.77%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 48 (48.00%) | 36 (36.00%) | 16 (16.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 12.67 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

6.8.5: Income Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the Religion in the Spread of Education:

There is a definite pattern in the relationship between Income Status and strength of appreciation for the efforts taken by religion in the spread of

education – analysis Table No. 6.8.5 reveals. It is seen that the lesser the income, the greater the strength of appreciation for the efforts taken. 74.53% of the lowest income category (Rs. <3000/-) have very great appreciation for the work done by Religion. The figure decreases gradually as we go up to the highest income group (Rs.9000/- and above). 55.29% is the figure in respect of the Rs.3000 – 6000 category. It comes down to 50.72% in the case of Rs.6000 – 9000 group and finally declines to 38.81% against the highest income group. If we analyse the “somewhat appreciating group” a reverse relationship between income status and the appreciation is discernible.

Table no. 6.8.5
Income Status and Appreciation for the Role Played by the
Religion in the Spread of Education

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 79 (74.53%) | 24 (22.64%) | 3 (2.83%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 115 (55.29%) | 60 (28.85%) | 33 (15.87%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 35 (50.72%) | 20 (28.99%) | 14 (20.29%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 26 (38.81%) | 31 (46.27%) | 10 (14.93%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 30.58 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P < 0.01
The Association is significant

This perspectival difference of the group may be the out come of the practice that the higher income groups prefer to send their ward for education to Institutions where heavy payments are received, whether the Institutions are run by Religious Institutions or not. So they do not feel that the providers are rendering any service. The lower income groups may be enjoying the free service extended by agencies including religious organisations.

6.8.6: Attitude Towards Religion and the Role of Religion in the Spread of Education:

When the data was analysed on the basis of the attitude categories, very similar results to that obtained in analysis No. 6.7.6 have got. It shows that as the affinity to religion increases the appreciation for the role played by religion in the spread of education increase. Among the indifferent category only 17.65% expressed that religion has played a highly appreciable role in the spread of education. For comparison if we take the highly favourable category the corresponding figure is 74.36%. On the contrary, 41.18% of the former group stated that the role of religion in the matter is not at all appreciable. The figure in the case of the latter category is only 3.85% (Table No. 6.8.6).

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

Table No. 6.8.6
Attitude Towards Religion and the Role of Religion in the
Spread of Education

| Attitude | Highly appreciable | Appreciable | Not appreciable | Total |
|-------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 3 (17.65%) | 7 (41.18%) | 7 (41.18%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 55 (39.86%) | 50 (36.23%) | 33 (23.91%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 139 (64.06%) | 61 (28.11%) | 17 (7.83%) | 217 (100%) |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Highly favourable | 58 (74.36%) | 17 (21.79%) | 3 (3.85%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 255 (56.67%) | 135 (30.00%) | 60 (13.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 54.00 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

6.9: Religion and Status of Women:

Women have been suffering from various disabilities since time immemorial due to various reasons. Religion was considered as one of the contributors to this menace. In this study an enquiry was conducted to identify the way the people in the area look upon religion in this regard. The respondents were asked “does religion adversely affect the status of women in Society?” Two responses were got, namely “does not affect adversely” and “does affect adversely”. While an overwhelming majority 87.78% feel that religion in no way affects the status of women, a minority of 12.22% respondents stated that Religion affects the status of women adversely. Inductively we can come to the conclusion that the people of the area do not have the impression that religion is causal for the deterioration of the status of women in society.

Now in Kerala State, where the study was conducted, religion is practiced by the people without affecting the status of any particular section including women. However, it is a truism that during the first half of the 20th century, even in Kerala religion was discriminating women as a backward ignorant class. However, the strong

political and social reform movements emerged in this part of the country eradicated such evil practices promoted by Religion.

6.9.1: Religious Affiliation and Outlook on the Adverse Impact of Religion on the Status of Women:

Analyses were carried out to find out the association of the outlook with the background variables selected in this study. The analyses revealed that variables except Religious Affiliation have no association with the dependent variables. The details of the association of the Religious Affiliation are given in Table No. 6.9.1. The rest of the analyses are not reported here.

Analysis Table No.6.9.1 shows that majority of all the religious groups in unequivocal terms state that Religion does not adversely affect the status of women. However, there is relative difference in the opinion of the Semitic Religious groups and the Hindus. While 91.33% each of the Christians and Muslims state that religion does not affect the status of women adversely only 80.66% of the Hindus subscribe to the view. The findings are interesting due to the fact that the Semitic religious groups are highly patriarchal and it is considered that where there is patriarchy, there is subordination of the status of women. Many groups of the Hindus are matriarchal and according to the above presumption mother (women) is more honoured in such a community. Had the presumptions been true, the results in the analysis should have been in the other way round.

Another reason for the type of outlook of the Hindus may be that created by caste structure of the community (which is unique for Hindus). Caste Hindus were reluctant to allow their women to freely mingle with the community in the past. Widowed women were suffering many other disabilities. In the case of out caste Hindus, their women were exploited in many ways by other groups. All these factors may be manoeuvring the perspective of the group to look upon religion as a hazard for women. Other background variables are not related.

Table no. 6.9.1
Religious Affiliation and out look on the Adverse Impact of
Religion on the Status of Women

| Religious Affiliation | Very much affects adversely | To some extent affects adversely | Does not affect adversely | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 10 (6.67%) | 19 (12.67%) | 121 (80.66%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 8 (5.33%) | 5 (3.33%) | 137 (91.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 6 (4.00%) | 7 (4.67%) | 137 (91.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 24 (5.33%) | 31 (6.89%) | 395 (87.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 13.39 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P< = 0.01
 The Association is significant

6.9.2: Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on the Adverse Impact of Religion on the Status of Women:

How does the attitude towards religion affect the outlook of people on the adverse impact of religion on the status of women in society has been explored in the study. The results show that majority of all the attitude categories do not believe that religion has any adverse impact on the status of women. However, there is great variation in the strength of the segment among the attitude categories. 64.71% of the indifferent group do not believe that religion has such an impact. The figure goes up to 78.99% in the context of the lukewarm category, 92.63% in the case of favourable category and 94.87% in the case of the highly favourable category. A very systematically reverse trend in the responses can be seen if we take the perspective that religion very much affects the status of women. Association is certain according to the statistical test applied (Chi-square statistic).

Table No.6.9.2
Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on the Adverse Impact of Religion on the Status of Women

| Attitude | Very much affects adversely | to some extent affects adversely | Does not affect adversely | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 4 (23.53%) | 2 (11.76%) | 11 (64.71%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 11 (7.97%) | 18 (13.04%) | 109 (78.99%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 6 (2.76%) | 10 (4.61%) | 201 (92.63%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 3 (3.85%) | 1 (1.28%) | 74 (94.87%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 24 (5.33%) | 31 (6.89%) | 395 (87.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 32.00 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

Summary:

As far as the perception on the unifying power of religion is concerned it is seen that the males are more emphasising this power of religion than the females do. An enquiry into the relationship between age and the perception shows that there is a general trend of seeing religion as a unifying force to a greater extent among the older people. The study indicates that the Muslims feel religion as more a unifying agent. Also the lower the educational attainment, the stronger the feeling that religion is a unifying force in society and the faith in the unifying power of religion is more among the larger families.

Regarding the function of promoting charity, the perception of the Muslims is far ahead of the others. The Christians come next and Hindus third. Also from the analysis it is revealed that religion has the capacity to promote environmental cleanliness and the Muslims are strong supporters of the view that religion is a cleanliness maintaining agent. The analysis reveals that the greater the positive attitude towards religion, the higher the appreciation for the power of religion to promote human love.

The study indicates that the people of Kerala have many reservations in projecting religion as a strong agency of social control. Analysis of the data based on the age status reveals that at the upper age brackets the opinion that religion is very important in maintaining social stability is stronger. Coming to the relationship between education and the perception, it is seen that the lesser educated people are stronger in their support to religion as an agency for fostering social stability.

Also on the basis of the results of the study it is to be stated that religion is an effective agency for spreading education. The study acknowledges that in the spread of modern education the Christian community has been taking pioneering efforts.

Again the study comes to the conclusion that the people of the Kerala do not have the impression that religion is causal for the deterioration of the status of women in society.

Increasing Worldliness in Religion
Chapter – 7

Chapter – VII

INCREASING WORLDLINESS IN RELIGION

As the case of every other institution, religion also has negative contributions to the Society. In this Chapter the researcher attempts to reveal in what all ways it impacts upon the society and create negative results.

7.1: Religion – politics nexus:

Religion should be the play ground of spirituality. In contemporary Society religion has become the centre stage for many worldly activities and hence the pious profile of it is considerably lost. When worldly interests are pumped into the society through religion, it becomes even instrumental for competition, conflict and human killings which are diametrically opposite to the known function of religion.

A recent trend that is observable in the religious activities is that they reflect the thirst for power and enjoyment. Religion therefore, rubs shoulders with politics. This study enquired into the after effect of the inter-relationship between the two institutions. The respondents were asked to reveal their perspective on the issue.

The elicited responses on analysis reveal that an overwhelming majority believe that the ethics of religion are lost due to this interaction (82.44%). The rest (17.56%), however, believe the other way round (Table No. 7.1.1). The outward activities of religion may become vibrant when it is sandwiched with politics. This might

be the reason for the perspective of the minor group. But they may not be taking into consideration the fact that true Religion is not interested in exposition, rather it is the purifying agent of human mind.

Subsidiary analyses were carried out to reveal the relationship of the outlook with the sociological variables and it was seen that it is associated with three variables, viz. Age, Religious Affiliations and Marital Status. These analyses are discussed in detail in the following sections.

7.1.1: Age Status and Perception on the Relationship between Religion and Politics:

It is a well established fact that age status influences the perceptions of people on various matters. This analysis starts with the premise that the age status is a determinant of the outlook of the people on the issue under consideration. An analysis to test the presumption as shown in Table No. 7.1.1 was conducted and it escalated certain results.

The analysis reveals that there is clear pattern in the relationship between the two variables, the younger the people the greater their anxiety over the erosion of religious ethics due to the influence of politics

An explanation for the result may be that the older are better adapted to the changing situations through their life experiences. As we know in the present Indian Society the relationship between the two domains is getting stronger. So the older generation are adjusting with the change by upholding the view that the relationship may be for the better.

Table no. 7.1.1

**Age Status and Perception on the Relationship between
Religion and Politics**

| Age (in years) | Religious ethics would be spoiled | The ethics will become vibrant | Total |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 68 (89.47%) | 8 (10.53%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 126 (85.71%) | 21 (14.29%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 104 (80.62%) | 25 (19.38%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 73 (74.49%) | 25 (25.51%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 371 (82.44%) | 79 (17.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 8.26 df = 3 Table value = 7.81 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

**7.1.2: Religious Affiliation and Perception on the Relationship between
Religion and Politics:**

Religious affiliation of an individual is a strong determining agency of his/her perspective on socio-political matters. In this study an attempt was carried out to identify the relationship, if any, existing between the religious background and the outlook towards the issue of the consequences of religion – politics interplay.

The data analysis as shown in Table No. 7.1.2 reveals that the Hindus, Muslims and Christians, in that order can be arranged in a hierarchy on the basis of the strength of their belief that the contribution of religion – politics interplay is detrimental to the religious ethics.

Table no. 7.1.2
**Religious Affiliation and Perception on the Relationship between
Religion and Politics**

| Religious | Religious ethics | The ethics will | Total |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|-------|
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|-------|

| Affiliation | would be spoiled | become vibrant | |
|-------------|------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 137 (91.33%) | 13 (8.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 129 (86.00%) | 21 (14.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 105 (70.00%) | 45 (30.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 371 (82.44%) | 79 (17.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value =25.55 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

Hindu Religion is inert towards material and power relationship. It is highly spiritual oriented though recently a turning trend is seen here and there. Naturally the concern of the religion is very much understandable. Among the two other sensitive religious followers, the Muslim community is a trading group and the Christian is more interested in power relations and domination. Their contact with the government is to be kept augmented as they had many institutions which are under government scanner. These ways the perceptions of the communities may be explained.

7.1.3: Marital status and Perception on the Relationship between Religion and Politics:

Marriage brings in maturity in thinking and activities of a person. This is because they have to look at varies liabilities and responsibilities towards the other person. On the basis of this perception it was assumed that the opinion of the people on the present theme may be divided among married and unmarried individuals. Accordingly the data was analysed to establish the veracity of the assumption. The analysis is given in Table No. 7.1.3

Table no. 7.1.3

Marital Status and Perception on the Relationship between

Religion and Politics

| Marital status | Religious ethics would be spoiled | The ethics will become vibrant | Total |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Married | 297 (80.49%) | 72 (19.51%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 74 (91.36%) | 7 (8.64%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 371 (82.44%) | 79 (17.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 5.42 df = 1 Table value= 3.84 P< = 0.05
The Association is significant

As revealed in Table No.7.1.3, a higher proportion of unmarried respondents (91.36%) subscribe to the view that political affiliation of religion will be a threat to ethical principles. The corresponding fraction in the case of married respondents is 80.49%. The difference between the perspectives is significant according to the statistical test conducted.

As pointed out earlier at the beginning, the married persons will be compromising with the changes in the ideologies and practices.

7.1.4: Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Relationship Between Religion and Politics:

Attitude towards religion and outlook on the relationship between religion and politics are associated – the study reveals. It is seen in Table No. 7.1.4 that in general those who have more affinity to religion are more against the religion – politics nexus and vice versa. The reason for this relationship may be that those who consider religion as a pious organisation wants to prevent the intrusion of any external ideology which

spoils its sanctity. But in the case of those who have no faith in religion, it is merely an organisation of people and there is the possibility for political mileage if politics – religion honey-moon is materialised.

Table No. 7.1.4
Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Relationship
Between Religion and Politics

| Attitude | Religious ethics would be spoiled | The ethics will become vibrant | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Indifferent | 12 (70.59%) | 5 (29.41%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 126 (91.30%) | 12 (8.70%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 165 (76.04%) | 52 (23.96%) | 217 1(100%) |
| Highly favourable | 68 (87.18%) | 10 (12.82%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 371 (82.44%) | 79 (17.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 16.50 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.2: Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Formations:

Another index of adverse impact of religion is the after effect of accumulation of material wealth by religious groups. The present trend of all religious groups is that they visualise the power and prestige brought about by the accumulation of wealth and struggle to heap up resources are necessary. If we borrow from Marx the rich become richer easily and the gap between the two poles will become wider. This would create tension between the parties and precipitate in various forms. This is applicable to religious communities also. In fact, much of the tension between religious communities

in our country is the product of the anxiety that who will control the wealth and who will suffer at the hands of the rich.

On this issue the study made some in-roads. The respondents were asked to reveal their concern about the economic activities of religious groups.

The results of the enquiry were according to the expectations. 78% of the respondents highlighted the adverse impact of the trend. They pointed out that disproportionate accumulation of material wealth by this kind of organisations nullify their spiritual and humanistic orientations and create rivalry and unhealthy competitions among the groups. Naturally, this will pave way for social decay. Another 18% stated that they feel this type of greedy accumulation of wealth ultimately will end up in the fight between religious groups. However, a meagre portion of 4% does not see any adverse impact for the non-ethical economic activities of Religions. On consolidation of the views, it is to be concluded that the true function of religion is vitiated by religion when it goes out of its expected domain (Table 7.2.1).

On further analyses five background variables indicated their association with the perspectives and these variables are Gender, Religion, Educational Status, Occupational Status and Family Size.

7.2.1: Gender and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

In order to identify the type of relationship existing between gender difference and the outlook an analysis of the data (Table No. 7.2.1) was carried out. It is revealed that 80.70% of the male members and 73.33% of the female members are of the

view that it is adverse to the spirit of religion to accumulate wealth beyond what is absolutely necessary. The lion's share of both the groups has the same opinion. However, it is seen that the male members are more concerned about the process than their female counterparts are. Regarding the extreme adverse impact, the two groups uphold almost the same outlook. Among those expressed the view that the accumulation will not affect the social fabric, the females have a slight edge over their male counterparts (18.79% and 17.54% respectively). The difference in the outlook of the two groups may be because of the fact that the females are not that much thinking about the inter-relations between the economic and other social activities. Marxian principle of economic determinism is not affecting them to the extent affected by the males.

Table no. 7.2.1
Gender and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of
Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Gender | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|--------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Female | 121 (73.33%) | 31 (18.79%) | 13 (7.88%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 230 (80.70%) | 50 (17.54%) | 5 (1.75%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 351 (78.00%) | 81 (18.00%) | 18 (4.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 10.62 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
 The Association is significant

7.2.2: Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

Religion wise analysis of the data shows that there is association between the religious background and outlook on the matter (Table 7.2.2). The analysis indicates that group rivalry as an off-shoot is more emphasised by the Hindus (89.33%), the difference in the opinion among the followers of migrated Religions (Muslims and Christians) is lesser on the theme (76% and 68.67% respectively). Too much greed for material wealth of religions is for the aggravation of social pathology, which is highlighted by 20% of the Muslims and 24.67% of the Christians. The corresponding figure in respect of the Hindus is 9.33%. The outlook of Muslims and Christians is comparatively closer while that of the Hindus is deviating considerably from others. It is to be inferred that the inter-relation between economic activities and social harmony is more known to the migrated Religions.

Table no. 7.2.2

Religious Affiliation and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Religious Affiliation | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 134 (89.33%) | 14 (9.33%) | 2 (1.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 114 (76.00%) | 30 (20.00%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 103 (68.67%) | 37 (24.67%) | 10 (6.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 351 (78.00%) | 81 (18.00%) | 18 (4.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 19.85 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P < = 0.01
The Association is significant

7.2.3: Educational Status and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of

Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

Another analysis was aimed at revealing the relationship between educational status and the outlook on unnecessary accumulation of material wealth by Religious groups. The analysis (Table No. 7.2.3) indicates that the Secondary and below educated and the College educated respondents have similar view that it will enhance animosity between religions. In the case of Higher Secondary group the figure is slightly lower than the other two figures (71.25%). Comparatively higher proportions of them believe that the accumulation has no after effect (10%). The proportions in the case of up to S S L C educated are 78% and College educated are 80% respectively. On the whole it is revealed that educational attainment is one of the factors, which influence the perception on the matter.

Table no. 7.2.3
Educational Status and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of
Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Educational Status | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 78 (78.00%) | 19 (19.00%) | 3 (3.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 57 (71.25%) | 15 (18.75%) | 8 (10.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 216 (80.00%) | 47 (17.41%) | 7 (2.59%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 351 (78.00%) | 81 (18.00%) | 18 (4.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.53 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<=0.05
 The association is significant.

7.2.4: Occupational Status and Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

Affiliation to a particular occupational group can affect the outlook of people on various matters. In this study an analysis carried out to find out the influence of the occupational culture on the opinion about the after effect of accumulation of material resources by religious groups revealed that the two are significantly associated. Overwhelming majority of the groups (Manual, White Collar and Professional) viewed that the process will escalate enmity between religious groups. This opinion seems to be more among professional groups and lesser among manual labourers. The white collar employees come in between the other two. A more grave consequence (disproportionate development and factionalism) is highlighted by 24.42% of the manual labourers. The portions among the White Collar employees and Professional who subscribed to the view are respectively 17.42% and 14%. The analysis indicates that all the occupational categories smell the danger of escalating religious rivalry by the accumulation of material wealth by religious groups. The apprehension is more strong among the manual labourers.

Table no. 7.2.4
Occupational Status and the Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of
Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Occupational Status | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 63 (73.26%) | 21 (24.42%) | 2 (2.33%) | 86 (100%) |
| White Collar Employees | 202 (76.52%) | 46 (17.42%) | 16 (6.06%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 86 (86.00%) | 14 (14.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 351 | 81 | 18 | 450 |

| | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| | (78.00%) | (18.00%) | (4.00%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|---------|--------|

Chi-square value = 11.45 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P <= 0.05

The Association is significant

7.2.5: Family size and the Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

Family size is assumed to have association with the outlook for the reason that the type of socialisation vary with the family size. Accordingly, the analysis conducted (Table No.7.2.5) reveals that the variables are associated. It is seen that the larger families are more perceiving the grave situation of social disruption that is created by the acquisition of wealth disproportionately by the religious groups. 25.81% of the families with six or more members subscribe to the view that the economic activities will create social aggrandisement. The figures in respect of the small and middle size families are respectively 18.49% and 16.02%. The statistical test of association confirms the association between the variables.

Table no. 7.2.5
Family Size Status and the Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Family size | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 Members | 190 (79.83%) | 44 (18.49%) | 4 (1.68%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 - 6 Members | 141 (77.90%) | 29 (16.02%) | 11 (6.08%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above Members | 20 (64.52%) | 8 (25.81%) | 3 (9.68%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 351 (78.00%) | 81 (18.00%) | 18 (4.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.95 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P <= 0.05

The Association is significant

7.2.6: Attitude Towards Religion and the Outlook on Unnecessary Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups:

When the data was analysed on the basis of the attitude two groups were found polarised. The “indifferent” and the “favourable” groups and the “lukewarm” and the “highly favourable” have similar outlook. 76.47% and 70.05% respectively of the “indifferent” and “favourable” groups believe that acquisition of material wealth beyond a certain limit enhances enmity between religious groups. The strength of the factions belonging to the “lukewarm” and “highly favourable” is almost the same (86.23% and 85.05% respectively). Similar patterning can be seen under the other response too. 23.53% and 23.96% respectively of the “indifferent” and “favourable” groups believe that acquisition of material wealth beyond a certain limit will create differently developed groups in the society. That is, the “indifferent” and the “favourable” come closer. The other two attitude categories also show similar orientation. An explanation of dissimilar group expressing similar orientation can be given only after further probing.

Table No. 7.2.6
Attitude Towards Religion and the Outlook on Unnecessary
Accumulation of Material Wealth by Religious Groups

| Attitude | Enhance the enmity between religions. | Create differently developed groups in the society. | It will in no way affect the society | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 13 (76.47%) | 4 (23.53%) | 0 (0.00%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 119 (86.23%) | 15 (10.87%) | 4 (2.90%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 152 (70.05%) | 52 (23.96%) | 13 (5.99%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 67 (85.90%) | 10 (12.82%) | 1 (1.26%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 351 | 81 | 18 | 450 |

| | | | | |
|--|----------|----------|---------|--------|
| | (78.00%) | (18.00%) | (4.00%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|---------|--------|

Chi-square value = 17.91 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

7.3: Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious Groups:

Apart from the spiritual need satisfaction religions have a charity profile. They collect resources and help the needy in what all possible ways. But it is doubted that this is a past story. Now religious groups collect resources in the name of charity without using them for the purpose for which they are mobilised. The resources are apportioned among corrupt functionaries of religious groups and by this religion become a promoter of economic corruption and profiteering.

This study attempted to analyse the perception of the people on this adverse impact of religion. When the collected data was analysed it was revealed that 54.22% of the respondents believe that economic activities of religion in the name of charity is creating economic inequality within the group and also among the wider Society. The poor is not benefited by the economic activities of religious groups in the name of charity – 38.67% opined. Only 7.11% expressed their opinion that religions by their economic activities help the poor to tide over the bad economic condition (Table No.7.3.1). The results reveal that the people perceive the economic activities of religion as pastures of corruption and social injustice.

7.3.1: Gender and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious Groups:

Opinion on religious matters is particularly gender based. In this study it is assumed that the opinion on money transaction by religious groups in the name of charity is associated with gender difference. On the basis of the presumption the

relevant data collected was analysed as shown in Table No.7.3.1. The analysis in unequivocal term indicates that the variables are associated. The analysis indicates that majority of the males and the highest portion of the females (58.60% and 46.67% respectively) highlight that economic injustice will be promoted by this activity because it causes enjoyment of material resources by undeserving sections of the society while the deserving will be cast out of their enjoyment. 43.03% of the females and 36.14% of the males opine that the poor will not be benefited by the money transactions of any religious group.

Table No. 7.3.1
Gender and Opinion about Money Transaction in the
Name of Charity by Religious groups

| Gender | Enhances the economic injustice | No use to the poor | Benefit the poor | Total |
|--------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Female | 77 (46.67%) | 71 (43.03%) | 17 (10.30%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 167 (58.60%) | 103 (36.14%) | 15 (5.26%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 244 (54.22%) | 174 (38.67%) | 32 (7.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 7.76 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P < = 0.01
The Association is significant

7.3.2: Religious Affiliation and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious groups:

An individual's perceptions on various matters are prompted by the various socio-cultural profiles of his/her group. Religion being an important socio-cultural parameter is assumed to have influence on the theme under consideration. The testing of the assumption was carried out by analysing the data as shown in Table No. 7.3.2. The analysis clearly indicates that the outlook is associated with the religious

background. The Hindus very strongly (66.67%) indicate that money transaction by religion under the pretext Charity can enhance social injustice. It is found that 55.33% of the Muslims and 40.67% Christians also have the same view. Conventionally, Hindu religion had been keeping money and material resources away from its activities. The activities were oriented to the well-being in the other world. Similarly, though Muslims are by and large traders they were not thinking about capital formation. But Christian ethics have no hesitation to think about capital accumulation. So the different approaches of different religious groups may be prompting to think them in various ways. It is interesting to note that the highest section of the Christians (47.33%) uphold the view that money transaction will not benefit the poor.

Table no. 7.3.2
Religious Affiliation and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name
of Charity by Religious groups

| Religious Affiliation | Enhance the economic injustice | No use to the poor | Benefit the poor | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 100 (66.67%) | 44 (29.33%) | 6 (4.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 83 (55.33%) | 59 (39.33%) | 8 (5.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 61 (40.67%) | 71 (47.33%) | 18 (12.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 244 (54.22%) | 174 (38.67%) | 32 (7.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.46 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.3.3: Occupational Status and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious groups:

Analysis on occupational status and the opinion reveals that there is association between the variables. Here as seen in Table No. 7.3.3 the Professional group distinguish itself from other two groups. Coming to the responses (50% of the professionals, the highest faction of them) indicate that the money transaction in no way is helpful to improve the conditions of the poor people. Only 31.40% of the Manual Labourers and 36.74% of the White Collar employees come under the category. Why the professionals do not emphasise the injustice aspect is a question that is to be first interpreted. This might be due to the fact that the capital formation created by free flow of money only could have been taken into consideration by them. Those who have the skill for accumulating capital become successful and hence there is no question of injustice. It is found that 44% of the professionals and 56.98% and 57.20% respectively of the Manual Labourers and White Collar employees subscribe to the view that money transaction by religious groups in the name of charity increases social inequality and hence escalate social injustice. However, they are conscious that the transactions are in no way helpful to the poor. The question of poor is secondary to the White Collars and Manual Labourers, they feel that the transaction promotes injustice and that issue is to be addressed first.

Table no. 7.3.3
Occupational Status and Opinion about Money Transaction in
the Name of Charity by Religious groups

| Occupational Status | Enhances the economic injustice | No use to the poor | Benefit the poor | Total |
|---------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-------|
| Manual | 49 | 27 | 10 | 86 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Labourers | (56.98%) | (31.40%) | (11.63%) | (100%) |
| White Collar Employees | 151 (57.20%) | 97 (36.74%) | 16 (6.06%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 44 (44.00%) | 50 (50.00%) | 6 (6.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 244 (54.22%) | 174 (38.67%) | 32 (7.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 10.28 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

7.3.4: Marital Status and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious groups:

When association between marital status and the opinion were taken and tested for association, the study revealed positive results. The two categories the married and unmarried have different outlooks. Majority of the former group give more emphasis on their injustice brought about by the activity (56.10%). The corresponding figure in respect of the latter group is 45.68%. In the unmarried group those who believe that the transaction is in no way advantageous to the poor have a slight edge over the other category. The married persons may better knowing the connection between money transaction and social injustice as they are care takers of family – smaller or larger in size.

Table no. 7.3.4
Marital status and Opinion about Money Transaction in the
Name of Charity by Religious groups

| Marital status | Enhance the economic injustice | No use to the poor | Benefit the poor | Total |
|----------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Married | 207 (56.10%) | 133 (36.04%) | 29 (7.86%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 37 | 41 | 3 | 81 |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (45.68%) | (50.62%) | (3.70%) | (100%) |
| Total | 244 (54.22%) | 174 (38.67%) | 32 (7.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.59 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

7.3.5: Family Size and Opinion about Money Transaction in the Name of Charity by Religious groups:

Analysis of Table No. 7.3.5 attempts testing of relationship between family size and the opinion. It indicates that smaller families are feeling more about the injustice brought about by the money dealings of religions. It is found that 55.04% of the families with members up to 4 feel that injustice is the major vices of the cash transaction. Majority of the middle size family follow suit of the former. However, majority of the larger size families (64.52%) highlight the contradiction in the preachings and practices of religions in the backdrop of this issue. Religions of all colours preach that they are for salvaging the poor from all types of sufferings, including those created by shortage of material resources at their disposal. However, the money transactions by all religious groups ignore the welfare of the poor.

Table no. 7.3.5
Family Size and Opinion about Money Transaction in the
Name of Charity by Religious groups

| Family size | Enhance the economic injustice | No use to the poor | Benefit the poor | Total |
|-------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|
| Up to 4 Members | 131 (55.04%) | 89 (37.39%) | 18 (7.56%) | 238 (100%) |
| 4 – 6 Members | 102 (56.35%) | 65 (35.91%) | 14 (7.73%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above Members | 11 (35.48%) | 20 (64.52%) | 0 (0.00%) | 31 (100%) |

| | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Total | 244 (54.22%) | 174 (38.67%) | 32 (7.11%) | 450 (100%) |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|

Chi-square value = 10.37 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Income and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

7.4: Androcentricity of Religion:

It is the general impression that all religions are promoting male domination. Mostly, the religious teachings are centred around certain male characters, be the religion, Hinduism, Islam or Christianity. Though in polytheistic religions, female characters at times play the central roles – the ultimate authority is a male figure.

In this study an investigation was made as to how far religions propagate androcentricism. The result indicates (Table No.7.4.1) that the general feeling is true. 44% of the respondents feel that religions give equal importance to both male and female. Another 50.22% (majority) feel that males are given importance by religion. The rest 5.78% did not respond to the query.

Subsidiary analyses reveal that four variables, viz. Gender, Age, Religion and Marital Status are associated with the opinion. The association between the variables are discussed in the following sections.

7.4.1: Gender and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions:

Testing of the hypothesis that gender difference and the outlook are associated was carried out as shown in Table No.7.4.1. The instability of the hypothesis is sure as revealed by the statistical test. Majority of the females (52.12%) feel that

religions only give secondary importance to females. Interestingly, those who subscribe to the view among males also have a slight edge over those who believe in the other way round.

Table No. 7.4.1
Gender and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions

| Gender | Equal importance to man and woman | Secondary importance to woman | Refused to respond | Total |
|--------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Female | 64 (38.79%) | 86 (52.12%) | 15 (9.09%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 134 (47.02%) | 140 (49.12%) | 11 (3.86%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 198 (44.00%) | 226 (50.22%) | 26 (5.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 6.75 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

7.4.2: Age Status and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions:

Age-wise analysis of the outlook reveals that females are subsidiary according to religious percept increases with age. However, the upper age group is an exception to this rule. The lowest segment of this group compared to the others, come under this category. The youngsters may not be closely interacting with religion and it may be creating such impression in them. In the case of seniors their conscience of sex or gender might have vanished and they may not be looking at the issue from the dichotomy of male-female. The youths and middle aged people interact between them taking account of sex or gender difference. An octogenarian sees others as another member of the society and as a he or she.

Table no. 7.4.2
Age Status and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions

| | Equal | Secondary | Refused to | |
|--|-------|-----------|------------|--|
| | | | | |

| Age (in years) | importance to man and woman | importance to woman | respond | Total |
|----------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 29 (38.16%) | 37 (48.68%) | 10 (13.16%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 65 (44.22%) | 74 (50.34%) | 8 (5.44%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 53 (41.09%) | 70 (54.26%) | 6 (4.65%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 51 (52.04%) | 45 (45.92%) | 2 (2.04%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 198 (44.00%) | 226 (50.22%) | 26 (5.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 12.94 df = 6 Table value = 12.59 P< = 0.05
The Association is significant

7.4.3: Religious Affiliation and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions:

The religious groups considered (Hindus, Muslims and Christians) in this study have different outlook on the androcentric approach of religions. Majority of the Hindu and Christian (57.33% and 52% respectively) believe that Religion is pampering the males and pin-pricking the females in this regard. But in the case of the Muslims majority feel that the females are considered on par with the males. It is almost an established fact that Muslims by and large are hesitant to give equal opportunities for male and female in the society. Their conditioned psyche may not be realising the discrimination shown by religion against female members.

Table no. 7.4.3
Religious Affiliation and Opinion about the
Androcentricism of Religions

| Religious Affiliation | Equal importance | Secondary importance | Refused to | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------|-------|
| | | | | |

| | to man and woman | to woman | respond | |
|-----------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 50 (33.33%) | 86 (57.33%) | 14 (9.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 83 (55.33%) | 62 (41.33%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 65 (43.33%) | 78 (52.00%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 198 (44.00%) | 226 (50.22%) | 26 (5.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 17.39 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P < = 0.01
The Association is significant

7.4.4: Marital Status and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions:

When the data was analysed on the basis of marital status the polarisation of the people was in a peculiar manner. Among the unmarried respondents only 35.80% believe that gender equality is maintained by religion. Almost equal proportion of the two groups (50.41% and 49.38% respectively of married and unmarried persons) stated that females are given only secondary importance by religions. The point to be particularly noted is that 14.81% of the unmarried persons refused to reveal their state of mind. Being they are unmarried 14.81% of the respondents may be feeling some limitations to point their fingers against religion. It is to be presumed that in fact, a higher portion of them belong to the second response. The reason for a higher portion of the first response among the married persons may be that the female partners have to propitiate their counterparts. The unmarried female respondents have greater freedom to talk against androcentricism.

Table no. 7.4.4

Marital Status and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religions

| Marital status | Equal | Secondary | Refused to | Total |
|----------------|-------|-----------|------------|-------|
|----------------|-------|-----------|------------|-------|

| | importance to man and woman | importance to woman | respond | |
|-----------|-----------------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------|
| Married | 169 (45.80%) | 186 (50.41%) | 14 (3.79%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 29 (35.80%) | 40 (49.38%) | 12 (14.81%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 198 (44.00%) | 226 (50.22%) | 26 (5.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 15.48 df = 2 Table value = 6.63 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.4.5: Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion about the Androcentricism of Religion:

Is religion practicing and propagating androcentricism and how the perspectives of the people are related to their attitude towards religion was another theme of analysis. Here very systematic relationship between the variables is revealed. Those who have more favourable attitude towards religion feel lesser androcentricism and also more parity in the status between male and female.

Table No. 7.4.5
Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion about the
Androcentricism of Religion

| Attitude | Equal importance to man and woman | Secondary importance to woman | Refused to respond | Total |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 2 (11.76%) | 14 (82.35%) | 1 (5.88%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 40 (28.99%) | 85 (61.59%) | 13 (9.42%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 101 (46.54%) | 106 (48.85%) | 10 (4.61%) | 217 (100%) |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Highly favourable | 55 (70.51%) | 21 (26.92%) | 2 (2.56%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 198 (44.00%) | 226 (50.22%) | 26 (5.78%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 44.50 df = 6 Table value = 16.81 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.5: Religious Fundamentalism:

Religious fundamentalism is, in fact, a dialectics of religious life. Religion stands for brotherhood and horizontal Society. Fundamentalism propagates that no other religion is so important and respectable as one's own religion. This perspective paves way for communalism and ultimate turmoil and persecution in the society.

Religious fundamentalism has always been present in Society. The mighty religion of all times created tension, persecution and proselytisation. The victims suffer untold miseries in undeserving manners.

Religious fundamentalism and communalism are covertly and overtly present in our society. Present day religious practices fan fundamentalism and create tension in our society.

In this study an enquiry was conducted to reveal how the people look at this phenomenon. Analysis of the data collected reveals that in unequivocal terms it is revealed that present day religious life of our plural society creates religious fundamentalism and communal tension and by thus the pious Institution becomes

dysfunctional to harmonious social life (Table No 7.5.1). It is found that 95.11% of the respondents are of the view that Religion has become a tension creating agency in the social fabric. Only a negligible portion of 4.89% looks upon in the other way round.

7.5.1: Gender and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion:

The outlook of male and female members towards this issue is assumed to be different. Analysis which investigated into the theme (Table No.7.5.1) reveals that the assumption is not baseless. Both gender groups overwhelmingly adhere to the view that religious fundamentalism, competition and conflicts arising out of it are present in our society. It is found that 89.70% of the females and 98.25% of the males subscribe to the view. This indicates that the females are not that much stronger as their male counterparts are on this matter. The moderate outlook of females towards every issue is seen reflected in this situation also – it is to be presumed.

Table no. 7.5.1
Gender and opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion

| Gender | Religious competition increases | Religious competition does not increase | Total |
|--------|---------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Female | 148 (89.70%) | 17 (10.30%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 280 (98.25%) | 5 (1.75%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 428 (95.11%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 16.42 df = 1 Table value = 6.63 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.5.2: Age and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion:

On an analysis based on the age status of the respondents a very interesting result is revealed. Respondents above the age of 30 years subscribe to the view that religion is creating social tension and divisive tendencies in the society, almost uniformly. The case of the youngsters (<30 years) is somewhat different. While among the older groups around 97% express their opinion as indicated above among the youngsters the figure is 82.89% only. The rest 17.11%, cluster under the opposite opinion that religion has no such role in the Society.

Table no. 7.5.2
Age and opinion on the Tension Creating role of
Contemporary Religion

| Age (in years) | Religious competition increases | Religious competition does not increase | Total |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 63 (82.89%) | 13 (7.11%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 144 (97.96%) | 3 (2.04%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 124 (96.12%) | 5 (3.88%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 97 (98.98%) | 1 (1.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 428 (95.11%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 30.40 df = 3 Table value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.5.3: Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion:

Another enquiry which was undertaken by the study is that whether religious background has any influence on the outlook regarding the tension creating role in the contemporary society. The data relating to the theme was analysed by taking religious affiliation as the background variable. The analysis (Table No.7.5.3) shows that there is a division between the native religion and migrant religions. The Hindus are

relatively soft to this issue. It is found that 90.67% (which definitely is the thumping majority, but relatively lower compared to the other two groups) only stated that religions have fissiparous tendencies. The corresponding figures in respect of Christians and Muslims are the same, 97.33% each. The *Puranas* and *Ithihasas* which are the leading torches of Hindu religious groups are not on compromising terms with the opposing forces. So conflict and resultant tensions are normal. This ideology may be influencing the community. As far as the migrant religions are concerned, the general trend is one of praying for one's opponents and forgiving the persecutors. So the tension generated may be felt more by the migrant Religions.

Table no. 7.5.3
Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Tension Creating
Role of Contemporary Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Religious competition increases | Religious competition does not increase | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Hindu | 136 (90.67%) | 14 (9.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 146 (97.33%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 146 (97.33%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 428 (95.11%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 9.56 df = 2 Table value = 9.21 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

7.5.4: Educational Status and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion:

The feeling of the different educational groups on the dysfunctional role played by religion is different – the analysis of data reveals (Table No. 7.5.4). The School (SSLC) educated group feels the group rivalry and resultant conflict among religious groups to the greatest extent. 99 in 100 feel that there is religious rivalry

existing among the different groups. Among the College educated the feeling is lesser (95.19%) and among the Higher Secondary educated the least (only comparatively) 90% (Table No. 7.5.4). The chasm between the two nearer groups (Secondary and Higher Secondary) is greater. It is to be inferred that the lower teens (Secondary) are more perceptive on these type of group relationship. The higher teens (Higher Secondary) are more turbulent in their life and may not be that much attentive to religious life and its social fall out. The College educated are more matured and they do not go to the two extremes in their opinions on themes having social consequences.

Table no. 7.5.4
Educational Status and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion

| Educational Status | Religious competition increases | Religious competition does not increase | Total |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 99 (99.00%) | 1 (1.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 72 (90.00%) | 8 (10.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 257 (95.19%) | 13 (4.81%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 428 (95.11%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 7.75 df = 2 Table value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

7.5.5: Marital Status and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion:

Marriage makes individual more perceptive on social environment and responsible in making observations on it. Therefore, it is doubted in this study that marital status may have influence on the opinion relating to parochial religious approach of people and its inevitable consequences which crystallise out in the form of conflict and tension in society.

Analysis conducted on the basis of the premise shows that the presumption is true. It is found that 96.21% of the married respondents stated that religion based competition and conflict are increasing. The corresponding figure in respect of the unmarried respondents is 90.12%. The difference in the outlook is significant as per the statistical test conducted. The reason for the difference in the opinion shall be the logic which led to the formulation of the postulate.

Table no. 7.5.5
Marital Status and Opinion on the Tension Creating Role of Contemporary Religion

| Marital Status | Religious competition increases | Religious competition does not increase | Total |
|----------------|---------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Married | 355 (96.21%) | 14 (3.79%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 73 (90.12%) | 8 (9.88%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 428 (95.11%) | 22 (4.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 5.28 df =1 Table value = 3.84 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Occupation, Income, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here

Summary:

No doubt, where the functions of religions are splendid, the dysfunctions shall also be teeming with almost equal force in the society. The study elicited that there

is erosion of ethics due to the influence of Politics – Religion interplay. The younger generation is more anxious over this issue but the older generation adjust with this change expecting still a better future, at least in the long run.

It is also noticed that disproportionate accumulation of material wealth by religious organisations nullifies their spiritual and humanistic orientations. This process will create enmity between the various religious groups in the society. Further, it is revealed that charity in the name of religion has also become corrupted in the contemporary society. The resources thus mobilised in the name of charity are apportioned amongst the corrupt functionaries of religious groups and by this religion becomes a promoter of economic corruption and a mechanism for personal profiteering. Money transaction in the pretext of charity shall escalate social injustice. It has also brought to light in the study that all religions, regardless of its denomination, promote male domination in the family and every arena of social life as well.

The study also reveals that religious fundamentalism is yet another product of cotemporary religion. My doxy is orthodoxy and your doxy is heterodoxy is such a heinous attitude to be discarded and eschewed diametrically by the religion and society as well. This perspective paves way for communalism and ultimate turmoil and terrorism in the Society.

Cultic Religion

Chapter – 8

Chapter – VIII

CULTIC RELIGION

Cultic Religions are mushrooming. Of them few get acceptance and recognitions in wider society and others function locally. In due course of time many of them fade out without making much impact on society.

It is of great interest to investigate, why such spiritual movements come up in spite of the existence of the conventional religions which are thought to be capable of giving spiritual solace and refurbishment? This study enquired into the matter. The data received when analysed reveals that human love and spiritual experience derived out of the collective activities are the two major reasons for people polarising around these movements. Attainment of bodily comfort and mental peace is a minor reason for joining this agglomeration. From Table No. 8.1.1 it can be seen that 42.31% and 40.38% respectively of the respondents subscribe to the first two reasons. Only 17.31% point out the third reason for the emergence of cultic religions in society. The result reveals that modern society aspires for both human love and spirituality. Conventional religions are oriented towards spirituality and the inclinations make them disenchanting to the modern people. As Durkheim pointed out, the social base of religion is to be reorganised to make it acceptable to the present day humans.

8.1: Mushrooming of Cultic Religion:

To identify the association between the outlook on the reason for mushrooming Cultic Religions and the background variables, investigations were carried out on the different variables and three variables viz. religious affiliations, occupational status and family size are found to have association. The results are discussed in the following analyses.

8.1.1: Religious Affiliation and Outlook on the Reason for Mushrooming of Cultic Religions:

Religious ethics strongly bias beliefs, outlooks and actions of people. This perspective is not anything new but having age old existence. This study also reinforces the truism as revealed in analysis Table No. 8.1.1. Majority of the Hindus (56.82%) highlight the spiritual enlightenment, achieved through cultic religion as the major reason for the spread of the movement. In the case of the two branches of the revealed religion majority believe that cultic religions are congregations based on human love and brotherhood (58.33% Muslims, and 54.17% Christians). Semitic religions are reformist movements centred around well defined principles and definite leadership. These characteristics of cultic religions are projected by the followers of the religious groups (Christians and Muslims). On the other hand the native religion i.e. Hinduism, is attracted by the *Ultimate* and preached by cultic religion, viz. the union of the *self* with the *Ultimate* and not the organisation or structuring principles.

Table No. 8.1.1
Religious Affiliation and Outlook on the Reason for
Mushrooming of Cultic Religions

| Religious | Spiritual | Human | Bodily Ease | Total |
|-----------|-----------|-------|-------------|-------|
|-----------|-----------|-------|-------------|-------|

| Affiliation | Experience | Love and Fellowship | and Mental Peace | |
|-------------|----------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Hindu | 25 (56.82%) | 11 (25.00%) | 8 (18.18%) | 44 (100%) |
| Muslim | 3 (25.00%) | 7 (58.33%) | 2 (16.67%) | 12 (100%) |
| Christian | 14 (29.17%) | 26 (54.17%) | 8 (16.67%) | 48 (100%) |
| Total | 42 (40.38%) | 44 (42.31%) | 18 (17.31%) | 104* (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 10.61 df = 4 Table Value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

*Note: Only 104 samples answered the question.

8.1.2: Occupational Status and Outlook on the Reason for Mushrooming of Cultic Religions:

The method of generating livelihood will affect perceptions on non-material aspects of human life. “Bread is the God of poor man”. Even after hard work the poor man could only dream about comfortable life.

With this logic an analysis as shown in Table No. 8.1.2 was carried out. Results show that the vocation is influencing the outlook on the basis of cultic religions. The manual workers and the professionals come closer in their outlook. They stress the humanism achieved through cultic religion (55% of the former group and 57.58% of the latter) stress the humanistic aspects of cultic religions. Contrary to this, the white collar group focuses on the spiritual experiences derived out of the religious observances. In their vocations the manual workers and the professionals are struggling groups in their own ways. They have more direct dependence on human beings. The white collar

employees are not facing harsh reality of life. Instead they have the cold comfort of steady income and conditions of service. This background influences them to look at religions in a different way from other groups do.

Table No. 8.1.2
Occupational Status and Outlook on the Reason for
Mushrooming of Cultic Religions

| Occupational Status | Spiritual Experience | Human Love and Fellowship | Bodily Ease and Mental Peace | Total |
|------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 6 (30.00%) | 11 (55.00%) | 3 (15.00%) | 20 (100%) |
| White Collar Employees | 27 (52.94%) | 14 (27.45%) | 10 (19.61%) | 51 (100%) |
| Professionals | 9 (27.27%) | 19 (57.58%) | 5 (15.15%) | 33 (100%) |
| Total | 42 (40.38%) | 44 (42.31%) | 18 (17.31%) | 104 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 9.48 df = 4 Table Value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
 The Association is significant

8.1.3: Family Size and Outlook on the Reason for Mushrooming of Cultic Religions:

The size of the family that one lives in has influence on the perceptions and perspectives on social matters. In this study enquiry was made as to how this background influences the outlook.

The analysis in Table No. 8.1.3 reveals that family size is a determinant of the outlook. Small size family highlights the spiritual and social attainments of cultic religions (members below 4). Very high emphasis is given on the social gain of cultic religion by the medium sized family (61.29% polarise under this category). The larger family give equal importance to the spiritual gain and mental peace attainment as a result of the religious practices (42.86% each come under the categories).

It is to be inferred that the small family has a craving for mental peace which is supplied by the spiritual discourses and activities associated with the cultic religious atmosphere. The bodily exercises and yoga practiced by cultic religious life are capable of giving bodily ease required.

The medium sized family has recognised the importance of more members intimately interacting, so it gives importance to the human brotherhood generated by cultic religion. The perspective of the large family is giving least importance to the social aspect as given by the medium sized family. Contradictions seen here in the case of large family to that “more member more emphasis on collectivity” norm may be due to the fact that the members may be sub-divided into small groups within the larger structure and by this practically become small families.

Table No. 8.1.3
Family size and Outlook on the Reason for
Mushrooming of Cultic Religions

| Family Size | Spiritual Experience | Human Love and Fellowship | Bodily Ease and Mental Peace | Total |
|-----------------|----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| Up to 4 members | 31 (46.97%) | 24 (36.36%) | 11 (16.67%) | 66 (100%) |

| | | | | |
|---------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| 4 – 6 members | 8 (25.81%) | 19 (61.29%) | 4 (12.90%) | 31 (100%) |
| 6 and above members | 3 (42.86%) | 1 (14.29%) | 3 (42.86%) | 7 (100%) |
| Total | 42 (40.38%) | 44 (42.31%) | 18 (17.31%) | 104 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 9.84 df = 4 Table Value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.2: Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion:

Mushrooming entities usually fade away very soon. There is scepticism on cultic religion too that they are having only short life. In this study the perception of the people on this topic was explored.

It is seen that 47.11% of the respondents feel that cultic religion will live long, 45.56% however, opine that cultic religion have short life and 7.33% have no opinion on the matter. So the view that cultic religion will live long has a slight edge over the opposite view. But what is the mind of the 7.33% “no opinion” group is the deciding factor to come to a definite conclusion (Table No. 8.2.1).

Subsidiary analyses conducted to reveal association, if any, between the background variables and the perception showed that Age, Religious Affiliation, Income and Place of Residence are associated parameters with the outlook.

8.2.1: Age Status and the Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion:

The analysis on the association between age status and the perception prima facie shows that higher proportions of the older groups except the upper middle group have more faith in the longer life of cultic religion. In the case of the upper middle group (45 – 60 years) the higher portion (48.84%) believes that it has only short life. In the case of the younger group (below 30 years) the divide between short life and long life is in the ratio 38.16: 43.42. But one projecting feature of the opinion of this group is that “No opinion group” is three times greater than that among the upper middle and upper age groups (45 – 60 & 60 – 75 years: 18% and 6% respectively). This abnormal behaviour of the lowest age group smells something else. Are they reluctant to reveal their opinion and hence keep themselves mum? So if we keep apart this group, we shall see another picture in the responses, which highlights that the age groups from 45 – 75 years have lesser support to the view that cultic religion has longer life. In the case of the upper group 60 – 75 the tilt in favour of long life is made by two frequencies (which is not very significant).

Table No. 8.2.1

Age Status and the Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion

| Age (in years) | Short life | Long life | No opinion | Total |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 29 (38.16%) | 33 (43.42%) | 14 (18.42%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 68 (46.26%) | 74 (50.34%) | 5 (3.40%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 63 (48.84%) | 58 (44.96%) | 8 (6.20%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 45 (45.92%) | 47 (47.96%) | 6 (6.12%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 205 (45.56%) | 212 (47.11%) | 33 (7.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 18.18 df = 6 Table Value = 16.81 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.2.2: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion:

Religion based analysis shows that majority of the Hindus and Muslim respondents (52% and 55.33% respectively) opine that cultic religion has long life. The case of the Christians is very different; only 34% subscribe to the view that cultic religion will secure longer life. The new trend in the religious practices of cultic religion seems to be appealing to the Hindus and Muslims. But in the case of the Christian, religion itself irrespective of the form has become disenchanting. Therefore, they believe that the new religious forms shall also face the destiny of the conventional religion. In practice, it is seen in the west that believer group is getting slackened. This trend might be in the offing in Kerala context also.

Table No. 8.2.2
Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the
Permanency of Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Short life | Long life | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 68 (45.33%) | 78 (52.00%) | 4 (2.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 49 (32.67%) | 83 (55.33%) | 18 (12.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 88 (58.67%) | 51 (34.00%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 205 (45.56%) | 212 (47.11%) | 33 (7.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 28.43 df = 4 Table Value = 13.28 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.2.3: Income Status and the Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion:

Income status and the perceptions on the life of cultic religion are associated in a particular pattern; analysis Table No. 8.2.3 indicates. It is seen that the greater the income the lesser the opinion that the religion has longer life. Table No. 8.2.3 indicates that among the lowest income group (<Rs.3000/-) those who believe that the religion has longer life comes to 55.66%. The corresponding figure in respect of the Rs.3000 – 6000 is 49.52%, 6000 – 9000 is 37.68% and 9000 and above is 35.82%. In the case of those who believe that the religion is a temporary phenomenon, the strength increases as we come through the lower income to higher income statuses. Since a larger portion of the highest income group did not reveal their opinion, there is some dip in the strength of them under the category of those who believe that it is a temporary movement. It is to be believed that the higher the income of the people, the greater their willingness to accept non-traditional movements.

Table No. 8.2.3
Income Status and the Perception on the Permanency of
Cultic Religion

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Short life | Long life | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 44 (41.51%) | 59 (55.66%) | 3 (2.83%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 90 (43.27%) | 103 (49.52%) | 15 (7.21%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 37 (53.62%) | 26 (37.68%) | 6 (8.70%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 34 (50.75%) | 24 (35.82%) | 9 (13.43%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 205 (45.56%) | 212 (47.11%) | 33 (7.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 13.53 df = 6 Table Value = 12.59 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.2.4: Place of Residence and the Perception on the Permanency of Cultic Religion:

An analysis was carried out to reveal whether place of residence and the perception are associated. The analysis indicates that 45.33% of the ruralites and 48.88% of the urbanites believe that it will last long. A sizable portion of the rural respondents (11.56%) did not reveal their opinion. If we do not pay attention to them, it is to be pointed out that urbanites favour the cultic religion more. An explanation for this result is very easy. New movements are more affecting the urbanites. We know that the nuclei of cultic religions are urban centres.

Table no 8.2.4
Residential Status and the Perception on the Permanency of
Cultic Religion

| Residential Status | Short life | Long life | No opinion | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Rural | 97 (43.11%) | 102 (45.33%) | 26 (11.56%) | 225 (100%) |
| Urban | 108 (48.00%) | 110 (48.89%) | 7 (3.11%) | 225 (100%) |
| Total | 205 (45.56%) | 212 (47.11%) | 33 (7.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 11.83 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.3: Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Life:

Cultic Religion is looked upon as an eventuality to conventional religion in the sense that it under estimates the importance of the formers ideologies and practices. Unethical and even immoral practices and ideology propagation in the wider society are alleged on cultic religion by certain structures of the society. In this context an enquiry to reveal whether cultic religion is a menace to the social values was carried out. The data is analysed as shown in Table No. 8.3.1. The analysis reveals that an overwhelming

majority (72.44%) of the respondents see nothing disadvantages to the social values from cultic religion. The rest of the respondents feel a threat to the social values from these Religious movements. So in this study there is no evidence to support the scepticism stated earlier.

Enquiries regarding the association of the sociological variables with the outlook revealed the facts described below:

8.3.1: Age Status and the Perception on the Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Values:

Analysis on the relationship between age and the outlook reveals that the general trend is displeasure to the cultic religion among the older persons. However, the lower middle group (30-45 years) shows a deviation, the group shows lesser animosity to the form of cultic religion than the lowest age group upholds. May be it a stage in transition when social responsibilities as well as related mental tension increase. Cultic religion by its balancing of physical and spiritual activities may be seen by this group as a solace to their mounting tension. The highest age group (60-75) may be upholding the old age, mature philosophy that anything has its own right to existence.

Table No. 8.3.1
Age Status and the Perception on the Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Values

| Age (in years) | A menace to the existing social values | Not a menace to the existing social values | Total |
|----------------|--|--|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 21 (27.63%) | 55 (72.37%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 30 (20.41%) | 117 (79.59%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 35 (27.13%) | 94 (72.87%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 38 (38.78%) | 60 (61.22%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 124 | 326 | 450 |

| | | | |
|--|----------|----------|--------|
| | (27.56%) | (72.44%) | (100%) |
|--|----------|----------|--------|

Chi-square Value = 9.95 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.3.2: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Values:

Religion is a modulating agency of the way of perceiving every phenomenon. In this analysis also the influence of religion on the outlook towards cultic religion is revealed. Hindu Religion is more tolerant to the cultic religion than the Semitic Religions are. While 20% of the Hindu followers look upon cultic religion as a menace to social values, 31.33% each of the other two religious groups, viz. Muslims and Christians perceive a threat to social values from the newly emerged religious forms. An explanation for the difference in the approach is very easy; Hindu Religion upholds an “all containing” philosophy, while the Semitic religions have an “all excluding except the one” approach.

Table No.8.3.2
Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Values

| Religious Affiliation | A menace to the existing social values | Not a menace to the existing social values | Total |
|-----------------------|--|--|---------------|
| Hindu | 30 (20.00%) | 120 (80.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 47 (31.33%) | 103 (68.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 47 (31.33%) | 103 (68.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 124 (27.56%) | 326 (72.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 6.43 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.3.3: Occupational Status and the Perception on the Impact of Cultic Religion on Social Values:

Work culture and work situation tell upon the outlook of people on various matters. This study analysed the sustainability of this principle with regard to this topic. An analysis (Table No. 8.3.3) reveals that the principle is found true in this context too. Here the manual labourers are more unaccommodative to cultic religion in comparison with White Collar employees and the Professionals. 34.88% of the Manual labourers, 28.79% of the White Collar employees and 18% of the Professionals are of the view that cultic religion is a menace to social values. Modernity and sophistication are the most influencing elements in the work culture of the Professionals and they decrease through White Collar employments to Manual Workers. The modernity makes the attitude more flexible towards any emerging trends and hence the professionals show more accommodation to cultic religion and that recedes through White Collar employees to the Manual Labourers.

Table No. 8.3.3
Occupational Status and the Perception on the Impact of
Cultic Religion on Social Values

| Occupational Status | A menace to the existing social values | Not a menace to the existing social values. | Total |
|-------------------------|--|---|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 30 (34.88%) | 56 (65.12%) | 86 (100%) |
| Whiter Collar employees | 76 (28.79%) | 188 (71.21%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 18 (18.00%) | 82 (82.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 124 (27.56%) | 326 (72.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 7.09 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.3.4: Attitude Towards Religion and the Outlook on the Impact of

Cultic Religion on Social Values:

In the analysis of the perception on the impact of cultic religion on social values against attitude towards religion, one significant result can be seen (Table No. 8.3.4). While more than 75% of the other attitudinal groups express that cultic religion is not a menace to the existing social values majority (52.56%) of the group which upholds “highly favourable” attitude towards religion highlight that cultic religion is a menace to the value system. This result reveal that the commitment to the conventional religion of the group makes them blind and stand against any other form of religious ideologies and practice. All other groups have almost uniform opinion that the new version of religion need not be considered as harmful to the society.

Table No.8.3.4
Attitude Towards Religion and the Outlook on the Impact of
Cultic Religion on Social Values

| Attitude | A menace to the existing social values | Not a menace to the existing social values. | Total |
|-------------------|--|---|---------------|
| Indifferent | 4 (23.53%) | 13 (76.47%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 31 (22.46%) | 107 (77.54%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 48 (22.12%) | 169 (77.88%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 41 (52.56%) | 37 (47.44%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 124 (27.56%) | 326 (72.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value= 29.58 df = 3 Table Value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed

and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.4: Foreign Assistance and Spread of Cultic Religion:

The patronage of foreigners and foreign money are doubted as giving impetus for the growth of cultic religion. Naturally, it is doubted by some sections of our society that they have an axe to grind through these deeds. Sceptics believe that illegal money transaction, drug trafficking etc. are major motives of these movements. In this study enquiries were conducted to identify the people's perception on the matter.

Analysis of data pertaining to the theme shows that majority of the respondents (59.33%) believe that foreign assistance by way of money and intellectual power are giving impetus for the rapid growth of cultic religion. The rest of the respondents responded in the other way round. This is a very disturbing matter that there is the overt and covert support of foreign forces for the cultic movements.

Our government is very polite to religious faiths in allowing transactions, national and international. Should we think that this polite approach is exploited to satisfy private interests of vested forces with or without the connivance of the leaderships of the new spiritual awareness inculcation movements? (Table No. 8.4.1)

Subsidiary analyses revealed many further insights.

8.4.1: Age Status and the Outlook on the Perception of Foreign Assistance and Spread of Cultic Religion:

Influence of age is revealed in the analysis meant for testing the existence of the association. Table No. 8.4.1 shows that the old – old (60 – 75 years) and the young – old (30 – 45 years) are reflecting different perceptions. The former category unequivocally states that foreign assistance is the under pinning factor behind the mushrooming of Cultic Religion. An opposite view is expressed by the 30 – 45 years age category. The group does not see any such foreign force. The other two age categories have similar outlook on the matter and they support the old – old though not very emphatically. Might be the young – old (30 – 45 years) category dominating in the new movement and they can not find anything bad about themselves.

The youngsters may be totally indifferent to religion and their outlook may be looked upon as the utilisation of the opportunity to tarnishing an opponent. The old – old is centred on conventional religion - it is to be doubted and this attachment prompts them to cloak the movement with this remark.

Table No. 8.4.1
Age Status and the Outlook on the Perception of Foreign Assistance and Spread of Cultic Religion

| Age (in years) | Support of foreign money is the cause of growth of Cultic Religion | Support of foreign money is not the cause of growth of Cultic Religion | Total |
|----------------|--|--|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 45 (59.21%) | 31 (40.79%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 73 (49.66%) | 74 (50.34%) | 147 (100%) |

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 45 – 60 | 75 (58.14%) | 54 (41.86%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60– 75 | 74 (75.51%) | 24 (24.49%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 267 (59.33%) | 183 (40.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 16.41 df = 3 Table Value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant.

8.4.2: Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Perception of Foreign Assistance and Spread of Cultic Religion:

How the religious background influences the outlook was another focus of the study. The analysis relating to this topic indicates that there is difference in the perception of people according to their religious background. The Hindus come at the lower rung among those who believe that foreign support helps increase cultic religion. At the apex we see the Muslims and in between come the Christians. While only 44% of the Hindus believe that foreign assistance play an important role in the growth of cultic religion, an overwhelming majority of the Muslims (70.67%) and majority of the Christians (63.33%) come under the this category Cultic religions are in fact, propagation mechanisms of conventional religious ideologies. Around the nuclei of conventional religion the standing of the religion (conventional) shall be fairly good. So no mechanisms of reinforcement are necessary. Hinduism is a gift of Indians. But the nuclei of Islam and Christianity are elsewhere.

Table No. 8.4.2
Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Perception of Foreign Assistance and Spread of Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Support of foreign money is the cause of growth of Cultic | Support of foreign money is not the cause of growth of | Total |
|-----------------------|---|--|-------|
|-----------------------|---|--|-------|

| | Religion | Cultic Religion | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 66 (44.00%) | 84 (56.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 106 (70.67%) | 44 (29.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 95 (63.33%) | 55 (36.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 267 (59.33%) | 183 (40.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 23.60 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.4.3: Attitude Towards Religion and the Role of Foreign Funds in the Spread of Cultic Religion:

Analysis indicates that the perception on the role of foreign funds in the spread of cultic religion is associated with attitudinal difference. Analysis in Table No. 8.4.3 indicates the “indifferent” group is very strong in their belief that foreign funds are strong supporter of spread of the religious movement. Those who have “highly favourable” attitude come next to the indifferent group in this matter. Those who have “lukewarm” attitude divide equally between the responses. Favourable attitude group is just above the lukewarm attitude group. The indifferent group may be distressed by the fund flow in the name of religious activities and that may be their reason for critiquing cultic religion. The highly favourable group may be having enmity to the cultic religion because the growth of cultic religion, they think, may detrimentally affect conventional religion.

Table No. 8.4.3
Attitude Towards Religion and the Role of Foreign Funds in the Spread of Cultic Religion

| Attitude | Support of foreign money is the cause of growth of Cultic Religion | Support of foreign money is not the cause of growth of Cultic Religion | Total |
|----------|--|--|-------|
| | | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 13 (76.47%) | 4 (23.53%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 69 (50.00%) | 69 (50.00%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 127 (58.53%) | 90 (41.47%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 58 (74.36%) | 20 (25.64%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 267 (59.33%) | 183 (40.67%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 14.41 df = 3 Table Value = 11.34 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.5: Cultic Religion and Stability of the Society:

Sociology considers religion as an agent of social solidarity. However, there are doubts on the integrating aspects of many cultic religions. This is basically because many of these movements have interest other than spirituality. Many of them are using spirituality as a cover for their greed for material possessions. Unethical and even immoral activities are concealed by pseudo-spirituality of many of the newly emerging cultic religions. Hence in this study an enquiry was carried out to assess the perception of the people on the positive contributions of cultic religion to the stability of society. Analysis of the data collected (Table No.8.5.1) shows that the people have no much appreciation for cultic religion in this regard. The lion's share of the respondents (81.56%) feels that the movements have adverse impact on the stability of society. The

rest feel that Cultic religion has certain positive contributions to the stability of the wider society. On the basis of this analysis cultic religion is to be looked upon as destabilising agent. These results have sustenance in the sense that many of these movements are attracting allegations that they are centres of clandestine economic activities. Certain centres, though very few, are alleged to have involvement in human trafficking. Sexual exploitation of the faithful females is also alleged to have been taking place in certain centres. This dialectics in the objectives of cultic religions may be pin-pricking the people and that might be the reason for their adverse remarks on the movement.

Analyses on the basis of the background factors reveal that Age, Religious Affiliation and Marital Status are determinants of perspectives.

8.5.1: Age Status and the Outlook on the Influence of Cultic Religion on the stability of the Society:

Age wise analysis indicates that all the age categories are highlighting the adverse impact of Cultic Religion on the stability of the wider society. The youngsters are highly critical about the movement. The upper – middle age group (45 – 60 years) and the upper age groups have almost similar opinion (83.72% and 82.65% respectively) and they come just below the younger age group (below 30 years). Among these categories we can see that the increase in age lightens their adverse stand against Cultic Religion in this regard. But the lower – middle age group (30 – 45 years) distinguishes itself from the other groups. Comparatively, they are lesser critical making them unaccommodative in the general pattern discerned above. This may be the highly distressed group in life due to various reasons and may be they are more depending on Cultic Religion to ease their tension.

Table No. 8.5.1
Age Status and the Outlook on the Influence of Cultic Religion on the Stability of the Society

| Age (in years) | Positive effect on the stability. | Adverse effect on the stability. | Total |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 7 (9.21%) | 69 (90.79%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 38 (25.85%) | 109 (74.15%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 21 (16.28%) | 108 (83.72%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 17 (17.35%) | 81 (82.65%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 83 (18.44%) | 367 (81.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 10.15 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.5.2: Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Influence of Cultic Religion on the Stability of the Society:

Analysis on the relationship between Religious Affiliation and the perception reveals that the Muslims feel the adverse impact of Cultic Religion on the social stability to the greatest extent and Christians the least. The Hindus come in between the two groups in this regard. The control of conventional Religion is more on Muslims and least on Christians. Though the two Semitic Religions, viz. Islam and Christianity prevent worship of anything else than Allah and Jehovah respectively, the latter faith due to its modernisation has undermined the edicts of the conventional religion while the other is in the other way round. Christians due to their mobile personality nature, which in turn is a product of modernisation, are ready to accept any novel trend. This is not the case with Muslims. Hinduism is a religion which has no reluctance to accommodate multiple gods and goddesses. This plural concept of the divine helps them to be more liberal to many emerging trends. In this context it may be remembered that Hinduism does not prevent the worship of ugly creatures even.

Table No. 8.5.2
Religious Affiliation and the Outlook on the Influence of
Cultic Religion on the Stability of the Society

| Religious Affiliation | Positive effect on the stability. | Adverse effect on the stability | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 32 (21.33%) | 118 (78.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 9 (6.00%) | 141 (94.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 42 (28.00%) | 108 (72.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 83 (18.44%) | 367 (81.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 25.38 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.5.3: Marital Status and the Outlook on the Influence of Cultic Religion on the Stability of the Society:

Table No.8.5.3 contains analysis of the empirical data based on Marital Status. As revealed in the analysis the unmarried respondents are more sceptic about the usefulness of cultic religion to the total society in terms of stability inculcation. 91.36% of the unmarried and 79.40% of the married persons feel adverse impact of cultic religion. The unmarried are more unaccommodative to cultic religion. This might be due to the fact that marriage increases responsibility to others and also demands accommodation with others. These qualities gradually incorporated to the personality of married persons. This difference is seen reflected in this situation also.

Table No. 8.5.3
Marital Status and the Outlook on the Influence of Cultic Religion on the Stability of the Society

| Marital Status | Positive effect on the stability | Adverse effect on the stability | Total |
|----------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Married | 76 (20.60%) | 293 (79.40%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 7 | 74 | 81 |

| | | | |
|-------|----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| | (8.64%) | (91.36%) | (100%) |
| Total | 83 (18.44%) | 367 (81.56%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 6.31 df = 1 Table Value = 3.84 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.6: The Nature of Leaders of Cultic Religion:

Cultic religions are transformations of conventional Religion. However, the mystic and blind belief elements are relatively low in cultic religions. They are touching worldly and other worldly affairs and the whole things are centred around the help of a charismatic leader, whether really charismatic or not. The leaders are considered by the followers as harbingers of peace and brotherhood. They usually show gestures and tone transformations in their talk to reflect their commitment to peace and brotherhood.

In this study enquiries were conducted as to know how the people consider the leaders of cultic religion. Analysis of the responses reveals that they are not the envoys of human brotherhood; rather they are ordinary humans having capacity to convert others to their side through overt talks and deeds. As revealed in the analysis (Table No. 8.6.1) 83.11% of the respondents do not consider them as envoys of brotherhood. However, the rest consider that they are symbols of humanism (16.89%).

8.6.1: Age Status and the Opinion about the Nature of Cultic Religious Leaders:

An analysis which studied the relationship between Age and the opinion indicates that the dislike towards the leaders according to this index is more amidst the

youngsters (below 30 years). Comparatively, the dislike is lesser among the lower – middle age group. The upper – middle and older age groups are closer in their opinion on the topic. It is found that 90.79% among the lower age group subscribe to the view that the leaders are not envoys of brotherhood. It comes down to 76.87% when we move to the lower – middle age group (30 – 45 years). The figure scales up to 86.05% and 82.65% respectively when we come to the upper – middle and older age groups. The youngsters seem to oppose any type of Religion; the high rate of disbelievers indicates this truism. The lower – middle group has more appreciation for the colourful and rationalised Religion. In the case of the elders their turbulence in the outlook slowly calms down and spirituality propagated by conventional Religion becomes palatable to them.

Table No. 8.6.1
Age Status and the Opinion about the Nature of Cultic Religious Leaders

| Age (in years) | Envoys of brotherhood | Not envoys of brotherhood. | Total |
|----------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 7 (9.21%) | 69 (90.79%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 34 (23.13%) | 113 (76.87%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 18 (13.95%) | 111 (86.05%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 17 (17.35%) | 81 (82.65%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 76 (16.89%) | 374 (83.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.08 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.6.2: Religious Affiliation and the Opinion about the Nature of Cultic Religious Leaders:

An investigation into the influence of Religious background on the opinion regarding Leaders of Cultic Religion was carried out. It was revealed that Religion is a determinant of the outlook. Those who believe that Leaders of Cultic Religions are not precursors of brotherhood are comparatively high among the Muslim community (93.33%). The corresponding figures in respect of the Hindus and Christians are respectively 80% and 76%. Why the two Semitic Religions differ considerably is to be analysed first. The possible reason is that the Muslims have uniformity in their outlook on religious matters which are inculcated by their conventional Religion. But the freedom for individuals in Christianity including the one in religious matters is higher. This difference between the two groups reflects in the religious matter also. Polytheistic perspectives are more in Hindu Religion. So even without crossing their traditional faiths they can practice derivatives of conventional religion. This boundary maintaining at the same time plurality of ideas and practices possibly make the Hindus friendlier to Cultic religion than the Muslims are. Cultic Religions which are propagated in India are by and large different versions of conventional Hinduism. But those which are propagated in Christian countries are Non-Christianity types.

Table No. 8.6.2
Religious Affiliation and the Opinion about the Nature of
Cultic Religious Leaders

| Religious Affiliation | Envoys of brotherhood | Not envoys of brotherhood. | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 30 (20.00%) | 120 (80.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 10 (6.67%) | 140 (93.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 36 (24.00%) | 114 (76.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 76 (16.89%) | 374 (83.11%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 17.60 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.7: Philanthropy of the Followers of Cultic Religions:

Any group is assessed in terms of the quality of leaders and followers. After the enquiry about the leaders the nature of the followers was brought under the scanner of the community. The respondents were asked to reveal their perceptions on the nature of the followers of cultic religions. The responses revealed that there is no philanthropy in the followers. In terms of the responses 68.67% believe that the followers have no philanthropic orientation. The other portion (14%) however, responded in the other way round and 17.33% preferred to remain neutral. The result clearly reveals that the philanthropy, which is the catch word of every new religious movement, is to be doubted.

8.7.1: Gender and the Perception on the Philanthropic Nature of Followers of Cultic Religion:

Gender is assumed to have influence on the perception of the people on the matter. Generally, the females are more attracted to religion of any form and showing devotion to it. In this context an analysis of the collected data shows this general pattern is followed here also. No doubt, larger portions of both the genders doubt the philanthropy of the followers. However, the strength of the doubting persons among the females is lesser (64.24%) than that among the males (71.23%).

Table No. 8.7.1
Gender and the Perception on the Philanthropic Nature of

Followers of Cultic Religion

| Gender | Followers of Cultic Religion are Philanthropists | Followers of Cultic Religion are not Philanthropists | No opinion | Total |
|--------|--|--|----------------|---------------|
| Female | 31 (18.79%) | 106 (64.24%) | 28 (16.97%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 32 (11.23%) | 203 (71.23%) | 50 (17.54%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 63 (14.00%) | 309 (68.67%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 6.59 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.7.2: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Philanthropic Nature of Followers of Cultic Religion:

How religious background influences the outlook on the nature of the followers was another topic of enquiry of the study. The enquiry reveals that there is an association between the religious affiliation and perception of the people. All the three religious groups (Hindus, Muslims and Christians) solidly stand behind the outlook that the followers are not philanthropists. Among the different groups the Muslims are stronger in their view, and then come the Hindus and finally the Christians. In terms of the percentage of the groups 79.33% of the Muslims, 66.67% of the Hindus and 60% of the Christians subscribes to the opinion. Deviations from the tradition are very hesitantly accepted by Muslim community, particularly in the case of religious life. So those deviate from the traditional path are looked upon as anti-humanistic. The Christians are more liberal in their outlook. They have a tendency to experiment with new forms. The Hindus are quite used to accept religion in plural forms. So they have lesser animosity to new forms of religion.

Table No. 8.7.2

Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Philanthropic Nature of Followers of Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Followers of Cultic Religion are Philanthropists | Followers of Cultic Religion are not Philanthropists | No opinion | Total |
|-----------------------|--|--|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 23 (15.33%) | 100 (66.67%) | 27 (18.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 12 (8.00%) | 119 (79.33%) | 19 (12.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 28 (18.67%) | 90 (60.00%) | 32 (21.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 63 (14.00%) | 309 (68.67%) | 78 (17.33%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 13.90 df = 4 Table Value = 13.28 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Age, Education, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.8: The Making of Human Gods by Cultic Religion:

Certain individuals have the capacity to attract people to them by their words and deeds. They assess the mental and physical needs of the people and make them believe that the path proposed by them is capable of attaining their ends. Few people at least are attracted by the new philosophies and practices. In due course of time, through chain reaction, followers flow to the Saviour and a Cultic Religion is born. Some of them become established and others fade away. Critics of Cultic Religion look at the movement in this manner. So they consider Cultic religion as a gathering around this kind of human gods.

In this study an attempt was made to assess the veracity of this outlook. The respondents were asked to reveal their perspectives on the essence of Cultic Religion. Majority (77.56%) expressed that it is a social polarisation around human god. The rest (22.44%) are of the view that there is something really godly in Cultic religion. So it is to be taken for granted that Cultic Religion is a creation of humans and nothing else. Here we remember Durkheim who postulated that religion is eminently social.

8.8.1: Age Status and Opinion on the Making of Human Gods by Cultic Religion:

Age wise analysis of the data reveals a clear pattern (Table No.8.8.1). The lower – middle age group (30 – 45 years) have more appreciation for the divine nature of Cultic Religion. Among them, 30.61% feel that Cultic Religion is not merely a social polarisation around human gods. Among the younger group also 21.05% come under this category. But the upper – middle and upper age groups are more of the view that they are bands of people gathering around human gods. When we consolidate the results we may say that the older age group is more critical about the divine nature of cultic religion. They are closer to conventional Religion than the younger groups are.

Table No. 8.8.1
Age Status and Opinion on the Making of Human
Gods by Cultic Religion

| Age (in years) | Cultic Religion is a social polarisation around human gods. | Cultic Religion is not a social polarisation around human gods. | Total |
|----------------|---|---|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 60 (78.95%) | 16 (21.05%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 102 (69.39%) | 45 (30.61%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 105 (81.40%) | 24 (18.60%) | 129 (100%) |

| | | | |
|--------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| 60– 75 | 82 (83.67%) | 16 (16.33%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 349 (77.56%) | 101 (22.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.92 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.8.2: Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Making of Human Gods by Cultic Religion:

Analysis in this study on the relationship between Religious Affiliation and the Perception on Cultic Religion reveals that (Table No.8.8.2) they are associated. In this context the Muslims and Hindus occupy two opposite poles, though within the same opinion. The Christians come in between the two groups. No religious group gives its heavy weight to the divine nature of cultic religion. Majority of all groups say that it is social polarisation around human gods. However, the Muslims are more firm in this opinion (89.33%). The strength decreases through Christians (74%) to Hindus (69.33%). The perceptions of Muslims are more conventional that they very strongly reveal that cultic religion is merely banding of persons around human gods. This firmness of the Muslims is seen in analysis of Table No. 8.7.2 also. (Deviations from the tradition are very hesitantly accepted by Muslim community, particularly in the case of religious life. So those deviate from the traditional path are looked upon as anti-humanistic). Why the Christians are harder here than the Hindus are, is to be found out only by further probing. The plural outlook towards religion of the Hindus may be highlighted in this context too as in the case of analysis Table No. 8.7.2. (The Hindus are quite used to accept religion in plural forms. So they have lesser animosity to new forms of religion).

Table No. 8.8.2
Religious Affiliation and Opinion on the Making of Human
Gods by Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Cultic Religion is a social polarisation around human gods. | Cultic Religion is not a social polarisation around human gods | Total |
|-----------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Hindu | 104 (69.33%) | 46 (30.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 134 (89.33%) | 16 (10.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 111 (74.00%) | 39 (26.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 349 (77.56%) | 101 (22.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 18.87 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.8.3: Educational Status and Opinion on the Making of Human Gods by Cultic Religion:

Educational attainment enables individual to make critical analysis of everything. Here the question dealt with is a complex as well as important one. So, educational background of the people would be a deciding factor of the perception. Analysis of data (Table No.8.8.3) supports the presumption. It is seen that 32% of the lower level educated (up to SSLC) and 21.11% of the College educated respondents believe that cultic religion is a social polarisation among human gods. The corresponding figure in the case of the Higher Secondary Level is only 15%. So the conclusion is that the HSL group is more sceptic about the true spirituality of cultic religions. The higher portion in the lower educated group who support cultic religion is easily explicable. But why the College educated respond in the manner while the HSL response pattern is bit different. May be the relative simplicity of the lower educated group and the liberal and sophisticated ideas of the higher educated bring them closer in their perception on the matter.

Table No. 8.8.3

**Educational Status and Opinion on the Making of
Human Gods by Cultic Religion**

| Educational Status | Cultic Religion is a social polarisation around human gods. | Cultic Religion is not a social polarisation around human gods | Total |
|--------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 68 (68.00%) | 32 (32.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 68 (85.00%) | 12 (15.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 213 (78.89%) | 57 (21.11%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 349 (77.56%) | 101 (22.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.07 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.8.4: Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on the Nature of Cultic Religion:

Overcrowding majority of all the attitudinal groups consider that cultic religion is a social polarisation around humans who create the impression that they are the incarnation of God (human gods). However, we see that there are variations among the attitude categories in the outlook. The “highly favourable” group comparatively constitute the largest segment under the group (89.74%). Then come those who constitute the “indifferent” group. The strength of the “favourable group” is the least (71.89%) comparatively. The “indifferent” group may be totally against all forms of religious formation. That approach is seen in the case of cultic religion too. The highly favourable group may be eager to distinguish cultic religion as not having any godly profile and hence they stress that they are formations around human gods.

**Table No. 8.8.4
Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on the
Nature of Cultic Religion**

| Attitude | Cultic Religion is a social polarisation around human gods. | Cultic Religion is not a social polarisation around human gods | Total |
|-------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Indifferent | 14 (82.35%) | 3 (17.65%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 109 (78.99%) | 29 (21.01%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 156 (71.89%) | 61 (28.11%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 70 (89.74%) | 8 (10.26%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 349 (77.56%) | 101 (22.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 11.05 df = 3 Table Value = 7.82 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Occupation, Income, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.9: Religious Consciousness and Cultic Religion:

Religion is a pious social institution which teaches to consider everyone as god created and hence there shall not be any form of dislike and enmity among human beings. Moreover, pious religions teach everyone to live for the welfare of others. So no one shall harm others, in practice or even in thinking.

In this enquiry on cultic religion, analysis was carried out to reveal how the people look upon the form of religion from this perspective. Results of the analysis give very astonishing facts. Very high majority (70.44%) of the respondents state that the religious forms are not oriented towards spreading true religious consciousness. The rest

(29.56%) however, consider the religion as spear heading to the aim. In this sense they are not worth to call as religion. The reason may be that cultic religions are mushrooming by and large, in urban areas and they secure popularity among the people by indicating the personal attainment brought about by them, may be physical health, mental peace and even social status. There are only very few cultic religions, which really are interested to create a mind set in individual which is conducive for the welfare of the brothers and sisters all around. The orientation of the cultic religions might have been analysed by the people.

8.9.1: Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion:

The influence of Religious background on the perception is revealed in the analysis contained in Table No. 8.9.1. It is seen that the thumping majority of all religious groups feel that cultic religions are not capable of or caring to inculcating true religious sentiment in the people. However, it is to be noted that the Christians are softer towards cultic religions with regard to this matter. While 76.67% of the Hindus and 74% of the Muslims find fault with the movement, only 60.67% of the Christians rub shoulders with other religious groups in this aspect. The Christians are more liberal in matters like religious life. This helped the spread of many religious revival movements and sectarian sub-divisions, in Christian dominated countries. The Christians in this state are also more liberal in dealing with new movements, than the other groups are; it is to be so inferred.

Table no. 8.9.1
Religious Affiliation and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Creates Religious Consciousness in the New Generation | Does not create Religious Consciousness in the New Generation. | Total |
|-----------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Hindu | 35 (23.33%) | 115 (76.67%) | 150 (100%) |

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Muslim | 39 (26.00%) | 111 (74.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 59 (39.33%) | 91 (60.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 133 (29.56%) | 317 (70.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 10.59 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P<= 0.01

The Association is significant

8.9.2: Occupational Status and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion:

An enquiry to reveal the relationship, if any, existing between Occupational Status and the outlook shows that the Professional group has greater faith in the power of cultic religion to create religious consciousness. It is found that 40% of the respondents have positive opinions about cultic religion. 30.23% of the Manual Labourers and 25.38% of White Collars also follow suit. Professionals have specialised knowledge in their respective fields and they will not generally critically look at other matters like, religion, politics etc. So they simply repeat what they hear on matters like these. This may be what is happening here too. In the case of Manual Labourers they are ignorant about many things and also innocent in their reactions. This brings them in the second position here, next to the Professionals. In fact, White Collar employees are having opportunity for discussion and debate on various social matters. They have more critical thinking. This gives the result in respect of the group in this manner.

Table No. 8.9.2
Occupational Status and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion

| Occupational Status | Creates Religious Consciousness in the New Generation | Does not create Religious Consciousness in the New Generation. | Total |
|---------------------|---|--|--------------|
| Manual Labourers | 26 (30.23%) | 60 (69.77%) | 86 (100%) |
| White Collar | 67 | 197 | 264 |

| | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Employees | (25.38%) | (74.62%) | (100%) |
| Professionals | 40 (40.00%) | 60 (60.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 133 (29.56%) | 317 (70.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 7.47 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.9.3: Income Status and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion:

It is assumed that Income Status is a determinant of the outlook on the capacity of cultic religion to create true religious spirit. In the analysis given in this section, (Table No. 8.9.3), the respondents may be considered as dividing themselves into two portions. One group is stronger in its belief that cultic religion can not create religious spirit in people and the other group is not so strong in its opinion on the matter. It is to be further noticed that the first category is constituted by the lowest income group (below Rs. 3000/- per month) and the other is set up by all the other income groups taken together (since the strength of each group is almost similar). 40.57% of the lowest income (below Rs.3000/-) group and 25.48%, 27.54% and 26.87% respectively of the Rs.3000 – 6000, 6000 – 9000 and 9000 and above groups look upon cultic religion as having no moral strength to inculcate spirituality in the people. Usually, the poor is more indifferent to novel social trends. According to Maslow's principle, only after material need satisfaction human thinks about social and psychic welfare. The lowest income group is struggling to eke out the daily bread. Where is time for them to critically look at such social movement as Cultic Religion? They approach these novel trends with a negative attitude. This might be the reason for the response of the lowest income group in this manner.

Table no. 8.9.3
Income Status and the Perception on the Inculcation of Religious
Consciousness in Individual by Cultic Religion

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Creates religious consciousness in the new generation | Does not create religious consciousness in the new generation. | Total |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 43 (40.57%) | 63 (59.43%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 53 (25.48%) | 155 (74.52%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 19 (27.54%) | 50 (72.46%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 18 (26.87%) | 49 (73.13%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 133 (29.56%) | 317 (70.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.20 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P<= 0.05
 The Association is significant

8.9.4: Attitude Towards Religion and Capability of Cultic Religion to Create Religious Consciousness:

All attitudinal categories strongly believe that cultic religion is incapable of inculcating religious consciousness in the younger generation who are, by and large, the followers of such movements. Among the categories the “indifferent” group is more strong to the conviction that cultic religion is incapable of creating religious conscience in the clientele. The “favourable” group is comparatively least strong in its opinion (63.13%). The other two groups have almost equal strength under this response. The “indifferent” group may be trying to highlight the falsehood of all religious groups including the cultic ones.

Table No. 8.9.4
Attitude Towards Religion and Capability of Cultic Religion to
Create Religious Consciousness

| Attitude | Creates Religious Consciousness in the New Generation | Does not create Religious Consciousness in the New Generation. | Total |
|-------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Indifferent | 3 (17.65%) | 14 (82.35%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 31 (22.46%) | 107 (77.54%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 80 (36.87%) | 137 (63.13%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 19 (24.36%) | 59 (75.64%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 133 (29.56%) | 317 (70.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 11.07 df = 3 Table Value = 7.82 P<= 0.05
 The Association is significant

The association of the perception with other background variables, viz. Sex, Age, Education, Marital Status, Family size and Place of Residence was analysed and it was seen that they are not related. Hence the details of the analyses are not given here.

8.10: Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

Another probing was on the flourishing of cultic religion. The respondents were asked how far they favour the flourishing of cultic religion. Analysis of the elicited data reveals that 12.67% highly support the flourishing of such movements, 43.33% favour the spread on an average level and 44% do not favour the growth at all.

The analysis indicates that the reaction to this issue is very lukewarm (Table No. 8.10.1). In a country where any one has the freedom to practice and propagate religion of any form, what role we do have to object the Cultic Religion? Such was the stand taken by the respondents, it is to be presumed. However, when we take into account the results of the previous analyses on the functions of cultic religion, we may conclude that people are not much in favour to the growth and blooming of this form of religion.

When subsidiary analyses were carried out, it was found that Age, Religious Affiliation, Occupation and Family Size are associated with the outlook. The analyses are discussed in the following sections.

8.10.1: Age Status and the Support for the Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

The inter-relationship between the variables was revealed in the analysis contained in Table No. 8.10.1. It is interesting to note that the patterns of responses help to consider the grouping on the basis of Age into three categories. They are the lower age group (up to 30 years), middle age group (30 – 60 years) and the old age group (60 – 75 years). The first category favours the flourishing to the highest extent and the older age group the lowest. The result is a clear indication of the extent of upholding of liberal ideas by the different age groups. The youngsters are very liberal in religious matters, the old, conservative and the middle age group comes in between the two.

Table No. 8.10.1
Age Status and the Support for the Flourishing of Cultic Religion

| Age | Very much | Favour | Do not | Total |
|-----|-----------|--------|--------|-------|
|-----|-----------|--------|--------|-------|

| (in years) | favour | | favour | |
|------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 11 (14.47%) | 42 (55.26%) | 23 (30.26%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 25 (17.01%) | 56 (38.10%) | 66 (44.90%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 15 (11.63%) | 55 (42.64%) | 59 (45.74%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 6 (6.12%) | 42 (42.86%) | 50 (51.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 57 (12.67%) | 195 (43.33%) | 198 (44.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 13.72 df = 6 Table Value = 12.59 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.10.2: Religious Affiliation and the Support for the Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

The next analysis was started on the assumption that Religious Affiliation and the outlook are associated. The assumption is tested true in the analysis (Table No. 8.10.2). The pattern revealed in the analysis is that 52% of the Muslim, 44.67% of the Hindus and 35.33% of the Christians disfavour the spread of cultic religion. The rest of the respective groups, favour the spread to various levels. These statistics indicate that the displeasure towards the flourishing of cultic religion is the highest for Muslims and least for Christians. The Hindus come in between the other two groups. This is a clear portrayal of the general outlook of the religious groups. The Muslims are most conservative in religious matters and the Christians least. The flexibility of Hindus is medium on a comparative basis.

Table No. 8.10.2
Religious Affiliation and the Support for the Flourishing of
Cultic Religion

| Religious Affiliation | Very much favour | Favour | Do not favour | Total |
|-----------------------|------------------|--------|---------------|-------|
| | | | | |

| | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 26 (17.33%) | 57 (38.00%) | 67 (44.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 12 (8.00%) | 60 (40.00%) | 78 (52.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 19 (12.67%) | 78 (52.00%) | 53 (35.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 57 (12.67%) | 195 (43.33%) | 198 (44.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 13.88 df = 4 Table Value = 13.28 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

8.10.3: Occupational Status and the Support for the Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

The Occupation based analysis reveals that the Professionals are least disfavoured the flourishing and the spread of cultic religion. The highest opposition comes from the White Collar employees. The Manual Labourers take a via-media position in the matter. In the analysis (Table No. 8.9.2), we have highlighted the nature of critical analysis of the different occupational groups on various general matters around them. The reasoning may be applicable here too. The Professionals disinterest in general matters make them indifferent and that stand is reflected here. Similar explanations may be given to the outlook of the two other occupational groups.

Table No. 8.10.3
Occupational Status and the Support for the
Flourishing of Cultic Religion

| Occupational Status | Very much Favour | Favour | Do not favour | Total |
|---------------------|------------------|--------|---------------|-------|
| Manual | 9 | 42 | 35 | 86 |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Labourers | (10.47%) | (48.84%) | (40.70%) | (100%) |
| White Collar Employees | 26 (9.85%) | 113 (42.80%) | 125 (47.35%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 22 (22.00%) | 40 (40.00%) | 38 (38.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Total | 57 (12.67%) | 195 (43.33%) | 198 (44.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 11.44 df = 4 Table Value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.10.4: Family size and the Support for the Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

The Family Size based study reveals that where the family comprises more than 6 members, they invariably support the flourishing of the cultic religion. It evinces an inherent fact that where the responsibility and liabilities are more, there the frantic search for some solace in temporal life enhances and that can be counted as the cause for the unstinted support extended from this group of family size to the cultic religion. The highest opposition to cultic religion is from medium sized family, where the family consists of between 4 – 6 members. This group may have a staunch association with each other in the family, coming to the succour of the other at the time of need, enabling them to disregard any help from external organisations. Hence, the highest opposition is exhibited to the Cultic Religion from this group of family size. However, the small size family in tandem comes next to middle sized family in disfavoursing the flourishing of the Cultic religion.

Table no. 8.10.4

Family Size Status and Flourishing of New Cultic Religion

| Family size | Very much favour | Favour | Do not favour | Total |
|-------------|------------------|--------|---------------|-------|
| Up to 4 | 37 | 102 | 99 | 238 |

| | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| members | (15.55%) | (42.86%) | (41.60%) | (100%) |
| 4 – 6 members | 14 (7.73%) | 77 (42.54%) | 90 (49.72%) | 181 (100%) |
| 6 & above members | 6 (19.35%) | 16 (51.61%) | 9 (29.03%) | 31 (100%) |
| Total | 57 (12.67%) | 195 (43.33%) | 198 (44.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 9.90 df = 4 Table Value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

8.10.5: Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion on the Flourishing of Cultic Religion:

On the question of whether the attitudinal groups differ on their opinion on flourishing cultic religion, an enquiry was carried out as shown in Table No. 8.10.5. The analysis reveals that broadly two distinct patterns of responses can be identified. One pattern is constituted by the responses of the “indifferent” group and the “highly favourable” group and the other pattern by the other two attitudinal groups. Majority of the first two groups (indifferent and highly favourable) do not favour the flourishing of cultic religion. The highest segment of the favouring group (47.93%) somewhat support the flourishing of cultic religion. Almost equal strength of the “lukewarm” group is shown under the two responses, viz. somewhat favour and don’t favour. The “highly favourable” attitudinal group (61.54%) disfavour the flourishing of cultic religion, it is to be inferred, because of their fear that it may adversely affect their conventional religion. The indifferent group may be disfavouring because they do not like the spread of any kind of religion including the new ones.

Table No. 8.10.5
Attitude Towards Religion and Opinion on the
Flourishing of Cultic Religion

| Attitude | Very much favour | Favour | Do not favour | Total |
|-------------------|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 2 (11.76%) | 6 (35.29%) | 9 (52.94%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 19 (13.77%) | 59 (42.75%) | 60 (43.48%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 32 (14.75%) | 104 (47.93%) | 81 (37.33%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 4 (5.13%) | 26 (33.33%) | 48 (61.54%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 57 (12.67%) | 195 (43.33%) | 198 (44.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 15.47 df = 6 Table Value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

Summary:

The study reveals that human love and spiritual experience derived out of the collective activities are the two major reasons for people polarising around these movements. Conventional religions are oriented towards spirituality and the inclinations make them disenchanting to the modern people.

The study also revealed that the peoples' view that cultic religion will live long has a slight edge over the opposite view. The analysis reveals that an overwhelming majority (72.44%) of the respondents see nothing disadvantages to the social values from cultic religion. Analysis of data pertaining to the theme shows that majority of the respondents (59.33%) believe that foreign assistance by way of money and intellectual power are giving impetus for the rapid growth of cultic religion. However, the lion's share of the respondents (81.56%) is of the opinion that the

movements have adverse impact on the stability of society. On the basis of this analysis cultic religion is to be looked upon as a destabilising agent.

Analysis further reveals that the leaders of cultic religion are not the envoys of human brotherhood; rather they are ordinary humans having capacity to convert others to their side through overt talks and deeds. As revealed in the analysis 83.11% of the respondents do not consider them as envoys of brotherhood. After the enquiry about the leaders the nature of the followers was brought under the scanner of the community. The respondents were asked to reveal their perceptions on the nature of the followers of cultic religions. The responses revealed that there is no philanthropy in the followers. Majority (77.56%) of the respondents expressed the view that cultic religion is a social polarisation around human god. So it is to be taken for granted that Cultic Religion is a creation of humans and nothing else. It is also found that very high majority (70.44%) of the respondents' state that these religious forms are not oriented towards spreading true religious consciousness.

Reforming Religion

Chapter – 9

Chapter – IX

REFORMING RELIGION

This study enquired into the method of arresting religious disharmony prevailing in the society as a stumbling block to all its development. Though Kerala community is relatively free from communal flare ups, elements of distrust and skirmishes are prevalent here too. So this segment of the study is important particularly from the application point.

9.1: Means to Prevent Religious Intolerance:

The enquiry reveals that the major measures identified by the respondents of the study are imparting religious education, inculcation of spirituality in the minds of the people, participation of various religious groups in social activities which are oriented towards the overall development of the society and punishing the miscreants who instigate communal problems.

The data analysed indicates that imparting religious education is the most appropriate measure which may be adopted for preventing communal problems (40.44%). Next to this involvement of different religious groups in the social activities of the area is highlighted (33.36%). Inculcation of the spirituality in the people is a comparatively weak measure because only 17.78% only support this method. 2.22% see

proper punishment to erring people as a means to prevent communal problems. 6% do not feel any communal problem, which requires correction, existing in the society.

The results indicate the mastery of the Durkheimian proposition that the ill will of the present day society can be condoned by religion, if it is properly utilised.

Further analyses proved that gender, age status and religious affiliation are influencing the perspectives of the people.

9.1.1: Gender and Opinion on Means to Prevent Religious Intolerance:

Analysis based on gender indicates that there is difference between the perspectives of male and female members. The perceptions of the two groups on two points are to be particularly pointed out. While 33.94% of the females state that proper religious education can arrest communal tension, the corresponding figure in the case of the males is 44.21%. That is, the males are more supportive to the measure that is to be taken. The other point is that more of the females abstain from responding to this enquiry. 12.12% of the females and 2.46% of the males come under the category. On other points almost similar responses are seen. So the “no response” is creating the outlook differences. The females may be feeling that they are not competent to express opinion on such sensitive matters or they are afraid of expressing their views for fear of attracting the wrath of religion.

Table No. 9.1.1
Gender and Opinion on Means to Prevent the Religious Intolerance

| Gender | Religious education can prevent competition | Spiritual knowledge can prevent competition | Punishment can prevent competition | Harmonious Religious activities can prevent competition | No response | Total |
|--------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------|
| Female | 56 (33.94%) | 28 (16.97%) | 7 (4.24%) | 54 (32.73%) | 20 (12.12%) | 165 (100%) |
| Male | 126 (44.21%) | 52 (18.25%) | 3 (1.05%) | 97 (34.04%) | 7 (2.46%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 182 (40.44%) | 80 (17.78%) | 10 (2.22%) | 151 (33.56%) | 27 (6.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 23.93 df = 4 Table value = 13.28 P < = 0.01
The Association is significant

9.1.2: Age and Opinion on Means to Prevent the Religious Intolerance:

Analysis based on age reveals that the largest portion of all the age groups except “below 30 years” subscribe to the view that religious education is a solution to prevent competition among religious groups. In the case of the youngest age group, the largest portion is of the view that harmonious religious activities (community based social work, charitable work etc.) can condone religious competition and consequential social problems. Another important point is that 18.42% abstained from expressing their opinion. No other age group comes under this category beyond strength of 4.65%. Consolidating these facts we must state that the youngest age group distinguishes itself from others in this regard. It is very clear that youngsters are not very much committed to religious education. Many are reluctant to express their real outlook and hence they conceal their opinion by refusing the answer to the questions. The appreciation for social activities is revealed in their opinion that harmonious religious activities shall prevent religious rivalries.

Table No. 9.1.2
Age Status and Opinion on Means to Prevent the

Religious Intolerance

| Age (in years) | Religious education can prevent competition | Spiritual knowledge can prevent competition | Punishment can prevent competition. | Harmonious religious activities can prevent competition. | No response | Total |
|----------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 23 (30.26%) | 12 (15.79%) | 2 (2.63%) | 25 (32.89%) | 14 (18.42%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 64 (43.54%) | 22 (14.97%) | 5 (3.40%) | 50 (34.01%) | 6 (4.08%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 54 (41.86%) | 24 (18.60%) | 2 (1.55%) | 43 (33.33%) | 6 (4.65%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 41 (41.84%) | 22 (22.45%) | 1 (1.02%) | 33 (33.67%) | 1 (1.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 182 (40.44%) | 80 (17.78%) | 10 (2.22%) | 151 (33.56%) | 27 (6.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 31.26 df = 12 Table value = 26.22 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.1.3: Religious Affiliation and Opinion on Means to Prevent the Religious Intolerance:

Analysis of the data based on religious affiliation reveals that religious background is a determinant of the outlook. 44.67% (largest segment) of the Hindus believe that religious education is capable of arresting religious competition. Almost equal portion of the Muslims and Christians (38% and 38.67% respectively) come under this category. One point that is to be emphasised in the case of the Christians is that comparatively a large segment (25.33% of them believe that spiritual knowledge will douse religious competition. Regarding the Muslims the largest segment suggests (41.33%) harmonious religious activities as solution to unfriendly activities of religious groups. Another note worthy point is that 10% of the Hindus refuse to reveal their opinion on the issue. In short, the views of different religious groups are different on the issue.

Table No. 9.1.3
Religious Affiliation and Opinion on Means to Prevent the
Religious Intolerance

| Religious affiliation | Religious education can prevent competition | Spiritual knowledge can prevent competition | Punishment can prevent competition. | Harmonious religious activities can prevent competition. | No response | Total |
|-----------------------|---|---|-------------------------------------|--|----------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 67 (44.67%) | 20 (13.33%) | 5 (3.33%) | 43 (28.67%) | 15 (10.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslims | 57 (38.00%) | 22 (14.67%) | 2 (1.33%) | 62 (41.33%) | 7 (4.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 58 (38.67%) | 38 (25.33%) | 3 (2.00%) | 46 (30.67%) | 5 (3.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 182 (40.44%) | 80 (17.78%) | 10 (2.22%) | 151 (33.56%) | 27 (6.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 20.07 df = 8 Table value = 15.51 P <= 0.05
 The Association is significant

9.1.4: Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Measures to Prevent Religious Intolerance:

An analysis on the relationship between the attitude and outlook on the measures for containing religious intolerance revealed that they are related factors.

It is seen that those who are with “highly favourable” attitude towards religion consider imparting religious knowledge as the most effective method for attaining the aim (47.44%). A higher proportion of the group (19.23%) again favour escalation of spirituality in the minds of the people as a solution to arrest/reduce religious intolerance. Another interesting point that is to be highlighted is that 17.65% of those who are with “indifferent” attitude towards religion suggest punishment (use of force) as a panacea to condone the tendency. The other attitude categories, who are coming under this response is only below 2%. These facts indicate that those who have no favourable outlook towards religion feel that religious intolerance can be controlled using external

force. In contradiction to this, those who are devout religious people feel that the problem is to be solved by religious and spiritual enlightenment.

Almost 30% of all the attitude categories are not willing to reveal their mind in this matter.

Table No. 9.1.4
Attitude Towards Religion and Perception on the Measures to
Prevent Religious Intolerance

| Attitude | Religious education can prevent competition | Spiritual knowledge can prevent competition | Punishment can prevent competition | Harmonious religious activities can prevent competition | No response | Total |
|-------------------|---|---|------------------------------------|---|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 7 (41.18%) | 1 (5.88%) | 3 (17.65%) | 5 (29.41%) | 1 (5.88%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 56 (40.58%) | 22 (15.94%) | 2 (1.45%) | 43 (31.16%) | 15 (10.87%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 82 (37.79%) | 42 (19.35%) | 4 (1.84%) | 79 (36.41%) | 10 (4.61%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly Favourable | 37 (47.44%) | 15 (19.23%) | 1 (1.28%) | 24 (30.77%) | 1 (1.28%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 182 (40.44%) | 80 (17.78%) | 10 (2.22%) | 151 (33.56%) | 27 (6.00%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 32.44 df = 12 Table value = 21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.2: The Role of Religious Leaders in a Multi Religious Society:

Leadership is the gateway of any society to good fortune. In a plural society the responsibility of leaders is very high as in the absence of responsible leaders' group rivalry and conflict occurs. These will entail the loss of spirit of collective living. Religion is in fact the basis of pluralism of societies like ours. So the task of religious leaders outstretches leaps and bounds.

In the study an enquiry as to what shall be the role of a leader was conducted. Analysis of the responses shows that (Table No. 9.2.1) the highest segment (35.56%) opined that the leaders should consider all sections of humans are the children of the same God, whatever be the God named as. 23.11% believe that wisdom of the leader is very important in a plural society as it can cement all sections to a unified social mass under a political system. Unalloyed spirituality should be upheld by religious leaders as per the perspective of 17.33% of the respondents. Social harmony should be fostered by religious leaders according to the opinion of 15.11% of the respondents. So, on a consolidation of the opinion it can be concluded that a religious leader should be a person who is capable of integrating the different sections of the society.

When sub-analyses were conducted to identify association between the views and background variables, it was revealed that two variables, namely religious affiliations and marital status are associated with the outlook. The nature of association is discussed in the following sections.

9.2.1: Religious Affiliation and the Opinion on the Role of Religious Leaders in a Multi Religious Society:

Enquiries based on religious affiliation revealed that major sections of all religious groups subscribe to the view that religious should leaders consider all categories of people as children of the same God. However, of the religious groups the Christians stand far ahead of the other groups in upholding this view (43.33). The other Semitic religious group (Muslims) is at the lowest rung in the category (26% only). 37.33% of

the Hindus come under this category. Muslims have very high in-group solidarity that they can not accept others as their brethren. This outlook may be the reason for the slim group to come under this category. It is astonishing that the Hindus who pray for the well being of every entity, (*Loka Samastha Sukhino Bhavandu*) could not stand at par with Christians in this matter.

It is to be inferred that though theoretical Hinduism speaks of the well-being of everyone practically, it is highly stratified into insular groups. May it is called as caste groups. Practically Christianity tried to consider all groups within and out it on an equal footing. May be it had certain self interest to serve by this practical approach.

Table No. 9.2.1
Religious Affiliation and the Opinion on the Role of Religious Leaders in a Multi Religious Society

| Religious Affiliation | Religious leader should be wise | Should have the knowledge that all humans are children of God | Social harmony should be the aim | Should be spiritual | Should maintain mental equilibrium | Total |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 45 (30.00%) | 56 (37.33%) | 17 (11.33%) | 21 (14.00%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 32 (21.33%) | 39 (26.00%) | 33 (22.00%) | 29 (19.33%) | 17 (11.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christian | 27 (18.00%) | 65 (43.33%) | 18 (12.00%) | 28 (18.67%) | 12 (8.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 104 (23.11%) | 160 (35.56%) | 68 (15.11%) | 78 (7.33%) | 40 (8.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 21.62 df = 8 Table value = 20.09 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.2.2: Marital Status and the Opinion on the Role of Religious Leaders in a Multi Religious Society:

Analysis based on marital status (Table No.9.2.2) reveals that the married group clusters around two responses primarily, namely, (1) religious leader should be wise and (2) all entities are the children of the same God. The other group (the unmarried) persons are distributed under the categories without much skewness except the last one (should maintain mental equilibrium). However, those come under the second category (Should have the knowledge that all humans are children of same God) have a slight edge over others (29.63%). These differences help conclude us that the social background is associated with the responses. 36.86% married group state that all are children of the same God. This figure with respect to the unmarried group is 29.63%. They are the largest faction under the respective social categories. Married and family lives tempt persons to think about God and its power over everything worldly. This is because a married person is within a web of social relation and also attains maturity in thinking. This influences them to think about the ultimate reality which unites humans and all other species. In the case of unmarried persons, their independent and unattached life creates a different outlook in them.

Table No. 9.2.2
Marital Status and the Opinion on the Role of Religious Leaders in a Multi Religious Society

| Marital Status | Religious leader should be wise | Should have the knowledge that all humans are children of God | Social harmony should be the aim | Should be spiritual | Should maintain mental equilibrium | Total |
|----------------|---------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|---------------|
| Married | 90 (24.39%) | 136 (36.86%) | 50 (13.55%) | 57 (15.45%) | 36 (9.76%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 14 | 24 | 18 | 21 | 4 | 81 |

| | | | | | | |
|-------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (17.28%) | (29.63%) | (22.22%) | (25.93%) | (4.94%) | (100%) |
| Total | 104 (23.11%) | 160 (35.56%) | 68 (15.11%) | 78 (17.33%) | 40 (8.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square value = 11.67 df = 4 Table value = 9.49 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.3: Confine Religious Life to the Personal Domain:

Religious faiths and activities are for the spiritual need satisfaction of the individual. Similar faiths and activities bring individuals together and create social formations. This process creates in religion a social dimension. However, in certain situations individual (social formations) tries to transgress other similar formations to instil his/her/it's styles in the latter, which creates in turn, skirmishes and finally rivalry and even fight. Thus religion becomes dysfunctional. This dysfunctional aspect may be avoided if religion is practiced within the personal domain or at the most within the formation.

This study attempted to analyse the views of the people regarding the confinement of one's religious life to the personal domain. The analysis reveals that 93.11% of the respondents feel that if religion is practiced within the personal domain it's dysfunctional aspects can be avoided. The rest of the respondents (6.89%) do not see it as a solution to the religious conflict (Table No.9.3.1).

The background variables except gender, occupation and family size are associated with the view on this matter – the analyses reveal.

9.3.1: Age and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

When the outlook is analysed against age status it is seen that the 45 – 65 years age group is distinguishing itself from other age groups. 87.60% of the group feel that religion is to be confined to the personal domain. The figures in respect of the other age groups vary between 94.90% and 97.37%.

The younger two groups, namely, < 30 years and 30 – 45 years may be of the view that “if you want you do” regarding religious life itself. So they won’t advocate religion to be practiced in the “public sphere”. In the case of the older group (60 – 75 years) they are actually those who are practically liberated from active life (*Vanaprastha*). So they are not much worried about the exhibitionism in religious life. But the upper middle age group (45 – 60 years) consists of people who are eager to exhibit their life pattern in the public and influence others to follow their styles. Hence they believe that religious life need not be confined to the private domain.

Table No. 9.3.1
Age Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the
Personal Domain

| Age (in years) | Restrict religion to personal domain. | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|-------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Up to 30 | 74 (97.37%) | 2 (2.63%) | 76 (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 139 (94.56%) | 8 (5.44%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 113 (87.60%) | 16 (12.40%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 93 (94.90%) | 5 (5.10%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 9.23 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.3.2: Religious Affiliation and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

Religious affiliation influences the perception on how religion is to be practiced – the study indicates. In this situation, Hindus and Muslims are more of the outlook that religion is to be restricted to the personal domain, so that rivalry may be avoided. 99.33% of the Muslims and 92.67% of the Hindus subscribe to the view. In the case of the Christians it is comparatively low – only 87.33%. Perhaps the difference in the outlook may be due to the reason that in the state the two first mentioned religions dislike others' participation in their religious functions conducted in their institution. In the case of Christians, they willingly invite other religious followers to their churches and take part in the ceremonies. These habits may be influencing the respective groups to opine in the manner in which they did.

Table No. 9.3.2
Religious Affiliation and Opinion about Confining
Religion to the Personal Domain

| Religious Affiliation | Restrict religion to personal domain | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Hindu | 139 (92.67%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 149 (99.33%) | 1 (0.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 131 (87.33%) | 19 (12.67%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 16.91 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P <= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.3.3: Educational Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

When the data was analysed against educational status it is revealed that Higher Secondary educated are lesser interested to confine the religious life to the personal private domain. 13.75% believe that religion need not be observed in the private life. The corresponding figures in respect of the school and College educated are respectively 8% and 4.4%.

Table no. 9.3.3
Educational Status and Opinion about Confining
Religion to the Personal Domain

| Educational Status | Restrict religion to personal domain | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Up to SSLC | 92 (92.00%) | 8 (8.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 69 (86.25%) | 11 (13.75%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 258 (95.56%) | 12 (4.44%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.58 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.3.4: Income Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

In the case of income groups there is an inverse relationship between income status and opinion that religion should be practiced in the private domain. In the lowest income category 96.23% express that religion shall be practiced in the private life

(income below 3000). The figure gets reduced 85.07% when we come to the highest income category (Rs. 9000 and above). In the case of the Rs.3000 – 6000 it is 95.19% and for Rs. 6000 – 9000 it is 89.86%. It is found that the higher the income, the lesser the aspiration for practicing religion, in the private domain.

Table No. 9.3.4
Income Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the
Personal Domain

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Restrict religion to personal domain | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 102 (96.23%) | 4 (3.77%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 198 (95.19%) | 10 (4.81%) | 208 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 62 (89.86%) | 7 (10.14%) | 69 (100%) |
| 9000 and above | 57 (85.07%) | 10 (14.93%) | 67 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 10.89 df = 3 Table Value = 7.81 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.3.5: Marital Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

Among both the married and unmarried groups negligibly small portions of the respondents aspire for practicing religion in the public domain. However, of the two groups the unmarried are more for restricting the faith to the private domain (98.11%). The corresponding figure in respect of the married group is 91.87%. Married

persons have the responsibility to socialise their younger generation which requires the practice of their religion in an overt fashion.

Table No. 9.3.5
Marital Status and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain

| Marital Status | Restrict religion to personal domain | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|----------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Married | 339 (91.87%) | 30 (8.13%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 80 (98.77%) | 1 (1.23%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 4.92 df = 1 Table Value = 3.84 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.3.6: Place of Residence and Opinion about Confining Religion to the Personal Domain:

Place of residence has influence on the outlook of the people towards the theme. It is revealed that the urbanites are more aspiring for keeping religion away from the public domain. 95.56% of the respondents opined that it is wise if it is possible to practice religion as a private matter. The corresponding figure in respect of the ruralites is 90.67%. It is to be highlighted that the urbanities are living in a more culturally plural environment. So they have to be careful not interfere with the traditions of other cultural group. In the case of rural community, there may be enough social and physical space for practicing one's own religion without interfering others. So the difference in the outlook

Table no. 9.3.6
Residential Status and Opinion about Confining
Religion to the Personal Domain

| Residential Status | Restrict religion to personal domain | Need not restrict religion to personal domain. | Total |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------|--|---------------|
| Rural | 204 (90.67%) | 21 (9.33%) | 225 (100%) |
| Urban | 215 (95.56%) | 10 (4.44%) | 225 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 4.19 df = 1 Table Value = 3.84 P <= 0.05
 The Association is significant

9.3.7: Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on Confining Religious Life to the Personal Domain:

Attitude towards religion and outlook on confining religious life to the personal domain are intimately related, an analysis reveals. The more the favourable attitude towards religion, the greater the feeling that religious life is to be confined to the personal domain. This shows that those who are serious in their religious faith are of the view that religious life shall not be a show piece. Rather it should be pious, holy and related to the internal life of the individual.

Table No. 9.3.7
Attitude Towards Religion and Outlook on Confining
Religious life to the Personal Domain

| Attitude | Restrict religion to personal | Need not restrict religion to personal | Total |
|----------|-------------------------------|--|-------|
|----------|-------------------------------|--|-------|

| | domain | domain. | |
|-------------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Indifferent | 14 (82.35%) | 3 (17.65%) | 17 (100%) |
| Lukewarm | 123 (89.13%) | 15 (10.87%) | 138 (100%) |
| Favourable | 207 (95.39%) | 10 (4.61%) | 217 (100%) |
| Highly favourable | 75 (96.15%) | 3 (3.85%) | 78 (100%) |
| Total | 419 (93.11%) | 31 (6.89%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 9.36 df = 3 Table Value = 7.82 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.4: Governmental Involvement in Religious Matters:

In the history of many western societies it can be seen that politics was under the protégé of religion. It was so because there were no many religious groups existing. Even then there, simultaneously existed problems of, who should lead whom?

In our society the religious spectrum is very complex since it contains many shades. During “*Raja Raj*” there was religion – politics nexus in our society. However, present day democratic society of ours presumes to be free from politics – religion inter-connection and upholding secularism of Indian variety (Equal treatment to all religions by the government). But how far this impartiality is strictly followed is left anybody’s imagination.

This study’s investigation received the result that the people aspire for a perfect de-linking of polity and religion, in the name of whatever reason this perspective

is overthrown frequently. 95.56% of the respondents pointed out that the principle of secularism (no interference of politics in religion/ equal treatment to all religions by the government) should be strictly adhered to by the polity to maintain religious harmony and social peace (Table No. 9.4.1).

Sub-analyses conducted identify relationship between the background variables and the outlook. Only two variables, Family Size and Place of Residence, reveal lack of association with the perspective. The sub-analyses are given in the ensuing segment of this section.

9.4.1: Gender and the Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

Gender wise analysis of the data reveals that the males are more supportive to the philosophy that government should be impartial in its dealings with various religions. As seen in Table No. 9.4.1, 97.54% of the males subscribe to the view, while the corresponding figure in the case of the females is 92.112%. That is the seriousness of politics – religion interaction is not so seriously thought out by the women folk as the men do.

Table no. 9.4.1
Gender and the Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Gender | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|--------|---|--|---------------|
| Female | 152 (92.12%) | 13 (7.88%) | 165 (100%) |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Male | 278 (97.54%) | 7 (2.46%) | 285 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 7.24 df = 1 Table Value = 6.63 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.4.2: Age and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

The pattern of relationship between age and the outlook is clearly revealed in analysis Table No. 9.4.2. The younger age group is lesser supportive to the view that the government should strictly uphold the principle of neutrality to religions. The age groups except < 30 years have almost similar response in the matter. In the case of the group the supporting segment is constituted by 88.16%. But in the case of the other groups the strength of the segment is around 96% of the respective groups.

The general expectation is that the younger age group is more against governmental interference in religious matters. But the results contradict the impression. Perhaps they may be under the impression that in a religiously plural social system, if the groups are left to free activities that may create social problems of various types. So the government shall keep a watchful eye on the activities of the various religious groups.

Table no. 9.4.2
Age and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Age (in years) | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|-------------------|--|---|-------|
| Up to 30 | 67 | 9 | 76 |

| | | | |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (88.16%) | (11.84%) | (100%) |
| 30 – 45 | 142 (96.60%) | 5 (3.40%) | 147 (100%) |
| 45 – 60 | 124 (96.12%) | 5 (3.88%) | 129 (100%) |
| 60 – 75 | 97 (98.98%) | 1 (1.02%) | 98 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 12.97 df = 3 Table Value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.4.3: Religious Affiliation and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

The religious groups have different levels of agreement with the principle that government shall not interfere with religions – the analysis of the data indicates 100% of the Muslims, 94% of the Hindus and 92.67% of the Christians believe that the Government should keep equal distance from all religions to avoid religious rivalries. The rest of the groups do not feel so. The Christians in the study are not getting any patronage from the government while the two other religions are supported by the government. In the case of the Hindus there is the *Devasom* and the Muslims, the *Wakhaf Board*. Does this fact has something to do with the outlook of the Christians in this context? Or do they feel that the polity has to have power over all aspects of social life. Further probing is necessary.

Table no. 9.4.3
Religious Affiliation and Perspective on the Necessity for
Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Religious Affiliation | Government is to keep equal | Government need not keep equal | Total |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------|
| | | | |

| | distance to all religions | distance to all religions | |
|------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| Hindu | 141 (94.00%) | 9 (6.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Muslim | 150 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 150 (100%) |
| Christians | 139 (92.67%) | 11 (7.33%) | 150 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value =10.78 df = 2 Table Value = 9.21 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.4.4: Educational Status and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

It is the general impression that the higher the education of the people, the greater the aspiration for non – interference of the polity in religious domains. But this study has a contradictory result to supply from its analysis relating to the theme. From analysis Table No. 9.4.4, it is seen that 93.33% of the College educated respondents believe that polity shall keep equal distance from all religion. However, the other two groups more against the involvement of polity in religions. 98% of the School and 100% of the Higher Secondary educated respondents stand for polity to keep equal distance from all religion. What is the conscience of the College educated people can not be explained without further examination?

Table no. 9.4.4
Educational Status and the Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Educational Status | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|--------------------|---|--|-------|
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| Up to S.S.L.C | 98 (98.00%) | 2 (2.00%) | 100 (100%) |
| Higher Secondary | 80 (100.00%) | 0 (0.00%) | 80 (100%) |
| College | 252 (93.33%) | 18 (6.67%) | 270 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 8.27 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.4.5: Occupational Status and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

Occupational status wise analysis also indicates results similar to the ones got in the previous analysis (educational status and the outlook). The professionally qualified people are more for the Government to involve in religious matters even if it is not on an equal treatment basis to all religions. Here too we are bit baffled by the results as to why the better positioned professionals stand for the polity to interfere with the matters of religion, is a question which is to answer after further deliberations.

Table no.9.4.5
Occupational Status and Perspective on the Necessity for
Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Occupational Status | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|------------------------|---|--|---------------|
| Manual Labourers | 84 (97.67%) | 2 (2.33%) | 86 (100%) |
| White Collar Employees | 255 (96.59%) | 9 (3.41%) | 264 (100%) |
| Professionals | 91 | 9 | 100 |

| | | | |
|-------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (91.00%) | (9.00%) | (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 6.46 df = 2 Table Value = 5.99 P <= 0.05
The Association is significant

9.4.6: Income Status and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

An enquiry into the nature of influence of income status on the outlook reveals that the upper middle income group (Rs.6000 – 9000) has slight disjoining with other income groups. While other groups almost concur in the matter, whether polity can interfere with religion, even on a discretionary basis, this group is more supportive to such interference. 15.94% believe that Government shall have the prerogatives to do so if situation arises. The view is expressed by negligible percentage of other income groups. The middle income group is a more involving group on every walk of social life, including economic activities. They may be of the view that if Government is to protect the multifarious interest of people why not it can interfere with such activities like religious life which has crumbling consequences in society, if not properly monitored.

Table no. 9.4.6
Income Status and Perspective on the Necessity for
Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Income Status (Monthly in Rs.) | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|---------------|
| Up to 3000 | 104 (98.11%) | 2 (1.89%) | 106 (100%) |
| 3000 – 6000 | 64 (95.52%) | 3 (4.48%) | 67 (100%) |
| 6000 – 9000 | 58 | 11 | 69 |

| | | | |
|--------------|-----------------|---------------|---------------|
| | (84.06%) | (15.94%) | (100%) |
| 9000 & above | 204 (98.08%) | 4 (1.92%) | 208 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 26.22 df = 3 Table Value = 11.34 P<= 0.01
The Association is significant

9.4.7: Marital Status and Perspective on the Necessity for Governmental Neutrality to Religions:

Married people are more matured in their social outlook and activities. Wait and see is the strategy they usually follow. On the basis of this felt difference between the groups this study also investigated into the difference in the perspectives of the married and unmarried groups. The enquiry reveals that there is difference in the outlook. The married group is more in favour of keeping the polity away from religious matters.

Table no. 9.4.7
Marital Status and Perspective on the Necessity for
Governmental Neutrality to Religions

| Marital Status | Government is to keep equal distance to all religions | Government need not keep equal distance to all religions | Total |
|----------------|---|--|---------------|
| Married | 356 (96.48%) | 13 (3.52%) | 369 (100%) |
| Unmarried | 74 (91.36%) | 7 (8.64%) | 81 (100%) |
| Total | 430 (95.56%) | 20 (4.44%) | 450 (100%) |

Chi-square Value = 4.10 df = 1 Table Value = 3.84 P<= 0.05
The Association is significant

Summary:

In this chapter an attempt is made to find solutions to prevent five ranking social problems prevalent in our society. The view of the respondents highlights certain ideas in order to harmonise the social ambience. The five social problems discussed in this chapter are:

1. Means to prevent religious intolerance,
2. The role of religious leaders in a multi religious society,
3. Confine religious life to the personal domain,
4. Governmental involvement in religious matters,

So as to prevent communal problems, the most appropriate measure which can be suggested is imparting religious education to every one in the society. Involvement of different religious groups in the social activities comes next to education only to fetch social cohesion.

A religious leader can play a vital role for the social coherence of the society. First of all, the religious leader should possess the sagacity and acumen to perceive and also to impart to others that all sections of humans are the children of the same God regardless of the nomenclature or sobriquet a person takes to invoke him.

Another vital point to be adduced is that religion is to be practiced within the personal domain of the individual and should not create an hallucination to others at any cost. It is viewed by majority of the respondents that if religion is practiced within

the personal domain, a slew of furore and ruckus can be avoided, which in turn as a corollary effect will bring peaceful and salubrious atmosphere in the society

The study throws light to the fact that if the policy of equal treatment to all religions by the polity is strictly adhered to and if secularism is upheld in its right spirit by keeping equal distance to all religions by the Government, we would be able to maintain religious harmony and social peace in our society.

Conclusion

Chapter-10

Chapter X

CONCLUSION

This study is aimed at finding out the functions and dysfunctions of religion in contemporary society and to suggest measures to reduce the dysfunctions of this pious and age-old social institution.

MAJOR OBJECTIVES:

The major objectives of the study are:

1. to analyse the attitude of contemporary society towards religion.
2. to assess the influence of the attitude towards religion on the perception of the community on the functions and dysfunctions of religion.
3. to assess the social functions and dysfunctions of religion in contemporary society.
4. to explain the reasons for the increasing popularity of cultic religions in terms of their functions and dysfunctions.
5. to suggest measures for arresting the problems created by religions in contemporary society.

Under the above major objective the following hypotheses were formulated for testing. Subsidiary hypotheses tested are given at the appropriate contexts.

HYPOTHESES:

Based on the objectives, this study formulated the following hypotheses for testing:

1. Religion as a social institution has both functions and dysfunctions in contemporary Kerala society and its functions outweigh the dysfunctions.
2. The positive functions of religion create favourable attitude of the people towards religion
3. Pious motives of religion promote mental hygiene of its followers and thus a healthy social psyche is created.
4. Material Motives drive the contemporary society towards religion and they create inter-religious hostilities
5. Progressive strengthening of any one religious group in the public sphere necessitates other groups also to strengthen themselves which ultimately creates religious hostilities.
6. Religion prevents the widening of the gap between the poor and the rich.
7. Religious leadership can create insular or cosmopolitan outlook within their religious group and hence the hostility and harmony can be created between them by the leadership.
8. The overloading of metaphysics in conventional religion gives popularity to cultic religion, which is more people friendly.
9. Cultic religions' rational approaches to modern life make them more attractive to the society.
10. The social background of the people influences their perceptions on the functions and dysfunctions of religion.

Brief Methodology:

The major source of primary data was interview of 450 heads of household or the eldest adult member who can supply the data, using a semi-structured interview schedule. The schedule enquired into the relevant matters to facilitate the testing of the hypotheses formulated in the study. For the selection of the sample, the state was considered as three zones, the North, the Middle and the South. The Zones are represented respectively by the Districts of Kozhikode, Ernakulam and Thiruvananthapuram. One rural and one urban area were selected from each of these districts. Equal representation was given for rural and urban population in the sample by adopting suitable stratification technique. Secondary data were collected from published materials and knowledgeable persons.

A compendium of the results and inference derived out of them are given below. Association between independent and dependent variables has been highlighted wherever it exists.

10.1: Attitude Towards Religion:

The study reveals that 48.22% and 17.33% have respectively favourable and highly favourable attitude towards religion. It means a majority of the respondents (65.55%) has a penchant towards religion. It is not an astonishing fact since being religious is an innate quality of human being. The analysis shows that religion is more favourably looked upon by the lowest and highest age groups. We see that overwhelming majority of both the Muslims and Christians have favourable attitude towards religion (82.67% and 70.66% respectively Table No.5.1.2). The results indicate that the Semitic religions with its steel frame have the capacity to attract the members to them and keep them adhering to them. Another significant result is that among the different educational groups, comparatively school educated respondents has more (25%) favourable

fascination for religion. It is also found that the higher income brackets have lesser fascination towards religion. Similarly, the lukewarm attitude towards religion increases with increase in income. The revelation evinces that the material prosperity and affinity towards religion do not go together.

Also it is found in the study that larger family is having greater favour to religion i.e. 61.29% of them show favourable attitude and 16.13% high favour towards religion. A larger portion of the small families have lukewarm attitude (34.45%). It may be due to the fact that religion being a strong agent of social control, the larger families seeks the support to a greater extent from it.

10.2: Religious Beliefs:

Belief is the conviction of things not seen and assurance of things hoped for. It is found in the study that 56.22% uphold the opinion that God is the unseen force which controls the world and people look upon God as a super natural all powerful force. Also amongst the Semitic religions Islam is more firm in their religious conviction and Christians stand next to Muslims. Hindus stand at the bottom of the ladder. It is conspicuous from the derived figures of Table No.5.2.2 that equal portions of the Hindus and Christians (37.33%) each admit that God can not be explained. 32.67% of Muslims also subscribe to the view. It can be seen that College educated to a lesser extent (54.44%) are subscribing to the view that “God is an unseen force” compared to school educated (59%). It shows that the College educated are more savvy and discerning, compared to the school educated.

The analysis (Table 5.3.1) reveals that 58.22% of the respondents believe that ‘God’ is ‘a living one’, (human like entity without physical existence). The analysis

highlights that a majority of people view God as a power which has human characteristics without physical existence. Analysis on the relationship between age and perception on the nature of God reveals that the older people have more faith in the 'Living Nature of God'. The abstract nature of God is more emphasised by the Hindus (43.33%). It can be attributed to the fact that according to the concept of Hindus God is very abstract in nature.

From the study it is revealed that the portion of those who consider God as a living God decreases with increase in income. The study indicates that the perception differs according to family size. The larger the family, the deeper the faith in God, that "God is a living entity". A reverse trend is seen in the faith of God as an abstract entity; larger families are lesser in the group (12.90%).

The analysis reveals that the lion's share of the respondents subscribes to the view that all religions are essentially the same (88.67%). The analysis in undisputed terms substantiates that Kerala community shows respect to the concept of secularism by showing equal respect to all religions, native and immigrant. The study reveals that the Muslims are more secular in their perception, followed by Hindus and lastly in tandem comes Christians.

On the whole, the analysis reveals that religious faith is increasing. When things go beyond the control of human beings, they instinctively look unto the unseen power and surrender themselves unto the God's Providence to balance their life. It is very evident that regardless of religious difference, people feel that religious faith is increasing in society.

It is the flooding of worshipers and pilgrims that create the impression that religious faith is increasing. The Semitic religions insist on the getting-together of the believers for worshipping God. But for the Hindus such coming-together is not necessary for expressing their faith. So they consider the increase in the offerings as a measure of increase in the faith instead of increase in worshippers.

10.3: Religious Practices:

Practice is a customary way of doing things. It is revealed in the study that 93.56% of the respondents are in the habit of visiting religious places on one pretext or the other. Some persons go there simply because of inquisitiveness and to see what is going on there and yet some others to make a livelihood by some kind of activities even nefarious, heinous and sleazy. In this matter the Muslims are not that much particular to visit religious places as the other two groups are.

The analysis revealed that 73.33% of the respondents are in the habit of giving offerings and the rest are not (26.76%). So, it is to be concluded that majority of the people are complying with the spiritual and moral outlook that the wealth one possesses is the gift of God and a portion of the possessed should be returned to the supplier (God) for the benefit of the fellow and lower category beings (Table No. 5.8.1). While overwhelming majority of the Hindus (88%) and Christians (92.67%) uphold the tradition of making offerings of different kinds in religious places only a minority of Muslims (39.33%) follow the practice. The Muslims may be giving service in the places of worship in various forms instead of giving offerings. Or they may be giving money for the welfare of the deserving among their brethren.

It was seen that offering prayers to God is palatable for an overwhelming majority of the population. That is, the people in general subscribe to the belief that humans are powerless before the nature and all the creations are at the mercy of a power, God. The analysis reveals that the females are more interested to pray to God for his/her blessings. In our culture, if we look back to history, the female members are more at the helm of spiritual activities. The socialisation process of female members explains the result of the analysis. Religion wise analysis of the data gives support to the presumption that Muslims are more committed to daily praying. Among the educational categories, the school educated shows more interest in conducting daily prayer than the Higher Secondary and College educated do. Also it is revealed that the lesser the income the more the inclination for conducting daily prayer. This indicates the difficulty to prosper both in materialism and spirituality.

10.4: Functions of Religion:

The result of the study evinces that religion is a strong cementing factor of society. Emile Durkheim while analysing the functions of religion in society has pointed out that it is a strong factor for bringing the shattered society together. So, the result of this analysis is corroboration to the philosophy of the eminent French philosopher. It is seen that the men are more emphasising this power of religion than the females do. There is a general trend of seeing religion as a unifying force to a greater extent among the older people. Also the Muslims feel religion as more a unifying agent and the feeling is least among the Hindus. It is also found that the lower the educational attainment, the stronger the feeling that religion is a unifying force in society. The agreement to the perception that religion is unifying agency of people is very high in the lowest income group (Rs. Below 3000/- per month). The faith in the unifying power of religion is more among the larger families. Attitude towards religion and the opinion on the unifying

power of religion are associated. It is seen that 83.33% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the unifying power of religion.

The analysis revealed that 56.89% of the respondents have very high appreciation for the charity shown by religion in contemporary society. Another 39.89% moderately appreciate this profile of religion. Thus, we can come to the inference that religion is showing its humane quality in contemporary social situations. Though all the three groups have all praise for charity according to their ideologies in real life situation charity is very much practiced by Muslim community. 93.59% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the unifying power of religion.

The religious life itself is a purificatory process of physical, mental and spiritual activities of human beings. When the elicited data was analysed it was seen that 74.22% of the respondents support the view that religion helps to create cleanliness in human life. . From this analysis it is revealed that religion has the capacity to promote cleanliness in human life. The study reveals that relatively, the young and old age groups have stronger opinion that religion has the capacity to bring about cleanliness in human life. 75% of the young age group (below 30 years) and 78.57% of the old age group (60 - 75 years) support the view that religion is capable of creating cleanliness in the physical, social and psychic lives of human beings. The Muslims are strong supporters of the view that religion is a cleanliness maintaining agent. 60% of them strongly believe that this is a fact and 27.33% have moderate agreement with the perspective.

Analysis of data reveals that overwhelming majority of the people have faith in the humane outlook of religion. Analysis on the basis of gender indicates that almost equal proportion of the females (84.84%) and the males (84.77%) subscribe to the

view that religion promotes human love. However, the depth of the feeling is very high among the males. 61.75% of the males and 45.45% of the females do strongly believe that religion has this capacity. Females are more oriented to practice religion for their spiritual realisation than to look at the sociological implication of religious life. Majority of the two religious groups, Muslims and Christians (68.67% and 52.67% respectively) showed deep faith in this function of religions. Among the lowest income group (below Rs.3000/-) the opinion is the strongest. 63.21% very strongly agree to the view that religion is capable of bringing about brotherhood. 30.19% even though do not express such deep faith are of the opinion that religion has such a profile. In all religious groups the lower stratum is getting financial and other material benefits either from their respective groups or from other groups even. So such helps prompt them to see the humane quality of religion.

It is seen that 77.56%, (of which 43.56% of the respondents of this study have strong agreement with this view and another 34% have somewhat concurrence) considered religion as an agency which brings forth contentment with life. So from this study we shall conclude that religion helps to lead a contented life. One important feature that is to be noted is that majority (58.67%) of the Muslims very strongly agree to the vision that religion can give contentment with life. Regarding the relationship between attitude towards religion and contentment with life, it is revealed that 93.59% of the respondents who have highly favourable attitude are strong believers that religion inculcates contentment with life in people. That is, the stronger the attitude the stronger the faith in the function.

Analysis supports the assumption that religion is an effective agency for social control. Muslims consider religion as a strong agency of social control. From

Table No. 6.6.2 it can be seen that as the family size increases, the opinion that religion is an agent of social control also increase. It can be seen that 84.62% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the social control function of religion.

In to 94.44% of the respondents are of the view that religion plays a role in creating and maintaining social stability. The older generation's affectivity to religion is revealed. They believe that not only the spiritual need of the individual but also the social stability of the group is taken care of by religions. An overwhelming 85.33% of the Muslims are of the opinion that Religion is an agent of creating social stability and 69.33% of the Christians also subscribe to the opinion. Coming to the relationship between education and the perception, it is seen that the lesser educated people are stronger in their support to religion as an agency for fostering social stability. Occupation wise analysis of the data indicates that the manual labourers are very strong in their support to religion on this account. The larger families are stronger in their opinion that religion is an efficient agency for inculcating stability in society. In the case of larger families, they have to fall back on agencies like religion for socialising their members. Ultimately, they see religion as a reliable agency for social stability. It is further revealed that 88.46% of the respondents who have highly favourable attitude are strong supporters of this function of religion.

The analysis reveals that 56.67% of the respondents have great appreciation for the role played by religion in spreading education. As everybody acknowledges, in the spread of modern education the Christian community has been taking pioneering efforts. Of late, the Muslims also came to the scene. Investment and enthusiasm shown by Hindu community is comparatively less. An enquiry into the

association of the outlook with the educational status reveals that the respondents with lower educational status are more attracted by the efforts taken by religion in the spread of education. In analysis (Table No. 6.8.4), it is revealed that 72.09% of the manual labourers (very high majority) and 54.92% of the white collar employees (majority) have great appreciation for the work done by religion in the spread of education. It is seen that the lesser the income, the greater the strength of appreciation for the efforts taken. 74.53% of the lowest income category (Rs. <3000/-) have very great appreciation for the work done by religion. It may be because the lower income groups are enjoying the free service extended by agencies including religious organisations. It can be seen that 74.36% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the role of religion in the spread of education

The people of the study area do not have the impression that religion is causal for the deterioration of the status of women in society. It is seen in the study that while 91.33% each of the Christians and Muslims state that religion does not affect the status of women adversely only 80.66% of the Hindus subscribe to the view.

Majority of all the attitude categories do not believe that religion has any adverse impact on the status of women. It can be seen that 94.87% of those who have strong positive attitude towards religion are strong supporters of the view that religion does not affect adversely the status of women.

10.5: Dysfunction of Religion:

Like any other field in religion too temporality surged into relegating its very existence in holiness and purity. In contemporary society religion has become the

centre stage for many worldly activities and hence the pious profile of it is considerably lost. These negative functions have been analysed in this study.

Analysis reveals that an overwhelming majority believe that the ethics of religion are lost due to this interaction (82.44%) between religion and politics. The younger the people they are more anxious over the erosion of religious ethics due to the influence of politics. As revealed in Table No.7.1.3, a higher proportion of unmarried respondents (91.36%) subscribe to the view that political affiliation of religion will be a threat to ethical principles. It is seen in Analysis No. 7.1.4 (on attitude towards religion and perception on the relationship between religion and politics) that in general those who have more affinity to religion are more against the religion – politics nexus and vice versa.

Another index of adverse impact of religion is the after effect of accumulation of material wealth by religious groups. It is revealed in the study that 78% of the respondents highlighted the adverse impact of the trend and they pointed out that disproportionate accumulation of material wealth by this kind of groups or organisations nullify their spiritual and humanistic orientations and create rivalry and unhealthy competitions among the groups. On a consolidation of the views, it is to be concluded that the true function of religion is vitiated by religion when it goes out of its expected domain (Table 7.2.1). . It is revealed that 80.70% of the male members and 73.33% of the female members are of the view that it is adverse to the spirit of religion to accumulate wealth beyond what is absolutely necessary. The analysis indicates that group rivalry as an off-shoot is more emphasised by the Hindus (89.33%). Too much greed for material wealth of religions is for the aggravation of social pathology. The analysis (Table No. 7.2.3) indicates that the school and College educated have similar view that

unnecessary accumulation of material wealth by religious groups will enhance animosity between religions. The analysis indicates that all the occupational categories smell the danger of escalating religious rivalry by the accumulation of material wealth by religious groups. The apprehension is more strong among the manual labourers. It is seen that the larger families are more perceiving the grave situation of social disruption that is created by the acquisition of wealth disproportionately by the religious groups.

The results reveal that the people perceive the economic activities of religion as pastures of corruption and social injustice. 43.03% of the females and 36.14% of the males opine that the poor will not be benefited by the money transactions of any religious group. The Hindus very strongly (66.67%) indicate that money transaction by religion under the pretext charity can enhance social injustice. It is interesting to note that the highest section of the Christians (47.33%) uphold the view that money transaction will not benefit the poor, even when Christian ethics have no hesitation to think about capital accumulation. Coming to the responses of the occupational groups 50% of the professionals, the highest faction of them indicates that the money transaction in no way is helpful to improve the conditions of the poor people. The study indicates that smaller families are feeling more about the injustice brought about by the money dealings of religions.

Majority of the females (52.12%) feel that religions only give secondary importance to females. Interestingly, those who subscribe to the view among males also have a slight edge over those who believe in the other way round. Majority of the Hindu and Christian (57.33% and 52% respectively) believe that religion is pampering the males and pin-pricking the females in this regard. But in the case of the Muslims majority feel that the females are considered on par with the males. According to marital status, almost

equal proportion of the two groups (50.41% and 49.38% respectively of married and unmarried persons) stated that females are given only secondary importance by religions.

Religious fundamentalism is, in fact, a dialectics of religious life. It is found that 95.11% of the respondents are of the view that religion has become a tension creating agency in the social fabric. Both gender groups overwhelmingly adhere to the view that religious fundamentalism, competition and conflicts arising out of it are present in our society. It is found that 89.70% of the females and 98.25% of the males subscribe to the view. The School (SSLC) educated group feel the group rivalry and resultant conflict among religious groups to the greatest extent. It is found that 96.21% of the married respondents stated that religion based competition and conflict are increasing.

10.6: Cultic Religion:

Cult is a particular system of religious worship, especially with reference to its rites and ceremonies. It can be further interpreted as a group bound together by veneration of the same thing, person, ideal etc.

The study reveals that the human love and spiritual experience derived out of the collective activities are the two major reasons for people polarising around these movements. Conventional religions are oriented towards spirituality and the inclinations make them disenchanting to the modern people. . The manual workers and the professionals come closer in their outlook. They stress the humanism achieved through cultic religion (55% of the former group and 57.58% of the latter) and that is the cause for mushrooming of the cultic religion.

The study reveals that the common view of the people that cultic religion will live long has a slight edge over the opposite view. Religion based analysis shows that majority of the Hindus and Muslim respondents (52% and 55.33% respectively) opine that cultic religion has long life. It is seen that the greater the income the lesser the opinion that the cultic religion has longer life. In the case of those who believe that the cultic religion is a temporary phenomenon, the strength increases as we come through the lower income to higher income statuses. It is revealed in the study that urbanites favour the cultic religion more. An explanation for this result is very easy. New movements are more affecting the urbanites. We know that the nuclei of cultic religions are urban centres.

The analysis reveals that an overwhelming majority (72.44%) of the respondents see nothing disadvantages to the social values from cultic religion Hindu Religion is more tolerant to the cultic religion than the Semitic Religions are. And the manual labourers are more unaccommodative to cultic religion in comparison with White Collar employees and the Professionals. While only around 25% of the other attitudinal groups express that cultic religion is a menace to the existing social values majority (52.56%) of the group which upholds “highly favourable” attitude towards religion highlight that cultic religion is a menace to the value system. This result reveal that the commitment to the conventional religion of the group makes them blind and stand against any other form of religious ideologies and practices. All other groups have almost uniform opinion that the new version of religion need not be considered as harmful to the society.

Analysis of data pertaining to the theme shows that majority of the respondents (59.33%) believe that foreign assistance by way of money and intellectual

power are giving impetus for the rapid growth of cultic religion. This is a very disturbing matter that there is the overt and covert support of foreign forces for the cultic movements. The Hindus come at the lower rung among those who believe that foreign support helps increase cultic religion. At the apex we see the Muslims and in between come the Christians. Analysis in Table No. 8.4.3 indicates the “indifferent” group is very strong in their belief that foreign funds are strong supporter of spread of the religious movement. Those who have “highly favourable” attitude come next to the indifferent group in this matter.

Analysis of Table No.8.5.1 shows that the people have no much appreciation for cultic religion in this regard. The lion’s share of the respondents (81.56%) feels that the movements have adverse impact on the stability of society. On the basis of this analysis cultic religion is to be looked upon as destabilising agent. These results have sustenance in the sense that many of these movements are attracting allegations that they are centres of clandestine economic activities. Age wise analysis indicates that all the age categories are highlighting the adverse impact of Cultic Religion on the stability of the wider society. Analysis on the relationship between Religious Affiliation and the perception reveals that the Muslims feel the adverse impact of Cultic Religion on the social stability to the greatest extent and Christians the least. Table No.8.5.3 contains analysis of the empirical data based on Marital Status. As revealed in the analysis the unmarried respondents are more sceptic about the usefulness of cultic religion to the total society in terms of stability inculcation.

As revealed in the analysis (Table No. 8.6.1) 83.11% of the respondents do not consider leaders of cultic religions as envoys of brotherhood; rather they are ordinary humans having capacity to convert others into their side through overt talks and

deeds. Those who believe that Leaders of Cultic Religions are not precursors of brotherhood are comparatively high among the Muslim community (93.33%).

As per the study there is no philanthropy in the followers of cultic religion. In terms of the responses 68.67% believe that the followers have no philanthropic orientation. All the three religious groups (Hindus, Muslims and Christians) solidly stand behind the outlook that the followers are not philanthropists. Among the different groups the Muslims are stronger in their view, and then come the Hindus and finally the Christians.

Majority of respondents (77.56%) expressed that cultic religion is a social polarisation around human god. So it is to be taken for granted that Cultic Religion is a creation of humans and nothing else. It is revealed in the study that the older age group is more critical about the divine nature of cultic religion. They are closer to conventional religion than the younger groups are. No religious group gives its heavy weight to the divine nature of cultic religion. Majority of all groups say that it is social polarisation around human gods. The perceptions of Muslims are more conventional that they very strongly reveal that cultic religion is merely banding of persons around human gods. Overcrowding majority of all the attitudinal groups consider that cultic religion is a social polarisation around humans who create the impression that they are the incarnation of God (human gods).

Very high majority (70.44%) of the respondents' state that the religious forms are not oriented towards spreading true religious consciousness. It is seen that the thumping majority of all religious groups feel that cultic religions are not capable of or caring to inculcating true religious sentiment in the people. While 76.67% of the

Hindus and 74% of the Muslims find fault with the movement, only 60.67% of the Christians rub shoulders with other religious groups on this aspect. All attitudinal categories strongly believe that cultic religion is incapable of inculcating religious consciousness in the younger generation who are, by and large, the followers of such movements.

It is revealed in the analysis that 52% of the Muslim, 44.67% of the Hindus and 35.33% of the Christians disfavour the spread of cultic religion. These statistics indicate that the displeasure towards the flourishing of cultic religion is the highest for Muslims and least for Christians. The Hindus come in between the other two groups. The Occupation based analysis reveals that the Professionals are least disfavoured the flourishing and the spread of cultic religion. The highest opposition comes from the White Collar employees. The Manual Labourers take a via-media position in the matter. The Family Size based study reveals that where the family comprises more than 6 members, they invariably support the flourishing of the cultic religion. It evinces an inherent fact that where the responsibility and liabilities are more, there the frantic search for some solace in temporal life enhances and that can be counted as the cause for the unstinted support extended from this group. Among the attitudinal groups, majority of the “indifferent” and “highly favourable” groups do not favour the flourishing of cultic religion.

10.7: Reforming Religion:

The data analysed indicates that imparting religious education is the most appropriate measure which may be adopted for preventing communal problems (40.44%). While 33.94% of the females state that proper religious education can arrest communal tension, the corresponding figure in the case of the males is 44.21%. Analysis

based on age reveals that the largest portion of all the age groups except “below 30 years” subscribe to the view that religious education is a solution to prevent competition among religious groups. 44.67% (largest segment) of the Hindus believe that religious education is capable of arresting religious competition. Almost equal portion of the Muslims and Christians (38% and 38.67% respectively) come under this category. It is found that the views of different religious groups are different on the issue. It is seen that those who are with “highly favourable” attitude towards religion consider imparting religious knowledge as the most effective method for attaining the aim (47.44%).

Analysis of the responses shows that (Table No. 9.2.1) the highest segment (35.56%) opined that the leaders should consider all sections of humans are the children of the same God, whatever be the God named as. On a consolidation of the opinion it can be concluded that a religious leader should be a person who is capable of integrating the different sections of the society. Enquiries based on religious affiliation revealed that major sections of all religious groups subscribe to the view that religious leaders should consider all categories of people as children of the same God.

The analysis reveals that 93.11% of the respondents feel that if religion is practiced within the personal domain it’s dysfunctional aspects can be avoided. When the outlook is analysed against age status it is seen that the 45 – 65 years age group is distinguishing itself from other age groups. 87.60% of the group feel that religion is to be confined to the personal domain. The figures in respect of the other age groups vary between 94.90% and 97.37%. It is revealed that Hindus and Muslims are more of the outlook that religion is to be restricted to the personal domain, so that rivalry may be avoided. 99.33% of the Muslims and 92.67% of the Hindus subscribe to the view. In the case of the Christians it is comparatively low – only 87.33%. It is found that the

higher the income, the lesser the aspiration for practicing religion, in the private domain. Among both the married and unmarried groups negligibly small portions of the respondents aspire for practicing religion in the public domain. It is revealed that the urbanites are more aspiring for keeping religion away from the public domain. Regarding the attitudinal groups it is revealed that the more the favourable attitude towards religion, the greater the feeling that religious life is to be confined to the personal domain.

It is revealed that 95.56% of the respondents pointed out that the principle of secularism (no interference of politics in religion/ equal treatment to all religions by the government) should be strictly adhered to by the polity to maintain religious harmony and social peace. Gender wise analysis of the data reveals that the males are more supportive to the philosophy that government should be impartial in its dealings with various religions. The analysis of the data indicates 100% of the Muslims, 94% of the Hindus and 92.67% of the Christians believe that the Government should keep equal distance from all religions to avoid religious rivalries. The study reveals that the married group is more in favour of keeping the polity away from religious matters.

Discussion of the Results

When we articulate and consolidate the findings of the analyses we could conclude that the postulates of the thesis are valid. The core chapters six and seven deal with the analyses on functions and dysfunctions of the institution. Here elaborate analyses have been done by taking indices of the two profiles of religion. In terms of the

number of indices and the nature of perceptions of the respondents the appreciation for the good deeds of religion is far greater than the opposite dimension. This validates the first postulate of the study.

In chapter five analyses on the attitude of people towards religion have been carried out. It is revealed that (majority) 65.55% of the respondents have favourable or highly favourable attitude towards religion. When the depth of appreciation of the people for the functions revealed in chapter six is read with the attitude towards religion the sustenance of the hypothesis that the functions of religion create favourable attitude towards religion is supported.

In our analyses in chapter six, (6.1.1, 6.4.1 and 6.5.1) it is revealed that religion is capable of creating contentment with life, human love and esprit-de-corps in society. These findings are valid support to the preposition that pious motives of religion promote mental hygiene of its followers and thus a healthy social psyche is created.

The study indicates that power (religion – politics nexus) and wealth accumulation occupy the central stage of every religion (analyses 7.1.1 and 7.2.1). When the same objective becomes the target of many religions, rivalry between them is inevitable. These perceptions validate the fourth postulate of the study that material motives drive the contemporary society towards religion and they create inter-religious hostilities.

Capturing political power and accumulation of wealth are the ladders for climbing up in the social space and facilitating ones voice reverberating in the public sphere. It is seen from the above analyses that all religious groups try to capture political

power and accumulate material resources. The findings shedding light to the existence of the relationship formulated in the fifth hypotheses that progressive strengthening of any one religious group in the public sphere necessitates other groups also to strengthen themselves which ultimately creates religious hostilities.

Social institutions in general are considered as having a built-in capacity to widen the gap between the rich and the poor. But the study results indicate that religion is to be brought under an exemption clause. In analysis 6.2.1, 56.89% have high appreciation for the charity shown by religion. The charity may not be flowing directly to the individual beneficiary but to organisations taking care of the welfare of the poor. So the sixth hypothesis of the study that religion prevents the widening of the gap between the poor and the rich should be considered as substantiated by facts.

Equanimity of religious leaders to members of different religious groups has been *inter alia*, stressed by this study (Analysis 9.2). If the leaders deviate from this path it will instigate followers to indulge in communalising religious groups. So the religious leaders' behaviour very much decides the harmony – disharmony relationship between religious groups. Hence the study postulates the seventh hypothesis that religious leadership can create insular or cosmopolitan outlook within their religious group and hence the hostility or harmony can be created between them by the leadership.

Conventional religions are propagating spirituality, metaphysics, philosophy of life after death, etc. But cultic religions according to this study help realise spirituality coupled with human love and physical comfort. The modern man/woman is becoming an atomised entity who has a craving for what is supplied by the cultic religion. Hence it is to be concluded that the disenchanting nature of conventional religion repels

the modern person from it and at the same time this worldly outlook of cultic religion (rational approach) attracts him/her to it. The essence of both eighth and ninth postulates of the study is substantiated.

Secondary hypotheses postulating the influence of the sociological variables (gender, age, religious affiliation, education, occupation, income, marital status, family size, place of residence and attitude towards religion) on the different dependent variables are tested and their validity established. Variables, namely, religious affiliation, education, occupation, income and attitude towards religion are showing greater influence on the dependent variables.

This study has made an attempt to make inroads into a complex, sensitive and elusive subject. Hence shortcomings in substantive and procedural matters are expected. However, the researcher has taken sincere efforts to minimise them.

Appendices

Appendix – I

Items Considered for Item Selection for Constructing the Likert Scale

| Sl. No. | Item | Strongly Agree 5 | Agree 4 | No Opinion 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly Disagree 1 |
|------------|--|------------------------|------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------------------|
| 1. | Religion brings order and harmony in the society | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 2. | Religion disintegrates the society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. | Religion makes meaning for life | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 4. | Religion creates social disorder in Society | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. | Religion teaches morality | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. | Religion hinders social change | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. | Religion strengthens the values of the society | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 8. | Religion supports homicide | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. | Religious festivals bring greater interaction in the society | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 10. | Religion upholds dogmas | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. | Religion comforts the bereaved | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 12. | Religious ceremonies refresh humans | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 13. | Religion obstructs creation of brotherhood | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. | Religion gives consolation | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 15. | Religious practices create stable personality | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 16. | Difference in religious ideas and dogmas are the obstacles in social unity and amity | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. | Religion gives confidence to face hardships | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| Sl. no. | Item | Strongly Agree 5 | Agree 4 | No Opinion 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly Disagree 1 |
| 18. | Religion promotes brotherhood | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 19. Progress has been hindered in the name of religion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 20. Mental perception is enhanced by religious practices | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 21. The precious nature of human life is revealed by religion | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 22. Religion retards rational thinking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 23. Religion brings material prosperity | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 24. Religion inculcates sharing mentality | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 25. Religion prevents free thinking | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 26. Religion protects the infirm and the needy | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 27. Religion promotes authoritarianism | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. Religion prevents crimes | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 29. Religion discriminates people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 30. Religion binds the individual to the social norms | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 31. Religion promotes group rivalry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 32. Religion promotes cooperation among people | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 33. Religion structures life | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 34. Religion urges to do charity | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 35. Religion is against the interests of woman | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. Religion is an agent of moral and ethical reforms | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 37. Religion promotes cleanliness | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| Sl. no. | Item | Strongly Agree 5 | Agree 4 | No Opinion 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly Disagree 1 |
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 38. Religion favours the wealthy | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|

| | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 39. | Religion helps personal adjustment | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 40. | Religion acts as a shock absorber in periods of personal crisis | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 41. | Religion has become a profiteering social Organisation | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 42. | Religion becomes a protective cover of lower Species | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 43. | Religion promotes killing | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44. | Religion fosters human love | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 45. | Religion causes drain of social wealth | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. | Religion enables to forgive to the enemies | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 47. | Religion is the stern critics of wrongs in the society at times | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 48. | Religion promotes show of splendour | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. | Religion provides guidelines for daily life | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 50. | Religion fetches contentment in life | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 51. | Religion creates suicidal tendencies | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. | Religion enables man to rejoice in God | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 53. | Religion pacifies the individual to Accommodate with the unfulfilled wishes | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 54. | Religion becomes health hazard | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 55. | Religion makes humans fearless | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| Sl. no. | Item | Strongly Agree 5 | Agree 4 | No Opinion 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly Disagree 1 |
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|

| | | | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 56. | Religion supports oppression of the poor | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 57. | Religious rituals serve as social control instrument | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 58. | Religion fosters social inequalities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 59. Caring others is a primary philosophy of religion | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 60. Faith in God embolden humans to act | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 61. Religion promotes false consciousness | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 62. Religious faith ennoble oneself | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 63. Religion provides good opportunity for friendship | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 64. Religion enables to accept the unacceptable | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 65. Religion upholds the philosophy of “service to humanity” | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 66. Religion spreads education | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 67. Communalism is a product of religion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 68. Religion emphasise benevolence and forbearance | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 69. Religion supports the folkways and customs | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 70. Religion becomes a source of social instability ¹ | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 71. Religion upholds ideals and values | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 72. Religion contributes to the growth of literature, art and music | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| Sl. no. | Item | Strongly Agree 5 | Agree 4 | No Opinion 3 | Disagree 2 | Strongly Disagree 1 |
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|
|---------|------|---------------------|------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------------|

| | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 73. Religion instigates group conflicts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 74. Religion helps to overcome a world of discord ⁵ | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | |
| 75. Religious fundamentalism damages social Fabrics | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 76. Religion inculcates optimism in humans | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 77. Religion differentiates the societies into factions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 78. Religion helps to promote science | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 79. Religion often turns to be an escapism from Responsibility | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 80. Religion transforms loneliness to rejoice | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 81. Religion has become homo-centric rather than theo-centric | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 82. Religion controls crime and delinquency | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 83. Religion inspires and guides the intelligent | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 84. Religion remains often silent to the wrongs of the society. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Note: 1. The responses strongly agree, agree, no opinion, disagree, strongly disagree were given against all items.

2. The numerals are Scale Scores corresponding to the responses.

Appendix – II

The Validity Coefficients of the Items

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value_ |
|---------|--|----------------------|------------|
| 1. | Religion brings order and harmony in the society | 0.4935 | 5.6170 |
| 2. | Religion disintegrates the society | 0.5039 | 5.7752 |
| 3. | Religion makes meaning for life | 0.5957 | 7.3420 |
| 4. | Religion creates social disorder in society | 0.3448 | 3.6363 |

| | | | |
|-----|--|---------|---------|
| 5. | Religion teaches morality | 0.5599 | 6.6896 |
| 6. | Religion hinders social change | 0.5263 | 6.1274 |
| 7. | Religion strengthens the values of the society | 0.6126 | 7.6727 |
| 8. | Religion supports homicide | 0.4616 | 5.1512 |
| 9. | Religious festivals bring greater interaction in the society | 0.2028 | 2.0502 |
| 10. | Religion upholds dogmas | -0.1839 | -1.8521 |
| 11. | Religion comforts the bereaved | 0.3877 | 4.1637 |
| 12. | Religious ceremonies refresh humans | 0.4109 | 4.4618 |
| 13. | Religion obstructs creation of brotherhood* | 0.6884 | 9.3954 |
| 14. | Religion gives consolation | 0.5211 | 6.0441 |
| 15. | Religious practices create stable personality | 0.5771 | 6.9955 |

*The selected items

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value_ |
|---------|--|----------------------|------------|
| 16. | Difference in religious ideas and dogmas are the obstacles in social unity and amity | 0.4035 | 4.3656 |
| 17. | Religion gives confidence to face hardships | 0.5478 | 6.4820 |
| 18. | Religion promotes brotherhood* | 0.6796 | 9.1710 |
| 19. | Progress has been hindered in the name of religion | 0.4827 | 5.4562 |
| 20. | Mental perception is enhanced by religious practices | 0.6191 | 7.8043 |
| 21. | The precious nature of human life is revealed by religion | 0.5634 | 6.7508 |
| 22. | Religion retards rational thinking* | 0.6255 | 7.9364 |

| | | | |
|-----|---|---------|---------|
| 23. | Religion brings material prosperity | 0.3937 | 4.2398 |
| 24. | Religion inculcates sharing mentality | 0.4272 | 4.6774 |
| 25. | Religion prevents free thinking | 0.6071 | 7.5633 |
| 26. | Religion protects the infirm and the needy | 0.4302 | 4.7176 |
| 27. | Religion promotes authoritarianism | 0.5203 | 6.0314 |
| 28. | Religion prevents crimes | 0.6043 | 7.5083 |
| 29. | Religion discriminates people | 0.4897 | 5.5601 |
| 30. | Religion binds the individual to the social norms | -0.0632 | -0.6269 |
| 31. | Religion promotes group rivalry* | 0.6423 | 8.2959 |
| 32. | Religion promotes cooperation among people* | 0.7026 | 9.7745 |

*The selected items

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value_ |
|---------|---|----------------------|------------|
| 33. | Religion structures life* | 0.7111 | 10.0123 |
| 34. | Religion urges to do charity* | 0.6600 | 8.6969 |
| 35. | Religion is against the interests of woman | 0.6061 | 7.5436 |
| 36. | Religion is an agent of moral and ethical reforms | 0.4428 | 4.8889 |
| 37. | Religion promotes cleanliness* | 0.6271 | 7.9698 |
| 38. | Religion favours the wealthy* | 0.6194 | 7.8104 |
| 39. | Religion helps personal adjustment | 0.5264 | 6.1290 |
| 40. | Religion acts as a shock absorber in periods of personal crisis | 0.1583 | 1.5871 |
| 41. | Religion has become a profiteering social Organisation | 0.2615 | 2.6820 |

| | | |
|---|--------|--------|
| 42. Religion becomes a protective cover of lower Species | 0.3359 | 3.5304 |
| 43. Religion promotes killing | 0.4640 | 5.1854 |
| 44. Religion fosters human love* | 0.6595 | 8.6852 |
| 45. Religion causes drain of social wealth | 0.5436 | 6.4114 |
| 46. Religion enables to forgive to the enemies | 0.6105 | 7.6307 |
| 47. Religion is the stern critics of wrongs in the society at times | 0.3335 | 3.5020 |
| 48. Religion promotes show of splendour | 0.5816 | 7.0777 |
| 49. Religion provides guidelines for daily life* | 0.6429 | 8.3091 |

*The selected items

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value |
|---------|---|----------------------|-----------|
| 50. | Religion fetches contentment in life* | 0.6685 | 8.8984 |
| 51. | Religion creates suicidal tendencies | 0.4556 | 5.0666 |
| 52. | Religion enables man to rejoice in God* | 0.6508 | 8.4855 |
| 53. | Religion pacifies the individual to accommodate with the unfulfilled wishes | 0.3333 | 3.4996 |
| 54. | Religion becomes health hazard | 0.5721 | 6.9052 |
| 55. | Religion makes humans fearless | 0.3287 | 3.4454 |
| 56. | Religion supports oppression of the poor | 0.4744 | 5.3349 |
| 57. | Religious rituals serve as social control Instrument | 0.1682 | 1.6892 |
| 58. | Religion fosters social inequalities | 0.3549 | 3.7580 |
| 59. | Caring others is a primary philosophy of religion | 0.1082 | 1.0775 |
| 60. | Faith in God embolden humans to act | 0.5953 | 7.3343 |

| | | |
|--|--------|--------|
| 61. Religion promotes false consciousness | 0.6074 | 7.5692 |
| 62. Religious faith ennobles oneself* | 0.6402 | 8.2499 |
| 63. Religion provides good opportunity for friendship | 0.4483 | 4.9648 |
| 64. Religion enables to accept the unacceptable | 0.0821 | 0.8155 |
| 65. Religion upholds the philosophy of “service to humanity” | 0.4414 | 4.8697 |
| 66. Religion spreads education | 0.5853 | 7.1461 |

*The selected items

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 67. | Communalism is a product of religion* | 0.6215 | 7.8535 |
| 68. | Religion emphasise benevolence and forbearance | 0.5769 | 6.9918 |
| 69. | Religion supports the folkways and customs | -0.3005 | -3.1190 |
| 70. | Religion becomes a source of social instability* | 0.6735 | 9.0198 |
| 71. | Religion upholds ideals and values* | 0.6271 | 7.9698 |
| 72. | Religion contributes to the growth of literature, art and music | 0.1836 | 1.8490 |
| 73. | Religion instigates group conflicts* | 0.7491 | 11.1943 |
| 74. | Religion helps to overcome a world of discord | 0.3058 | 3.1796 |
| 75. | Religious fundamentalism damages social fabrics | 0.3439 | 3.6256 |
| 76. | Religion inculcates optimism in humans | 0.5460 | 6.4517 |
| 77. | Religion differentiates the societies into factions | 0.6175 | 7.7716 |
| 78. | Religion helps to promote science* | 0.6873 | 9.3670 |
| 79. | Religion often turns to be an escapism from Responsibility | 0.5362 | 6.2886 |

| | | |
|---|--------|--------|
| 80. Religion transforms loneliness to rejoice | 0.0235 | 0.2327 |
| 81. Religion has become homo-centric rather than theo-centric | 0.3474 | 3.6675 |
| 82. Religion controls crime and delinquency* | 0.6414 | 8.2762 |
| 83. Religion inspires and guides the intelligent | 0.4747 | 5.3392 |
| 84. Religion remains often silent to the wrongs of the society. | 0.6041 | 7.5044 |

*The selected items

Appendix – III

The Selected Items as a List

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value |
|---------|---|----------------------|-----------|
| 1. | Religion obstructs creation of brotherhood | 0.6884 | 9.3954 |
| 2. | Religion promotes brotherhood | 0.6796 | 9.1710 |
| 3. | Religion retards rational thinking | 0.6255 | 7.9364 |
| 4. | Religion promotes group rivalry | 0.6423 | 8.2959 |
| 5. | Religion promotes cooperation among people | 0.7026 | 9.7745 |
| 6. | Religion structures life | 0.7111 | 10.0123 |
| 7. | Religion urges to do charity | 0.6600 | 8.6969 |
| 8. | Religion promotes cleanliness | 0.6271 | 7.9698 |
| 9. | Religion favours the wealthy | 0.6194 | 7.8104 |
| 10. | Religion fosters human love | 0.6595 | 8.6852 |
| 11. | Religion provides guidelines for daily life | 0.6429 | 8.3091 |
| 12. | Religion fetches contentment in life | 0.6685 | 8.8984 |

| | | | |
|-----|--|--------|--------|
| 13. | Religion enables man to rejoice in God | 0.6508 | 8.4855 |
| 14. | Religious faith ennobles oneself | 0.6402 | 8.2499 |
| 15. | Communalism is a product of religion | 0.6215 | 7.8535 |

| Sl. no. | Items | Validity coefficient | “t” value |
|----------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 16. | Religion becomes a source of social instability | 0.6735 | 9.0198 |
| 17. | Religion upholds ideals and values | 0.6271 | 7.9698 |
| 18. | Religion instigates group conflicts | 0.7491 | 11.1943 |
| 19. | Religion helps to promote science | 0.6873 | 9.3670 |
| 20. | Religion controls crime and delinquency | 0.6414 | 8.2762 |

o0o

APPENDIX – IV

Test for Reliability of the Scale (Split – Halves Method)

| Schedule number | Score for odd item | Score for even item |
|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 1 | 13 | 30 |
| 2 | 36 | 29 |
| 3 | 41 | 29 |
| 4 | 44 | 36 |
| 5 | 41 | 39 |
| 6 | 36 | 28 |
| 7 | 33 | 31 |
| 8 | 35 | 38 |
| 9 | 43 | 36 |
| 10 | 41 | 39 |
| 11 | 38 | 38 |
| 12 | 46 | 42 |
| 13 | 47 | 42 |
| 14 | 37 | 34 |
| 15 | 41 | 36 |
| 16 | 42 | 33 |
| 17 | 42 | 39 |
| 18 | 38 | 34 |
| 19 | 36 | 36 |
| 20 | 48 | 42 |
| 21 | 44 | 42 |
| 22 | 32 | 31 |
| 23 | 43 | 37 |
| 24 | 33 | 31 |
| 25 | 36 | 38 |
| 26 | 33 | 28 |
| 27 | 30 | 30 |
| 28 | 38 | 43 |
| 29 | 44 | 48 |
| 30 | 38 | 25 |
| 31 | 40 | 38 |
| 32 | 37 | 33 |

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 33 | 45 | 39 |
| 34 | 35 | 42 |
| 35 | 44 | 46 |
| Schedule number - | Score for odd item - | Score for even item - |
| 36 | 41 | 40 |
| 37 | 45 | 41 |
| 38 | 48 | 42 |
| 39 | 37 | 36 |
| 40 | 45 | 37 |
| 41 | 43 | 42 |
| 42 | 42 | 37 |
| 43 | 48 | 43 |
| 44 | 48 | 40 |
| 45 | 48 | 42 |
| 46 | 48 | 42 |
| 47 | 48 | 42 |
| 48 | 46 | 42 |
| 49 | 37 | 36 |
| 50 | 37 | 36 |
| 51 | 43 | 38 |
| 52 | 40 | 41 |
| 53 | 46 | 43 |
| 54 | 31 | 32 |
| 55 | 42 | 31 |
| 56 | 44 | 42 |
| 57 | 44 | 37 |
| 58 | 42 | 36 |
| 59 | 48 | 42 |
| 60 | 36 | 39 |
| 61 | 35 | 41 |
| 62 | 32 | 23 |
| 63 | 35 | 26 |
| 64 | 34 | 29 |
| 65 | 41 | 36 |
| 66 | 38 | 38 |
| 67 | 35 | 19 |
| 68 | 34 | 24 |
| 69 | 37 | 38 |
| 70 | 28 | 39 |
| 71 | 42 | 39 |
| 72 | 29 | 24 |
| 73 | 36 | 26 |
| 74 | 31 | 30 |
| 75 | 38 | 34 |
| 76 | 36 | 33 |
| 77 | 48 | 39 |
| 78 | 45 | 38 |
| Schedule - | Score for - | Score for - |

| number | odd item | even item |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 79 | 40 | 37 |
| 80 | 36 | 33 |
| 81 | 28 | 28 |
| 82 | 28 | 20 |
| 83 | 35 | 31 |
| 84 | 26 | 37 |
| 85 | 27 | 26 |
| 86 | 35 | 33 |
| 87 | 29 | 27 |
| 88 | 29 | 40 |
| 89 | 42 | 28 |
| 90 | 30 | 24 |
| 91 | 35 | 36 |
| 92 | 38 | 30 |
| 93 | 32 | 35 |
| 94 | 42 | 37 |
| 95 | 38 | 35 |
| 96 | 33 | 35 |
| 97 | 26 | 33 |
| 98 | 37 | 35 |
| 99 | 35 | 29 |
| 100 | 26 | 35 |
| 101 | 37 | 35 |
| 102 | 36 | 27 |
| 103 | 34 | 28 |
| 104 | 33 | 28 |
| 105 | 41 | 34 |
| 106 | 36 | 24 |
| 107 | 27 | 24 |
| 108 | 30 | 26 |
| 109 | 29 | 24 |
| 110 | 45 | 40 |
| 111 | 44 | 35 |
| 112 | 38 | 35 |
| 113 | 43 | 31 |
| 114 | 38 | 30 |
| 115 | 45 | 50 |
| 116 | 44 | 41 |
| 117 | 33 | 25 |
| 118 | 38 | 29 |
| 119 | 33 | 28 |
| 120 | 42 | 34 |
| Schedule number - | Score for odd item - | Score for even item - |
| 121 | 36 | 45 |
| 122 | 42 | 39 |
| 123 | 40 | 34 |

| | | |
|-----|----|----|
| 124 | 36 | 29 |
| 125 | 36 | 28 |
| 126 | 38 | 45 |
| 127 | 35 | 42 |
| 128 | 43 | 32 |
| 129 | 44 | 35 |
| 130 | 30 | 31 |
| 131 | 35 | 33 |
| 132 | 40 | 38 |
| 133 | 33 | 31 |
| 134 | 40 | 38 |
| 135 | 31 | 35 |
| 136 | 35 | 42 |
| 137 | 39 | 34 |
| 138 | 38 | 38 |
| 139 | 42 | 39 |
| 140 | 40 | 39 |
| 141 | 45 | 38 |
| 142 | 31 | 29 |
| 143 | 38 | 29 |
| 144 | 38 | 32 |
| 145 | 38 | 32 |
| 146 | 34 | 31 |
| 147 | 35 | 32 |
| 148 | 39 | 35 |
| 149 | 45 | 39 |
| 150 | 45 | 42 |

r - value = 0.60

t - value = 9.19

'r' is significant at 0.01 level of confidence

Appendix – V

THE CONTRIBUTION OF RELIGION TO SOCIETY

Schedule no.

Date:

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

I. PERSONAL DATA:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Name and address of the respondents: | : | |
| 2. Gender | : | 1. Male 2. Female |
| 3. Age | : | 1. Up to 30 2. 30 – 45 3. 45 – 60 4. 60 – 75 |
| 4. Religion | : | 1. Hindu 2. Muslim 3. Christian |
| 5. Educational status | : | 1. Up to SSLC 2. Higher Secondary 3. College |
| 6. Occupation | : | 1. Manual 2. White-Collars 3. Professionals |
| 7. Marital status | : | 1. Married 2. Unmarried 3. Widow 4. Widower 5. Others |
| 8. Monthly Income | : | 1. Up to 3000 2. 3000 – 6000 3. 6000 – 9000 4. 9000 and above |
| 9. Place of residence | : | 1. Urban 2. Rural |

II. FAMILY STRUCTURE (Give the details of the members residing in the family)

| Sl. no | Name of the member | Relation to the respondent | Age | Education | Marital status | Occup- - ation | Income (monthly) (in Rs.) |
|--------|--------------------|----------------------------|-----|-----------|----------------|-------------------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | | | |

10. Head of the family :
 1. Self
 2. Father
 3. Mother
 4. Others

II. THE BELIEF AND PRACTICE

11. Are you a believer in God? : 1. Yes 2. No

12. Do you worship God? : 1. Yes 2. No

13. How do you define God? :
 1. The unseen force
 2. The force of society
 3. Can not explain
 4. Not applicable (no God)

14. Do you believe that God can influence your life. : 1. Yes 2. No 3. Do not know

15. Do all religions worship the same God? : 1. Yes 2.No 3. Do not know
16. What speciality your religion got on nature of God comparing to others? :
1 .A living God
2. Abstract entity
3. A power
4. Other views
17. Do you visit religious places? :
1. visit religious places
2. do not visit religious places
18. Do you give offerings at religious places?:
1. Give offerings
2. Do not give offerings
19. Do you render donations for good deeds?:
1. Yes 2. No
3. Not applicable
20. Do you give donations for God's favour?:
1. Yes 2. No
3. Gives donation for worship expenses
21. Do you visit Pilgrim Centres? : 1. Yes 2. No
22. What benefit you derive from Pilgrim? :
1. Mental peace
2. Spiritual bliss
3. Bodily ease
4. Godly blessings
5. Cure of illness.
23. Do you pray Daily? :
1. Pray daily
2. Do not pray daily
24. Do you practice incessant prayer? : 1.Yes 3. No

25. If so, why do you do so? : 1. For getting spiritual enlightenment
2. Mental ease
3. Bodily ease
4. To attain the aimed desire
5. For getting Godly blessings
6. To keep up relation with God.
26. If you are a Theist, who poured it in you? : 1. Parents
2. School
3. Friends
4. Religious institutions
5. Not applicable
27. If an Atheist, how you became so? : 1. There is no God/
2. Life situations
3. Not applicable
28. Did you get any Religious Training? : 1. Yes 2. No
29. What you attain from religious coaching centres?: 1. Helps to know God
2. Teaches to love human
3. Makes men a social creature
4. No benefit at all
- (a) If nothing is attained through such coaching is there any adverse implications in it? : 1. Instigates communal feelings
2. Spoils secular thoughts
3. Do not know

IV. INDIVIDUAL AND RELIGION

30. How religious belief is beneficial to individuals? : 1. Mental peace
2. Control on life
3. Success in life
4. Bodily ease
5. Do not know
- a] Is there any difference in between the religions in essence in this matter? : 1. All religions are alike in their essence.

2. Indigenous religion is important
3. Immigrant religion is important
4. Do not know
31. Will religious belief adversely affect the individual? : 1. Yes 2. No
3. Do not know
- (a) Is there any difference in between the religions in this regard? : 1. Indigenous religion ahead
2. Imported religion ahead
3. All the religions are alike
4. Do not know
32. Can religions make the individual active? : 1. Very much
2. Up to some extent
3. No
- (a) Is there any difference in between religions in this aspect? : 1. Indigenous religion ahead
2. Imported religion ahead
3. All the religions are alike
4. Do not know
- (b) Is there any difference with the New Spiritual Sects in this aspect? : 1. Far better 2. Lagging behind
3. Alike 4. Do not know
33. How religious practices beneficial to the individual? : 1. Systematic life 2. Mental peace
3. Bodily ease 4. Not good
5. Do not know
- (a) Is there any difference in between religions in this aspect? : 1. Indigenous religion ahead
2. Imported religion ahead
3. All the religions are alike
4. Do not know
34. How does the religious practices adversely affect the individual? : 1. Curtails the individual freedom
2. Denies gender equality
3. Increases untouchability
4. All the above
5. Do not affect adversely

- (a) Is there any difference in between religions in this aspect? : 1. Indigenous religion ahead
2. Emigrated religion ahead
3. All the religions are alike
4. Do not know
- (b) Is there any difference with the New Spiritual Sects in this aspect? : 1. Far better 2. Lagging behind
3. Do not know
35. Is there any difference in between New Spiritual Sects and Conventional Religions? : 1. Far better 2. Lagging behind
3. Alike 4. Do not Know

V. FAMILY AND RELIGION

36. Do you think religious belief will increase the stability of family relationship? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
37. Do you think religious belief will keep up the peaceful ambience in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
38. Do you think religious belief will secure the financial stability of the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
39. Do you think religious belief will create unnecessary expenses in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
40. Do you think religious belief will curtail the individual liberty in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
41. Do you think religious belief do have any adverse impact on the status of women? : 1. Very much affects adversely
2. To some extent affects adversely
3. Does not affect adversely
42. Do you think religious belief will enable : 1. Very much 2. To some extent

- the women to acquire a loving consideration
in the family? 3. No
43. Do you think religious practices will increase
the stability of family relationship? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
44. Do you think religious practices will keep up
the peaceful ambience in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
45. Do you think religious practices will enhance the
financial stability of the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
46. Do you think religious practices will create
unnecessary expenses in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
47. Do you think religious practices will curtail
the individual liberty in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
48. Do you think religious practices will mar the
status of the women in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No
49. Do you think religious practices will enable
the women to acquire a loving consideration
in the family? : 1. Very much 2. To some extent
3. No

VI. WIDER RELIGION AND SOCIETY:

50. Do you think Religious belief
increases in human beings?: : 1. Religious belief increases very much
2. Religious belief increases up to some
extent only
3. Religious belief does not increase
- (a) If yes, why do you feel so? : 1. Worshippers increases
2. Offerings increases
3. Pilgrims increases

4. Not applicable

51. Do you think religious belief controls the society? : 1. Definitely 2. Up to some extent
3. Controls slightly 4. Does not control
52. How religious belief will affect the neighbourhood relationship? : 1. Love increases 2. Help each other
3. Enmity increases 4. Not applicable
- (a) How much religious practices influences this aspect? : 1. Love increases 2. Enmity increases
3. Not applicable.
53. If religion and politics intermingles, how far shall it affect our Society? : 1. Religious ethics would be spoiled
2. The ethics will become vibrant
54. Do you think the religion-politics relation trend increases now? : 1. Yes 2. No
55. If religion accumulates wealth, how shall it affect the Society? : 1. Enhance the enmity between religions
2. Create differently developed groups in the society
3. It will in no way affect the society
56. How the charity work of religion will affect the society in totality? : 1. Develop the society
2. Enmity between social elements will increase
3. Not applicable
57. Is the role played by religion in the spread of education appreciable? : 1. Highly appreciable
2. Appreciable
3. Not appreciable
58. Will the Self-financing Educational Institutions functioning under Religions are good for the society? : 1. Yes 2. No
3. Not correct
4. Do not know

- (a) If not good, what is the reason? : 1. Flaunting the wealth is not good for the religion
2. Not applicable
3. Religion should remain in spirituality itself.
59. Will Religion in Five Star Hospital services be appreciable? : 1. Not at all 2. Appreciable
3. No
- (a) If not, what is the reason : 1. Religion should serve without profiteering intention
2. No opinion 3. No use for the poor
60. How Money Transaction in the name of charity by religious groups will affect the society? : 1. Enhance the economic injustice
2. No use to the poor
3. Benefit the poor
61. Do you think Religion will enhance the disparity between the Rich and the Poor? : 1. Certainly 2. Up to some extent
3. No 4. Do not know
62. Do you believe Religion stands for protecting the Poor? : 1. Believe 2. No
3. Do not know
63. How Religions consider the Women (Androcentricity of religion) folk in general? : 1. Equal importance to man and woman
2. Secondary importance to woman
3. Refused to respond
64. Do you think, the Religious Beliefs and Deeds do not coincide and hence it creates Problems? : 1. Certainly 2. Up to some extent
3. No 3. Do not know
65. Do you think the Religions influence the Media very much? : 1. Yes 2. No
3. Limitedly 4. do not know
- (a) If yes, how it affects the Society? : 1. Make the Society good

2. Destroy the Society
3. Do not know
4. Do not affect

66. Can the media control the Religions? : 1. Yes 2.Up to some extent
3. No 4.Do not know

(a) If yes, how? : 1. By enhancing the Religious harmony
2. By enhancing the spirituality
3. By enhancing the loveliness
4. Loveliness to all creatures
5. Other answers _____
6. Not applicable

VII. RELIGIOUS COMPETITIONS:

67. Will the Religious Belief give stability to the Society? : 1. Religion has great role,
2. Religion has some role
3. Religion has no role

68. Do you think Religious Competition (religious fundamentalism) increases in the Society? : 1. Religious competition increases
2. Religious competition does not increase

:
(a) If yes, what is the reason for it? : 1. Political meddling
2. Communal feeling
3. Relegating other Religions
4. Self Truism 5. Not applicable
6. Others _____

(b) If yes, is it good for the prosperity of the Society? : 1.No 2.Yes 3.No opinion

(c) Or, how can it be prevented? : 1. Religious education can prevent competition
2. Spiritual knowledge can prevent competition
3. Punishment can prevent competition
4. Harmonious religious activities can prevent competition.

69. Do you think, a Society with many Religions can proffer Social-goodness to it? : 1.Yes 2.No
3.No opinion
70. Do you think enmity is indispensable in a Society with many Religions? : 1.Yes 2.No
3. No opinion
- (a) If yes, will not it hinder the progress of the society? : 1. Will hinder 2.No
3. No opinion
71. How a Religious Leader ought to be in a Society with many Religions? : 1. Religious leader should be wise
2. Should have the knowledge that all humans are children of God
3. Social harmony should be the aim
4. Should be spiritual
5. Should maintain mental equilibrium
72. Do you think, the unenlightened Religious Leaders create enmity in between Religions in our Society? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
73. Do you think, a pure spirituality can lead the Society consisting with many Religions to prosperity? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
74. The Ideals or Customs of Religions, according to you, creates enmity in society? : 1. The ideals 2. Customs
3. Not either but the ignorance of man

75. Does not the tendency of manifesting the Mightiness of Religions create enmity in the Society? : 1 Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
76. Do you support Proselytisation? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
- (a) Will not it create enmity among Religions? : 1.Definitely 2.No 3.No opinion
77. Do you think, the desire of Religions to amass wealth will create enmity in the Society? : 1.yes 2.no 3.no opinion
78. Do you think, if Religion is restricted to the personal domain of individuals, will it evade enmity in Society? : 1. Restrict religion to personal domain
2. Need not restrict religion to personal domain
79. Do you think, the Government is to keep equal distance to all Religions? 1. Government is to keep equal distance to all religions
2. Government need not keep equal distance to all religions
80. Do you think, the Government is not keeping equal distances to all Religions? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
81. The Government is keeping equal distance to all Religions, will it pave way for Religious Competition amongst the Religions? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion

VIII. THE NEW SPIRITUAL CULTIC RELIGIONS AND ITS ETHOS:

82. Do you like the New Cultic Religions? : 1. Yes 2.No
- (a) If yes, do you work in any of its Organisations? : 1. Yes 2.No
3. Not applicable
- (b) What is the reason for mushrooming of cultic religion? : 1. Spiritual experience
2. Human love & fellowship
3. Bodily ease & mental peace
- (c) If otherwise, what is the drawback of it? : 1. Temporary existence
2. Loss of value
3. Lack of discipline
83. Do you like man God? : 1.Yes 2.No
- (a) If yes, what is the reason? : 1. Renewing the society
2. Good society
3. Religious equality
4. End of superstition
5. Human outlook development
- (b) If no, what is the reason? : 1. Spoil the religious consciousness
2. Ruin the moral value of life
3. The infirmity of Man-God will affect the followers too
4. Indiscipline will become the hallmark of it
5. Ruin the social value/
84. What is your opinion about the flourishing of Cultic Religion as a whole? : 1. Very much favour
2. Favour
3. Do not favour

85. Do you think Cultic Religion is flourishing? : 1.Yes 2.No 3.No opinion
- (a) If yes, what is the reason? : 1. Fellowship of peers
2. No compulsory rule for anything
3. Receives all religious groups
4. Enjoys temporal life but claims to live in spirituality
5. Gives an opportunity to improve the life to those who are expelled from other religions.
86. Can Cultic Religion bring temporality and spirituality together? : 1. Yes 2. No
3. Up to some extent 4.No opinion
- (a) If yes, is it that which publicises it? : 1. Yes 2.No
3. No opinion
87. Do you think cultic religion creates religious consciousness in the new generation? : 1. Creates religious consciousness in the new generation
2. Does not create religious consciousness in the new generation.
88. Do you think Cultic Religion is a wing of hordes of people as followers behind human-gods? : 1. Cultic religion is a social polarisation around human gods
2. Cultic religion is not a social polarisation around human gods
89. What do you think about the permanency of Cultic Religion? : 1. Short life
2. Long life
3. No opinion
90. Do you think the Cultic Religion is a menace to the existing social values in the society? : 1. A menace to the existing values
2. Not a menace to the existing values
91. Do you think, Cultic Religion will become the haven of those weed outs from Conventional Group? : 1. Yes
2. No
3. No opinion

92. Do you think, the support of foreign money is the cause of the growth of Cultic Religion? : 1. Support of foreign money is the cause of growth of cultic religion
2. Support of foreign money is not the cause of growth of cultic religion
93. What do you say about the intervention of cultic religion in educational arena? : 1. A greedy business to amass money
2. Good for the social welfare
3. Prosperity of our country
4. A free education to the poor
94. How their liberal approach will affect the future of our Society? : 1. It is a Resort for violators of law
2. An opportunity for survival to any type of person
3. Nurtures the criminals
4. Transforms the criminals
95. How will it affect the stability of family? : 1. Arranges an opportunity to survive
2. Increases the crime
3. Spoils the family relations
4. Mends the family relations
96. How will it affect the stability of the wider Society? : 1. Positive effect on the stability
2. Adverse effect on the stability
97. Do you believe the Leaders of these Sects are envoys of brotherhood? : 1. Envoys of brotherhood
2. Not envoys of brotherhood

98. Do you think the followers of these Sects are philanthropists? :
- 1. Followers of cultic religion are philanthropists
 - 2. Followers of cultic religion are not philanthropists
 - 3. No opinion

99. Kindly state your valuable opinion on this topic, if any, here below:

Appendix – VI

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