CHAPTER VI

PROTESTANT ETHIC AND RATIONAL ORGANIZATION

A typical set of attitudes and beliefs have been identified and described by Weber (1930) to constitute Protestant Ethic - the motive power for capitalistic society. The nucleus of protestant Ethic could be identified with rational organization of one's activity. Studies have shown that protestant Ethic contributes to capitalistic growth and entrepreneurship. Besides, Protestant Ethic has systematic relationship with such variables as need achievement, risk taking and locus of control. The concept of protestant Ethic and studies bearing on its influence with regard to rational organization are reviewed and presented in this chapter.

The research questions and hypotheses relating to the possible differences between housewives and career women, and between Housewives and women entrepreneurs in Protestant Ethic have been stated in this chapter.

Weber (1930) distinguishes capitalistic enterprise from the pursuit of gain as such. The need for accumulation of wealth and its accompanying mercantile operations has long been existing in various forms of society, in Babylon and Ancient Egypt, China, India and Mediaeval Europe. However, only in the West capitalistic activity
has become routine and the calculated administration has come within continuously functioning enterprises. In other words the rationalized capitalistic enterprise has come into existence only in the West. The rational organization of formerly free labour implies the availability of disciplined labour force and the regularized investment of capital. The motive force for the rational organization of capitalism is traced to the spirit of capitalism and ultimately the protestant Ethic.

Protestant Ethic emphasizes self discipline and the entrepreneurs associated with the development of capitalism combine the impulse to accumulation with a positively frugal life style. This world asceticism of puritanism focused through the concept of calling is invoked to explain the drive to accumulation of wealth conjoined to an absence of interest in the worldly pleasures that wealth can purchase. The notion of calling introduced by reformation refers basically to the idea that the highest form of moral obligation of the individual is to fulfil his duty in the worldly affairs. Again, the moral responsibility of the protestant in contrast with catholic is cumulative. The protestant Ethic has grown more rigorously from the doctrines of various Puritan sets viz., Calvinism, Methodism, Pietism and Baptism. The doctrine of predestination which holds
that only some human beings are chosen to be saved from damnation by the choice of God, emphasized by Calvinism has created a feeling of inner loneliness. It is from the torment of the inner loneliness that the capitalist spirit has born. Calvinism made it obligatory to regard oneself as chosen and hence the performance of 'good works' in worldly activity became accepted as the medium to express one's faith in being chosen by god. Success in a calling is regarded as a 'sign' of being one of the elect Protestantism gives moral sanction for accumulation of wealth in so far as it is combined with a sober, industrious career and condemns only accumulating wealth to support a life of ideal luxury or self indulgence. The moral energy and the drive of the capitalist entrepreneur are applied by Calvinism in a dynamic manner. The Protestant Ethic provides only one side of the causal chain connecting puritanism to modern capitalism.

The spirit of capitalism lies in the emphasis of the value of time, prudence in handling money, punctuality, industry and frugality, hardwork, honesty and wise judgement. The 'sumnum bonum' of the protestant Ethic is the earning of more and more money combined with strict avoidance of all spontaneous enjoyment of life. The thoughts that economic acquisition to be purely are end in itself is no longer subordinated to man as the
means for the satisfaction of his material needs. Contentment in professional activity is characteristic of social ethic of capitalistic culture.

Mirels and Garrett (1971) views protestant ethic as a dispositional variable and they have attempted to characterize its psychological meaning in terms of its relationship with other personality variables and with occupational interests.

They also investigated the relationship with protestant ethic to other personality variables. The results show that protestant ethic is significantly negatively correlated with Internal-External locus of control. The protestant ethic disposition is positively associated with the inclination of avowed responsibility for personally relevant outcomes. Protestant ethic is also reported to be related to sex guilt and morality conscious guilt but unrelated to hostile guilt. This pattern of result is consistent in the protestant Ethic condemnation of morality, laxity in worldly affairs, castigation of pleasures of the flesh, and tolerance for aggressive righteousness. Similar orientations are implied in the significant relationship between protestant ethic and authoritarinism. The authors further report that Protestant ethic values are reflected in the interest
than in pattern rather/vocational interest patterns. The findings of Mirels and Garrett (1971) relating to relationship between protestant ethic and authoritarianism and internal locus of control receive further support in another study (Mc Donald, 1972). The study further reports that endorsement of protestant ethic is significantly related to negative attitudes towards the poor and opposition to guaranteed annual income. The results further report that the protestant ethic is negatively related to values such as comfortable life, equality and pleasure and is positively related to ambition, self control and solvation.

That Protestant Ethic may be regarded as a correlate of n_ach has been stressed in a few studies. In one study mothers of n_ach children are reported to stress characteristics subsumed under Protestant Ethic in their child rearing practices. Mothers of high n_ach children emphasize that the children should be active independent and compete well, make their own friends and know their way around the city during their early childhood. The mothers of children low on n_ach are reported to have expectations that are opposite of the mothers of high n_ach children. In another study it is found protestant boys have high n_ach than catholic boys and that
attending modern technical schools contribute to directing Protestant ethic into business activity. (Mc Clelland, 1961). In another study that entrepreneurs in general have a very high degree of protestant ethic (Venkatapathy, 1984).

Research Questions and hypotheses:

2.0.1. Will there be significant difference between housewives and career women on Protestant Ethic?

2.0.2. Will there be significant difference between housewives and women entrepreneurs on Protestant Ethic?

The conception of Protestant Ethic (Weber, 1930) emphasizes a sort of aptitude that contributes to a active participation in a rational organization of capitalistic activity. As conceived as personality variable (Mirels and Garrett, 1971) Protestant Ethic has been implicated in the explanations of a variety of phenomena. The life style of a Hindu women in Southern India is less rationally organized. The traditional Hindu ideology has been recognized by Weber as something opposite to that of Protestant Ethic. Weber reasons that the belief in doctrine of Karma that
one's position in life is the resultant of... the acts and deeds of the Karma done by him/her in the previous birth stultifies rational organization of capitalist activity. The field observations and informal interviews suggest the faith in rebirth and the doctrine of Karma has receded to the background among present day Hindu women. However, the pattern of activity and expectations remain to be reflecting least protestant ethic. The housewife has a very flexible schedule time and even in the case of home and economics she has less scope for involvement since it is the elderly male member, usually the husband, who assumes the economic responsibility in the family. However, when a woman emancipates from her traditional role of the housemaker and take up a career she has to develop protestant ethic to sustain and succeed in the career. In the case of entrepreneurs a greater degree of protestant ethic is needed because essentially entrepreneurship is a rational organization of one's own labour and skills. In view of the above consideration the following hypotheses are advanced to the research questions relating to Protestant Ethic among Housewives, Career Women and Women Entrepreneurs.

2.0.1. The Housewives will score lower than the career women on the PES.
2.0.2. The housewives will score lower than the women entrepreneurs on the PES.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter provides a review of the concept of Protestant Ethic propounded by Weber. It has also reviewed studies relating Protestant Ethic to certain personality variables. Based on the analysis done in this chapter research questions and hypotheses relating to possible differences between Housewives and Career Women, and between Housewives and Women Entrepreneurs have been developed and stated.