In the light of the theoretical implications and other issues discussed in Introduction and Review of Literature, the present study has been carried out with the following objectives.

OBJECTIVES

Comparing the two samples of workers drawn from Tamil Nadu and Kerala, it is aimed:

1) To know the various conceptions of class structure held by industrial workers.

2) To identify the levels of working class images—deference, proletarianism, privatisation—prevailing among industrial workers.

3) To know the influence of socioeconomic characteristics of the workers on their images.

4) To ascertain if experiences of social mobility have any bearing on the images.

5) To examine if there is any consistency between the attitudes to private property and images of society.

6) To know whether the three images are mutually exclusive or overlapping on each other.
7) If they are overlapping, to find out what the specific areas of such overlapping are;

8) To assess the role of political ideology in shaping the working class images of society.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Class Imagery

It is concerned with the ideas about the class structure, the number and names of classes, the defining characteristics of class and one's own position in the class structure.

The Deferential Worker

The worker who thinks social position in terms of innate qualities, gives legitimacy to the existing order and accepts his low position.

The Proletarian Worker

The worker who thinks of society in class terms, perceiving himself as working class having appositional interests with the capitalist class and believing in the alternative egalitarian society.
The Privatised Worker

The worker who thinks social position in terms of money and material possessions and is self-oriented having instrumental outlook towards organised activities.

Perception of Social Mobility (Self Experience)

In concerns with whether or not the worker thinks that he has a better social position compared to that of his father.

Perception of Social Mobility (Societal Experience)

It concerns with whether or not the worker thinks that social mobility is occurring generally in society.

SAMPLING

The present study attempts on a comparison of the Tamil Nadu and Kerala workers to know how far they are different in their images of society. A textile company which has its manufacturing units in both Tamil Nadu and Kerala was selected for the study. The Tamil Nadu plant is situated in a small town in the Tirunelveli District and the Kerala plant is situated in a small town in the
Ernakulam District. The Tamil Nadu plant had a total of 5714 workers at the time of the study; it had no women workers. The Kerala plant had 2396 workers of whom 449 were women workers. For comparison purpose, it was decided to select 300 workers, 150 from each plant.

They were selected under systematic random sampling method. For this purpose, the muster roll was obtained from time office and it was used as the sample frame. In the Tamil Nadu plant where there were 5714 workers, among the first 38 names in the muster roll one was selected under lottery method; that was to be the first respondent. Subsequently, every 38th name was selected. In the Kerala plant where there were 2396 workers, among the first 16 names in the muster roll one was selected under lottery method and subsequently every 16th name was selected. Thus, a total of 300 workers, 150 from each plant were selected for the study.

DATA COLLECTION

Structured interview schedule was used in collecting the necessary data. A tentative interview schedule was prepared and administered among 25 workers of a textile mill in Coimbatore. This pretest helped in modifying the interview schedule. Thus, the interview schedule was
finalised. It contained questions regarding socioeconomic conditions, occupational history, social mobility, mobility chances and aspirations, deference, proletarianism, privatisation, attitudes to private property, union membership and party membership, Direct interview method was followed in collecting data from the two samples from Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Data collection was held during June-September, 1988.

ANALYSIS

The collected data were coded in two master charts separately for the two samples of Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Tables were drawn and the necessary statistics were computed.

For descriptive purposes, percentage has been used. In describing the sample characteristics, both percentage and index of qualitative variation (a measure of variation in nominal variables) have been used.

With regard to deference, proletarianism and privatisation, statements were developed and subjected to the judgment of ten academicians. As a result of their judgment, six statements on deference, eight on proletarianism and seven on privatisation were selected as to be relevant to the topic area. In the interview schedule, these statements had a 'yes/No' type response pattern.
For the presence of an image in a particular respect, a score of 1 was given and for the absence a score of 0 was given. The range between the lowest possible score and the highest possible score was subdivided into three possibly equal segments to denote 'high', 'moderate' and 'low' possession of a particular attribute. With the total scores obtained by the respondents in a particular attribute, they were assigned to the 'high', 'moderate' and 'low' categories. This helps in analysing the data in contingency tables.

Mean scores and t test have been used in analysing the data in contingency tables. The t value pointing to the difference between any two categories in the independent variable has been given with the serial numbers of those categories. The significant values are marked with asterisks.

Correlation analysis has been carried out in assessing the overlappings of the three images.