

CHAPTER - IV

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THE FAMILY, KINSHIP AND OCCUPATION : STRUCTURAL DIMENSIONS

The following definitions have been adopted to classify the family into three structural units viz. nuclear, semi-extended and joint. A nuclear family consists of a father and mother with or without their unmarried children. If any one of the parents or spouses or any other unmarried dependant relative stays with the couple, it is described as a semi-extended family. A joint family means a household which consists of a minimum of two married couples and their children and other relatives staying together in the same house.

On the basis of the above definitions, the majority of families in this study has been classified as nuclear (51.3 per cent). The joint and semi-extended families are 27.7 per cent and 21.0 per cent respectively. Further, significant variations have been found in the family structure of the three occupational groups.

The nuclear family is found highest among the weavers (63 per cent) and it is the lowest (39 per cent) in the case of traders. Fifty two per cent of white collar employees in the sample belong to the nuclear family. The joint family is represented well among the traders (47 per cent), followed by the white collar professionals (26 per cent). It is interesting to note that only 10 per cent of the

weavers have joint family system. The percentage of weavers of in semi-extended family is much higher than that of the other two occupational groups.

Table - 1

Family Type-Wise Distribution of Occupational Groups

Occupational groups	Type of family			Total N = 300
	Nuclear	Semi-extended	Joint	
Weavers	63	27	10	100
Traders	39	14	47	100
Salaried employees	52	22	26	100
Total	154(51.3)	63(21.0)	83(27.7)	300

It is commonly observed that the nuclear family is often a consequence of occupational or social mobility. Our data suggest a contrary trend. Numerous respondents who are still following the traditional occupations live in nuclear family. For example, the maximum number of weavers live in nuclear families. This may be explained partly due to urban living and partly to scarcity of accommodation.

Among the weaving families, the widowed mother usually stays with the son who is weak economically and contributes to family income by means of weaving. Therefore, such a person's presence in the home is often considered a blessing rather than a burden.

There is a strong correlation between respondent's occupational background and economic status of the family.¹ A high percentage of weavers (70 per cent) are found in low income group and a high percentage of traders (58 per cent) are in the high income group. The middle class is represented equally by the three occupational groups. The salaried employees are found more in upper middle and high income groups. It is important to note here that while 27 per cent of weavers have reached middle ranking position, only two per cent of them have attained the level of high status. Only three traders' families are considered as low. One salaried employee's family income in our sample is less than Rs 750/- On the whole the percentage of low, middle, upper middle and high class families are 24.7, 27.3, 16.7 and 31.3 respectively.

Table - 2

Socio-Economic Status of Families of Respondents by Occupation

Respondent's Occupation	Socio-Economic Status of Family				Total N = 300
	Low (%)	Middle (%)	Upper Middle (%)	High (%)	
Weavers	70	27	1	2	100
Traders	3	26	13	58	100
Salaried employees	1	29	36	34	100

1. Families having a monthly income upto Rs 750 have been classified as low. The families in the income group of Rs 750-1500 are placed in the middle class status. Those families in the income group of Rs 1500-2250 are placed in the higher middle class status. Those families whose income is above Rs 2250 is ranked as high.

There is rather a negative association between education and family structure. The notion that higher education is positively related to nuclear families and lower education to joint families is not supported by the present study. On the contrary, the available data suggest that more respondents with low education are found in nuclear families, whereas more respondents with high education are found in joint families.

A clear distinction of family types has been observed among respondents who possess high and low educational standards. For example, 50 per cent of the primary educated respondents and 66.7 per cent of middle school level educated respondents in the sample fall in nuclear families. A considerable percentage of graduate (39.5 per cent) and the post-graduates (30.8 per cent) are found in joint families. Similarly 50 per cent of the professionals live in joint families.

Table - 3
Respondents' Education by Type of Family

S.No.	Education (%)	Nuclear (%)	Semi-Extended (%)	Joint (%)	Total N = 300
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
1	Illiterate	58.3(7)	-	41.7(5)	100(12)
2	Primary	50.0(38)	31.6(24)	18.4(14)	100(76)
3	Middle	66.7(24)	16.7(6)	16.7(6)	100(36)
4	Matric	51.7(46)	20.2(18)	28.1(25)	100(89)
5	Graduate	46.5(20)	14.0(6)	39.5(17)	100(43)

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
6	Postgraduate	30.8(4)	38.5(5)	30.8(4)	100(13)
7	Professionals	35.7(5)	14.3(2)	50.0(7)	100(14)
8	Technical (Diplomas)	58.8(10)	11.8(2)	29.4(5)	100(17)

It is clear from the above table no. 3 that among the Saurashtrans, higher education has not weakened the joint family. Moreover, the strengthening of joint family due to high education becomes evident from this study. Another major trend is that the respondents of poor educational background try to modify their family pattern. No doubt, a majority of them are weavers who establish individual households soon after marriage.

Respondents' age group has been compared with the type of family they are living in. The table no. 4 given below shows a great variation of the family type of young and aged household heads. About sixty per cent of middle as well as old age respondents have formed nuclear family type. The young household heads are inclined to live in joint families.

Table - 4

Distribution of Respondents by Age Group and Family Type

Family structure	Young (Below 36 years) (%)	Middle (36 - 50 years) (%)	Old age (51 and above) (%)	Total N= 300
Nuclear	39.5(49)	59.7(46)	59.6(59)	154
Semi-extended	25.8(32)	23.4(18)	13.1(13)	63
Joint	34.7(43)	16.9(13)	27.3(27)	83
Total	100.0(124)	100.0(77)	100.0(99)	300

Sociologists have established correlation between economic system and family system. The economy affects the family's status and the family supplies man power to the economy. Talcott Parsons and N. Smelser provide a detailed analysis on this point.² Indian scholars have also found that the class variation does create a change in the family organisation.

Table - 5

Class-Wise Distribution of Family Type

Family Structure	Economic Structure			
	High	Upper-Middle	Middle	Low
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Nuclear	29.8(28)	58.0(29)	57.3(47)	67.6(50)
Semi-extended	13.8(13)	20.0(10)	23.2(19)	28.4(21)
Joint	56.4(53)	22.0(11)	19.5(16)	4.1(3)
Total	100.0(94)	100(50)	100(82)	100(74)

Table no. 5 clearly shows the relationship between family economic status and family structure. The middle and upper middle classes have a similar family structure. There is a marked difference between high income and low income groups in regard to family structure. The proportion of low and high income group in nuclear families is 67.6 per cent and 29.8 per cent respectively. By contrast, while 56.4 per cent of high income group belong to joint family, only 4.1

2. Talcott Parsons and Neil J. Smelser, Economy and Society, Glencoe, Free Press, 1956, pp. 51-55, 70-72.

per cent of low income group belong to joint family.³

Family Size

The number of members in the sample ranged from 3 to 19. The size of the family has been correlated with the occupational and economic background of the respondents. The traders in the sample had the largest household with nineteen members. Among the weavers maximum members belonging to a household were ten, while among the white collar employees it was twelve. The mean family size of the households chosen in the sample of our study is 6.1 persons. The trader family on an average consists of 7.2 persons, which is higher than the mean family size of the weaver (5.6) as well as the white collar employees (5.5).

The Saurashtrians in matters of size and composition of family, preferred to adapt to urban conditions than adhere to their tradition.

Table - 6

Distribution of Occupational Groups by Family Size

Family size	Occupational Groups			Total
	Weavers	Traders	Salaried	N = 300
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Upto 3	8	8	13	29(9.7)
4 - 6	67	41	62	170(56.7)
7 - 9	21	30	20	71(23.7)
Above 9	4	21	5	30(10.0)
Total	100	100	100	300(100.1)

3. Upreti in his study of migrant community's social organization has shown a similar result. According to him, the family of low socio-economic status group tends to disintegrate because of the economic pressure involved in maintaining a large family. For details see Social Organization of a Migrant Group, Himalaya Publishing House, Bombay, 1981.

One hundred and seventy families (56.7 per cent) in the selected sample consisted of four to six members. This is the common family size noticed in all the three occupational groups. The small family of three members exists more among the white collar employees. The large families of above nine members is associated with the traders. Moreover, the weavers and the white collar employees show a similar trend in the size of their family. Traditionally, the large family was preferred by the weaving sector of the community. At present, large household is rare among them. The decline in family size makes further changes in relationship between the households inevitable.

All classes uniformly have 4 - 6 as standard family size. The large family size reflects an index of upper strata.

Table - 7

Class-Wise Distribution of Family Size

N=300

Family size	Economic Classes			
	High	Upper Middle	Middle	Low
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
Upto to 3	6.4(6)	12.0(6)	11.0(9)	10.8(8)
4 - 6	35.1(33)	64.0(32)	63.4(52)	71.6(53)
7 - 9	33.0(31)	22.0(11)	20.7(17)	16.2(12)
Above 9	25.5(24)	2.0(1)	4.9(4)	1.4(1)
Total	100(94)	100(50)	100(82)	100(74)

A clear distinction of family size variation has also been noticed among the respondents belonging to various economic classes. Even though the higher class families have variations in family size, the large family is a typical characteristic of higher class. Eighty per cent of large households of above 9 members belongs to the higher class. It is apparent from the study that families with one to two children are becoming the rule among them. On an average they have 2.5 children per family. This beginning of a decline in the number of children born to a couple indicates the fact that very substantial internal change has occurred in the relationship between husband and wife and between parents and children.

The following observations have been made while analysing the family pattern within the community:

1. There is a trend towards nuclear family pattern among the weavers.
2. The businessmen are more attached to joint families.
3. There is a sharp distinction between high and low income groups in terms of family structure. The family size of the low income groups is limited to a few members.
4. There is a negative correlation between education and family type. The increasing education helps to form the joint family irrespective of the occupational background of the respondents.
5. The educated and middle aged persons tend to live in joint families as they have more responsibilities.

Kinship

In every society, an individual needs recognition and support from others in his activities. He gets it from various sources such as the members of his own family, kin circle, work groups, friends, specific associations etc. In traditional societies the association between family and kin was very strong. This may be explained as the outcome of a low level of mobility and a high degree of interdependence among the individuals in the pre-industrialized societies. Kinship relations change as the people's attempts to satisfy their wants change in the physical and social environment.

E. Bott⁴ says that the kinship maintenance in an urban environment is complex and depends upon a combination of factors which include the following: residential accessibility; common economic interests; composition of household; the biological range of persons available for kin recognition; the existence of key personalities in the household to take initiative in kin contacts etc.

The structural changes in family and occupation also necessitate some adjustments in the kinship system. S.J. Chen,⁵ found three major implications of family due to structural changes. They are:

- 1) The role of individual in the nuclear family is more specific and less complicated;

4. E. Bott, op. cit., p. 94.

5. S.J. Chen, "Modernization in Singapore : Changing Values and the Individual", No. 10, Working Papers, Department of Sociology University of Singapore, 1972,pp. 1-16.

- 2) There is a transformation of relationship between parent and children.
- 3) Nuclear family is socially alienated and isolated.

Kinship Organization

The traditional Saurashtran family can be characterized as highly patriarchal, patrilineal, patrilocal and ideally of the joint type. Despite the urban living the Saurashtrians as a group always gave normative priority to kinship. Even the rules of address and modes of greeting are closely related to the kinship structure. A multi-generational and harmonious joint family enjoyed a meritorious reputation and carried weight in the social circle of the community. Even affinal and distant relatives were inducted into the family and thereby cherished kin values. The close proximity, occupational homogeneity, elaborative and expensive ceremonies tied together their kinship sentiments. The related families maintained an atmosphere of love and affection, tolerance and reciprocal kinship awareness.

In the past, an ideal Saurashtrian family was to go on for four to five generations without a division of property. Thurston⁶ notes: "the masses (Saurashtrians) enjoyed the property under the joint undivided Hindu family system as prescribed in the Code of Manu". Sons inherited equal shares in the ancestral property. The childless couples adopted the child of one of the spouse's closest relatives.

6. E. Thurston, op.cit., p. 166.

name. A group of relatives with the same family name was regarded as an endogamous group and this rule was strictly observed.⁷ It is interesting to note that if two individuals share the common family name, even if there is only a distant relation between them, they will feel a sense of togetherness. If the family name is different, there is a greater feeling of difference. It may be said here that using the family name to refer to a group of kin puts a collective stamp on this immigrant group. The present day Saurashtrians often use the Tamil kin term 'Pankali'⁸ to refer common kin group or kinsmen.

The Madurai Saurashtrians always sought matrimonial ties within Madurai itself. This exclusiveness lent an air of superiority to the community and preserved its uniqueness. The present trend of marital alliance is that Saurashtrians accept bride grooms from outside Madurai and at the same time they are reluctant to give their daughters in marriage outside Madurai.

The rituals associated with various life cycle ceremonies are also important in understanding Saurashtran kinship organization. These ceremonies depict the distinctive characteristics of Saurashtran kin groups. The celebration of various social events brought relatives together and such occasions often served as the meeting ground of all the members of the kin group.

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7. Those persons who possess common family name are believed to be blood relatives.
 8. 'Pankali' in Tamil means share holders of ancestral property. This terminology can be treated in par with the 'Tarward' of Nair kinship terminology of Kerala.

The nature of occupation to a great extent regulated the kinship system of the community. Financial and physical assistance of kinsmen became inevitable for them in carrying out their economic activities. The Saurashtrians preferred to employ kinsmen or own castemen in their shops. The reason being that they were believed to be more honest and amicable in their behaviour. They also did not like others entering into the textile business. It is no surprise that if a man who succeeds in business or in some other field of endeavour extends his help or provides employment to his kinsmen.

Marriage

An analysis of marriage pattern and age at marriage is also important in understanding familial change. It has been well established that mobility in education, occupation, income etc. directly influences the marital connections and age. Generally these factors cause a delay in marriage for both males and females. Marriage may also be considered as an important avenue of mobility for young persons who establish marital alliances with large and well-to-do families.

In olden days relatives did not marry. They considered marriage as an alliance of two families and their kindred and not a mere union of two individuals. As far as possible they arranged marriages outside the kin circle. Now, many of them are in favour of arranging inter-kin marriages. Difficulty in finding suitable spouses, withholding of ancestral property, rising of dowry, fulfilling of elders' desire besides acculturation made them to change the marital arrangements. Cross-

cousin marriage of bilateral type is much preferred among them. They feel that if the spouses are related to each other there will be much co-operation between them and the in-laws.

Sibling exchange is also done if the circumstances favourably admit. That is, when a man or woman marries into a family, he or she will often take the initiative in arranging a marriage between one of his or her siblings and the brother or sister of the spouse. The practice of marrying an elder brother's widow is a custom of the community. One such marriage was reported in our study: an young man married an elder brother's widow. Three respondents entered into second marriage after the death of first wife. No case of divorce or polygamy appeared in our study. Uncle-niece marriage has become very common. Love marriages are very few. Some of them have started welcoming love marriage provided if it takes place within the community. In our sample two young couples were united by love. In one case strong opposition came from parents of both parties. But the couple got married outside Madurai with the help of friends. When they returned home they were received by the parents who arranged another marriage ceremony for them.

Table - 8

Respondent's Relationship with Spouse Prior to Marriage

(Occupation-Wise)

Type of Relationship	Occupation			Total
	Weavers (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried (%)	
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
First cousin (Paternal)	5.1(5)	4.1(4)	2.2(2)	3.9(11)

N = 285

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
First cousin (Maternal)	12.2(12)	8.2(8)	2.2(2)	7.7(22)
Distant relative (paternal)	6.1(6)	3.3(13)	3.4(3)	7.7(22)
Distant relative (maternal)	11.2(11)	16.3(16)	6.7(6)	11.6(33)
Uncle-niece	7.1(7)	5.1(5)	1.1(1)	4.6(13)
Others	4.1(4)	13.1(3)	-	2.4(7)
Unrelated	54.1(53)	50.0(49)	84.3(75)	62.1(177)
Total	100(98)	100(98)	100(89)	100(285)

The present study shows overall 37.9 per cent of the couples got married within the kin circle.

The traders stood first in the inter-kin marriages (50 per cent) whereas the weavers occupied a second place (45.9 per cent). Quite a good number in the white collar category (84.3 per cent) got married outside kin group. Marriages with the maternal relatives were more numerous than with the paternal relatives among all the occupational groups. This is probably due to the more frequent social mixing with maternal relatives. By tradition, among the Saurashtrans, the maternal uncle plays a significant role in the celebration of various ritual ceremonies ranging from birth to death. The marriage between first cousins was more common among the weavers than among the traders. However, the white collar employees could break away from the tradition by making marriage alliance with non-relatives. The uncle-niece marriages may be attributed to the influence of Tamil culture.

An average Saurashtran male marries at the age of 26.5 years and a female at the age of 19.5 years. The average mean age at marriage for men of low, middle, upper middle and high income families were found to be 25.2, 26.5, 27.9 and 26.3 years respectively. The age at marriage goes up with increase in income. A sudden decline is noted among the high income groups. The mean age at marriage of respondents belonging to three major occupations has been calculated and presented in Table 9.

Table - 9
Average Mean Age at Marriage by Sex and Occupation

Occupation	Average Mean Age at Marriage	
	Males	Females
Weavers	25.0	18.3
Traders	26.0	19.6
Salaried employees	28.5	20.6
All respondents	26.5	19.5

Compared with males, the Saurashtran females get married when they are quite young. The three occupational groups registered considerable differences in age at marriage of both males and females. No doubt, a rise in occupational status makes for a delay in the age at marriage also. The weavers who are educationally and economically poor married earlier than the traders. Males and females of average

salaried employee's family married at the age of 28.5 years and 20.6 years respectively. However, this is not applicable to every household. In our study, we came across some exceptional cases like a girl of thirty years in a weaver family who remained unmarried due to dowry problem and a girl in a trader family who got married at the age of fourteen.

In Saurashtran families the husbands tend to be older than their wives. The age gap between the spouses has been calculated. At an average, the husband is 7 years older to wife. The mobility in occupation rather widened the age gap between the spouses. The average age difference between spouses of weaver family is 6.7 whereas that of salaried employees is 7.5. The biggest age difference between husband and wife was noticed as 14 years in the case of trader, 12 years in the case of a salaried employee and 10 in the case of a couple belonging to weaving family. In no case the couple belonging to similar age was reported.

While expressing the ideal age difference a majority of our respondents felt that the wife should be at least 3 years younger to the husband. No respondent favoured husband younger than wife. However, 3 per cent of the respondents stated that age is not significant in making marital alliances. They said that age is not so important as long as the married couple is happy. However, 7.3 per cent suggested same age as better.

Pattern of Kin Networks

The proximity of relatives in the selected neighbourhoods has been analysed. Fifty five per cent of the respondents are surrounded by one or more related families in their present neighbourhood. The strength of relatives is found higher in the weavers' colonies than the other settlements. It is evident from the study that forty three per cent of weavers have fewer than six related families in their neighbourhoods. A large number of salaried employees (61 per cent) are said to be staying away from their relatives' residence. At the same time seven per cent of them are having more than ten related families dwelling in their vicinity. Fifty six per cent of traders and 28 per cent of weavers are separated from their kin.

Table - 10

Residential Proximity of Kin by Occupation

No. of related families	Weavers (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried employees (%)	Total (%)
Nil	28	46	61	135(45.0)
Less than 6	43	32	21	96(32.0)
6 - 10	17	13	11	41(13.7)
Above 10	12	9	7	28(9.3)
Total	100	100	100	300(100.0)

On analysing the respondents' relationship with various categories of kin, it is found that fifty two per cent maintain formal relationship and rest of them have developed non-formal relationship with kin.⁹ Formal relationship is emphasised in regard to affinal relatives (31.3 per cent), while non-formal relationship is expressed in regard to agnatic relatives (23.7 per cent). While ten per cent of respondents termed their relation with tertiary relatives as formal 12 per cent considered it as non-formal.

Sixty five per cent of weavers have a formal relationship with their kindred. The salaried employees are equally divided in the classification of formal and non-formal contact with relatives. The trader mix freely with the agnatic and affinal kin. The salaried employees move freely with the agnatic as well as tertiary relatives. On the whole, the table shows that a great deference is shown to the affinal relatives by all sections.

Table - 11

Nature of Relationship With Relatives by Respondents' Occupation

Nature of Relationship	Weavers (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried employees (%)	Total (%)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
<u>Formal</u>				
Agnatic	14	10	10	34(11.3)

9. 'Non-formal' relationship has been understood as having a strong sense of 'we feeling' and mixing up freely with kin and showing deep involvement in kin affairs. 'Formal' relationship lacks such a free, frank & close relationship in establishing social contact with kin.

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
Affinal	39	24	31	94(31.3)
Tertiary	12	9	8	29(9.7)
Sub Total	65	43	49	157(52.3)
<u>Non-Formal</u>				
Agnatic	17	29	25	71(23.7)
Affinal	8	21	7	36(12.0)
Tertiary	10	7	19	36(12.0)
Sub Total	35	57	51	143(47.7)
Grant Total	100	100	100	300 (100.0)

The degree of contact with relatives has been studied and presented in Table no. 12. Nearly forty per cent of the respondents maintain frequent contacts with their relatives. A further thirty eight per cent stated that they are moderate in their contact with kin. One fifth of our sample reported the contact as minimal. Only very few respondents (3.3 per cent) are not interested in social contact with kin. A significant variation has been observed while correlating the nature of contact with occupation. A majority of traders establish frequent contact with kin. The kin contact of salaried employees and weavers is poor. Twenty nine per cent of weavers and eighteen per cent of traders restrict the contact to a minimum degree.

Table - 12

Nature of Contact with Relatives by Occupation

Nature of contact	Weavers (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried (%)	Total N = 300
Frequent contact	27	53	38	118(39.3)
Moderate contact	38	32	44	114(38.0)
Minimal contact	29	11	18	58(19.3)
No contact	6	4	0	10(3.3)
Total	100	100	100	300(99.9)

Attachment with Kin

The respondents in our sample, consistently maintain good relationship with maternal relatives (29.0%). Only 3.3 per cent in the sample reported that they are not closely attached to any one of their relatives. Table no. 13 shows that the ties with the maternal relations are stronger among the weavers as well as salaried. The role of women in the households of these groups made intimate ties with maternal kin inevitable. The traders are more associated with the father's side. The joint management in business, the brothers' co-operation in assisting business are some of the reasons for this

preference. A considerable proportion of salaried and business classes are well-connected with affinal relatives. However, 15 per cent of weavers, 24 per cent of traders and 28 per cent of salaried professionals prefer to have equal social contact with all relatives.

Table - 13

Respondents' Preference of Kin by Occupational Category

Preferred kin	Weaver (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried (%)	Total N = 300
Paternal family	26	27	21	24.7(74)
Maternal family	33	22	32	29.0(87)
Affinal family	10	17	14	13.7(41)
Others	9	6	3	6.0(18)
Equal relation with all	15	24	28	22.3(67)
No contact with kin	6	4	-	3.3(10)
Not mentioned	1	-	2	1.0(3)
Total	100	100	100	100(300)

Selection of Kin

The respondents were asked about the need for giving respect to the relatives. The reasons cited are tabulated here.

Table - 14

Respondent's Reasons for Showing Deference to Relatives

S.No.	Reasons for giving respect to kin	Percentage (Frequency)
1	Seniority	16.3(49)
2	Personal character	20.3(61)
3	Helping tendency	16.0(48)
4	Common kin group	28.0(84)
5	Good occupation	9.7(29)
6	Well-to-do status	4.7(14)
7	High Education	3.7(11)
8	No answer	1.3(4)
	Total	100(300)

It is understood from Table no 14 that the occupation, wealth and education of relatives are not given much importance in showing deference. Belonging to the common kingroup, personal character, helping tendency and age are the main factors. However, the younger generation give priority to occupation and education in showing their deference. A large number of respondents (47 per cent) received physical and moral support from their kin. Thirty two per cent availed of financial help and fifteen per cent took the assistance of relatives in performing occupation. Four per cent found employment through relatives and two others acquired education with the aid of relatives.

Again 56 per cent of our respondents are supported by agnatic relatives, 23 per cent from affinal relatives and 20 per cent take the help from tertiary relatives. The agnatic relatives provide all sorts of help. The respondents get more physical and moral support from the affinal and tertiary relatives. Five per cent of respondents go to affinal relatives and eight per cent turn to tertiary relatives for financial help. For occupational purpose our respondents depend upon agnatic kin than among other types of kin. Table no. 15 defines the specific types of help and service found within kin network.



Table - 15
Nature of Help by Type of Relatives

	Agnatic	Affinal	Tertiary	Total N = 300 (%)
Financial	57	15	24	96(32.0)
Occupational	33	7	5	45(15.0)
Physical and moral	67	44	30	141(47.0)
Employment	7	3	2	12(4.0)
Education	5	0	1	6(2.0)
Total	169(56.3)	69(23.0)	62(20.7)	300(100.0)

Occupation

Any structure consists of different parts. The occupational structure of Madurai Saurashtrans is constituted by traditional and several modern occupations which are grouped here under three broad

categories i.e. weaving, trading and salaried professions. The term occupation here means the main profession of the respondent which is the real indicator of his status and prestige in the socio-economic context.

Weaving may be considered as a traditional occupation which involves inherited skill and joint effort of many persons. Based on the economic organization, the weavers are classified as weavers working under co-operative society, weavers working under master weaver, and apprentice weavers. The traders are sub-divided into two groups. Those who deal with the materials and products of handloom textiles are termed as traditional traders and those engaged in non-textile activities as modern traders. A majority of traders (69 per cent) in our study fall under the former category. The salaried profession consist of white collar urban jobs which usually require high level education, specific training etc.

In addition to earnings through primary occupation fifty per cent of the respondents get additional sources of income through various means. It can be seen from the Table no 16 that thirteen per cent of the respondents earn additional income through secondary occupation. That is five per cent of weavers, nineteen per cent of traders and fifteen per cent of salaried employees are engaged in secondary occupations. The chief secondary occupation of weavers seem to be repairing of hand-looms, native medicine, running of petty shops, etc. Atleast seven per cent of weavers have hired out hand-looms to supplement their income. A few others rented out a portion of their house allotted by the co-operative society.

Table - 16
Additional Means of Earning by Occupation

Source of income	Occupation			Total N = 300(%)
	Weavers (%)	Traders (%)	Salaried (%)	
Rent (House and handloom)	12	25	9	46(15.3)
Agriculture	0	13	11	24(8.0)
Savings	2	7	22	31(10.3)
Secondary occupation	5	19	15	39(13.0)
Other sources	2	1	6	9(3.0)
Nil	79	35	37	151(50.3)
Total	100	100	100	300(99.9)

The traders, besides their major business activities concentrate on jobs like money lending, pawn-brokerage, managing chit funds, sales agency and contracting. The salaried employees also work as part-time accountants, consultants, tutors, sales representatives, owners of printing presses and bookshops and starting of productive enterprises. Twenty two per cent of salaried employees multiply income through savings.

Fifteen per cent of our respondents get income through renting out house, shops or hand-looms. Eight per cent of the respondents hold agricultural land and many of whom have leased out the land

for tenant cultivation. Most of them have secured the land either through inheritance or by means of dowry. No respondent has purchased agricultural land from his own earnings. On the other hand, they do not hesitate in investing money on buying new houses in the town. The Saurashtrians as a whole show less enthusiasm for agricultural activities which involve hard manual labour.

Many traders belonging to the high and upper middle class employ hired workers for their occupation. Nearly 73 per cent of traders employ hired workers. Twenty three per cent of traders in our sample employ more than four employees at their shops. Only eleven weavers take the assistance of hired weavers.

Occupational Change

The manner in which the Saurashtrians became traders has been discussed in the last chapter. It is the trading section which initiated changes within the community. Although their interest in modern education and non-traditional occupations began in the beginning of the present century, the concrete achievement in these fields came with the country's independence. The community's socio-economic structure was also affected by the change of political power in South.

A great many weavers during the time of native rulers were unwilling to change their occupation because their occupation because their earning from weaving provided them with the means to lead a comfortable life. During the British period, a number of them tried to concentrate on trade partly due to the demand for textiles made in India in foreign countries. The development of textile

technology and growth of mill industries in Madurai, and government's control over textile economy especially during the post-independence period, adversely affected those people settled in Madurai. In view of the above situation many had to choose an occupation outside their traditional fold.

In fact the most spectacular occupational diversification began among them since the middle of the present century. A close look at their present occupational structure reveals the fact that they are now strongly represented in status-oriented urban jobs. While preserving their traditional occupations, they are now making conscious efforts to move further into white collar occupations.

A general tendency favouring high ranking occupations has been found among all the sectors of the community. White collar jobs are believed to confer high status on the community. The secular education provided by the community-owned institutions acted as a spring board enabling a great many of them to break away from the traditional occupations. To some extent, the general occupational structure of the community has changed due to the environmental and economic pressures which have arisen in the wake of changing times.

Still weaving and trading are principal occupations of many Saurashtran families in Madurai. A large number of them are associated with the traditional type of business such as manufacturing and sale of textile goods, dyes and chemicals, yarn and cotton items. Many of them feel that they are not capable of doing modern type of business as they lack skill in such occupations.

However, due to pressure and deteriorating condition of weaving young merchants have taken to new kinds of business. They are mostly from the educated class who are engaged in modern business such as running television and cassette centres, book-stall and printing presses and selling electrical and electronics articles. The involvement in modern business has drawn them out of their homes and provided them with more opportunities for social interaction.

An important aspect of any occupational analysis is the number of earning members a household head is having. The employment of family members alters the household's basic economic structure. It is very difficult for a household to move upward where there are many dependants. Table no 17 correlates adult male earning members with occupational group.

Table - 17

Classification of Respondents by Adult Male Earning Member

Male working Member	Weaver (%)	Trader (%)	Salaried (%)	Total N = 300(%)
None	49	31	59	139(46.3)
One	33	24	23	80(26.7)
Two	10	19	13	42(14.0)
Three	8	16	4	28(9.3)
Above three	0	10	1	11(3.7)
Total	100	100	100	300

There is an unequal distribution of respondents when the working status of adult males are taken into consideration. The study shows 49 per cent of weaving families and 59 per cent of white collar employee families do not have a single adult male earning member other than the respondents. Nearly one third of weavers and one fourth of the traders have an additional male worker within their families.

Compared to adult males the contribution of adult females is dominant in the weaving sector. Their representation is considerably less in other categories. While 55 per cent of the weavers have at least one female employed in their houses, 10 per cent of traders and 13 per cent of salaried have got one employed woman. Of course, there is a change in the quality of occupation of the women belonging to the three occupational groups. The women of weaving families are predominantly engaged in weaving. The women from non-weaving families are better placed.

Table - 18

Classification of Respondents by Adult Female Earning Member

Working woman	Weaver (%)	Trader (%)	Salaried (%)
None	20	89	84
One	55	10	13
Two	16	1	2
Three	7	0	1
Above three	2	0	0
Total	100	100	100

Relation between the nature of occupation of respondents and the family member is an important aspect in understanding the direction of occupational change of a community. Table 19 given below shows the correspondence between respondents' occupation and adult family member following the similar occupation as done by the respondent.

Although the family members show common occupational characteristics, a considerable change in occupation can be noticed while comparing Table nos. 17 and 19. In fact 32 per cent of traders at least have one adult male in the similar profession. Weavers having more than two adult males in that occupation is quite uncommon. There is a sharp decrease in the number of adult male members of salaried class living with the household head. The traders living in joint families have been able to diversify their economic base.

Table - 19

Classification of Respondents by Similarity of occupation

Similar Occupation	Weaver (%)	Trader (%)	Salaried (%)	Total N = 300
None	64	49	86	199
One	24	32	8	64
Two	11	6	4	21
Three	1	9	2	12
Above three	-	4	-	4
Total	100	100	100	300

When we consider the occupational change during the career of individual respondents, as many as 35% i.e. 104 out of 300 respondents changed one or more occupations during their occupational history. The shift of occupation is at the higher rate among the traders than the other two groups. Fifty seven per cent of the traders are affected by change of occupation. The figures reveal that 10 per cent of present traders had started their career as shop accountants or assistants.

It is interesting to note that three traders in our study entered into business after spending some years in government jobs. One of them who is a cotton merchant said that he was compelled by his father to go in for government job. But after the death of his father he left the job to take up business. A retired government servant now doing his business said that he got the opportunity very late, as in the past he did not have enough capital to start the business.

Intergenerational Occupational Mobility

Respondents' occupation in relation to the fathers' are recorded in the table no. 20. The figures clearly show that most of the weavers were those individuals whose fathers were also in the same occupational category. The comparison reveals that the rates of occupational succession is high among the weavers (85 per cent) and traders (55 per cent). But majority of salaried men do not follow their fathers' footsteps.

The inherited occupations are followed by a majority weavers for a variety of reasons. A majority of them attributed low education and non-availability of alternate jobs as major causes. Some came out with the interesting answer that as they had spent 10-15 years in learning the craft, they do not want to be engaged in some other work. Some others viewed lack of capital and lack of experience in other jobs as reasons to stick to their traditional occupation.

There is some evidence of downward movement in case of eight weavers whose jobs have less prestige than those of their fathers. Of course, these new entrants are also interested in changing completely to new lines, and perhaps they are trying to be as successful as their fathers were. In due course, most of these individuals may even surpass their fathers in occupational achievements since they still have several working years ahead of them.

Business tends to become an affair of inheritance with at least 68 per cent of traders. This may be explained due to the goodwill that comes to be associated with particular firms as they grow old and pass from generation to generation in a family. In a business house, if there are more sons than one, one of them must sit in the shop while the rest may change their occupation. Nearly 45 per cent of the traders are new to the occupation. The comparison with their fathers' occupations shows that within a gap of two generations, 16 moved up to the rank of trading from weaving and 10 achieved the status as traders from shop assistants. However, trading is downward

mobility for atleast 12 per cent of the traders, whose fathers belonged to high status urban occupations. Another change of direction is the kind of business with which traders are involved. Thirty one per cent of traders are attached toward modern type of business, whereas in the case of traders of previous generation only 17 out of 111 did business of a modern kind.

Nearly 50 per cent of the salaried respondents moved to the present position from trading as compared to fathers. Therefore, it is wrong to assume that only white collar employees breed white collar employees. The fathers of 13 per cent had worked as shop assistants. Out of 14 professionals seven are sons of traditional business men. None of the technically employed person had his father in the similar line. This indicates a pattern of upward mobility among the Saurashtran white collar employees. To a remarkable extent, the upward mobility is actually achieved by the traders as well as the salaried employees.

Some interesting points have emerged while making a detailed comparison of respondents' occupation with their father's. The trend of movements are as follows:

1. An overwhelming majority of weavers follow the footsteps of their fathers with regard to their occupational career.
2. A steady decline in handloom business and a shift in the direction of modern business are observable differences in the respondents' generation.

Table - 20

Respondents' Occupation Cross-Tabulated With Father's Occupation

(Frequency Table)

Occupation of Respondents	Respondents' Father's Occupation									Total
	Weaving	Tradi- tional trading	Modern trading	Tech- nical	White collar	Profe- ssional	Shop Asst.	Land lord	Artison etc.	
Weaving	85	4	2	2	-	-	5	-	2	100
Trading (Traditional)	12	39	1	1	2	-	6	2	6	69
Trading(Modern)	4	13	2	1	2	-	4	-	5	31
Technical	-	5	1	-	2	-	3	-	3	14
White collar	6	26	11	6	8	1	9	3	2	72
Professionals	-	7	-	-	3	2	1	-	1	14
Total	107	94	17	10	17	3	28	5	19	300

3. The data show that the route from the position of a small shop employee to self-owned business man is favoured as a typical channel of upward mobility by many businessmen.
4. It is very rare among traders to become weavers and they seldom move downward.
5. The scale of business is a determinant factor in absorbing sons into the family business. For example, sons are more likely to change occupations if their fathers are in small enterprises, and less likely to do so if their fathers are in large enterprises.
6. There is a discernable movement of the sons of those engaged in business towards salaried professions.