CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION: In a community there are both individual and social problems. Individual problems become social problems when they affect a large number of people amounting to a threat to the welfare and social interest of the whole group. But all individual problems are not social problems. Poverty, alcoholism, crime, untouchability and religious intolerance are few social problems. Religious intolerance and untouchability are two of the major problems afflicting and crippling the Indian society in particular and constitute the subject of this study in some aspects.

On the basis of religion, the Hindu society is stratified into four varnas - Brahmans, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. These are further divided into castes and subcastes. The caste system in India is an example of 'closed class' as there is no mobility or shifting from one class to another and members remain throughout their life-time in the same caste wherein they are born. Each caste is governed by certain rules and sanctions relating to endogamy, food taboos, ritual purity etc. Each caste group within a community is expected to give certain standardized services to the families of other caste. Hindu reformers have failed to make any headway against
the rigid caste system and religious dogmatism because religion and caste system are deep rooted in the minds of the people and only a change in attitude can bring about change in the social structure. In urban life where people are educated and are comparatively wealthy, caste system and religious intolerance, although existing, is not rigid; there is a considerable intercommunication and interpersonal relationship not strictly based on caste hierarchy and narrow religious thinking.

"The caste system is based on birth according to which man's position in a society is fixed. The caste system is based on Varna Dharma. According to Varna Dharma different people in a society adopt different occupations and this adoption of different occupations by their ancestors constitute their caste" (Kuppuswami, 1979). There are some people in a society who have chosen the work of religious ministers called priests. They are the Brahmins and they constitute the intellectual group or the best part of the society. In the second place there are the Kshatriyas who have devoted themselves in the defensive activities of the society. These were the rulers and warriors of the olden days and still constitute a separate group. Some people have a special aptitude for earning money or we may say to produce wealth and they
constitute the third group the vaisyas. All the agriculturists, industrialists, bankers, traders etc. come in this group and their work is the production and distribution of wealth. The last and the most neglected people in the society, though equally important, are the workers called sudras. The first three groups, the intellectual, the politicians and warriors and the production groups are the supermost part of the society and the fourth group which consists of the working class, constitutes the sudra group.

It is a well known fact that the "Varna Ashram Vyavastha" or the caste system is the basis of the Indian social organisation. All Hindu beliefs and practices are based on the caste system. Broadly speaking all the societies of the world are based on some kind of system and this is true with other religious groups in India too like the Muslims, the Christians etc. The only difference is that in Indian social organisation natural endowments are linked with birth and this is the foundation of Indian caste system.

Caste exhibits striking contrast with community sentiments. Sentiments of caste are essentially sentiments of disparity. Above all it unites the superior against
inferior. It emanates from the belief in superiority, however ill-founded, so that caste division is really imposed on the lower by the higher castes. Furthermore, this continues from generation to generation. Hence, caste sentiments involve entirely different attitude, with respect to one another, of the various groups within the hierarchical system.

For centuries, the Indian social system permitted social and economic injustices by the so called higher castes on the lower castes. The lower castes have been universally denied the equal chance in the opportunities and benefits of the larger society.

"The caste system in its early stages was not so rigid but in the course of time it gradually confined into a tight inflexible structure based upon heredity. As a result it gave rise to a customary gradation full of snobbery, one caste looking down upon another in the society. Thus, there came into being social hierarchy and stratification resulting in perpetration of injustices by the so called higher castes on the lower castes" (Hutton, 1961).

The untouchables or Harijans are those Hindus who are kept outside the Hindu circle. They are, however,
subjected to the Hindu sanctions and rules governing their lives. Earlier and even now in many places the untouchables are considered even as unseeable and unheardable and high caste Hindus even avoid their shadows. They are born in unequal conditions and die in those conditions. These untouchables are denied access to wells, temples, schools and other places and they are bound to do dirty and menial tasks for livelihood. "These unfortunate classes of citizens were socially oppressed and economically condemned to live the life of extreme poverty and educationally, they are compelled to learn their family trade or occupation. In short we can say that the untouchables are in a real sense outsiders of the Hindu system. They live in a community but actually they are not the members of the community. The roots of their basic disabilities grew from their low status in Hindu hierarchical system" (Majumdar, 1964).

The scheduled castes or the Harijans who are considered by caste Hindus to be those who are destined by god to serve the higher castes, comprise about fifteen percent of India's total population. About 90 percent of these live in rural areas and are illiterate. More than 75% of the scheduled caste
population is engaged in agriculture as landless labourers. "The majority have means only to fulfill their immediate needs and are set apart from others as regards to their place of residence and housing and are victims of tuberculosis, leprosy and venereal diseases besides the various disabilities arising out of Hinduism" (Ghurye, 1961).

Whether the caste system evolved as simple division of labour or as the result of the coming of the Aryans who sent away the conquered race to some inferior position is debatable. However, the system which was prevailing at the time of independance of India in 1947, was an example of racial discrimination. The condition of the lower castes especially of the untouchables at the hands of the higher castes was wretched.

Religion like caste is also a constitutionally forbidden ground for making any classification in secular India. Attitudes towards religion amongst college students has been included in the present study as it is one of the important changes which the Indian society is undergoing to become a secular society. "The caste rules and taboos are so mixed with religion that it is some times very difficult to separate the two. The caste system is hierarchical determining the social status in the group. It is the
religious factor which prevented the lower class people to make any revolution against the upper caste as they believe in the myth of holiness and infallibility (exempt from liability to error or to failure of the Brahmin) and the indoctrination of the myth among the lower castes which made them accept the status of Brahmin without questioning it" (Prasad, 1957). Srinivas (1964) takes up more or less similar position by asserting that the beliefs of the people in the law of Karma and the doctrine of Puranjanma, namely, transmigration of the soul, were responsible for the acquiescence of the lower castes to the whole system.

Like caste, religion forms an important aspect in the social structure. The role played by religion in the network of social relations is of great importance. "Traditionally we can say that religious activities maintain the purity of soul, prevent individuals from wrong doings and help to promote a healthy community living. It is believed that the observance of religious practices provides protection and security" (Mann, 1979).

Despite every day trust on scientific way of thinking and modern technology, various informal religions and beliefs in the supernatural continue to prosper.
In India as well as in United States today many full-time and part-time astrologers are occupied in business of astrology. "Various forms of serying (seeing or perceiving the future) continues to hold the confidence of many contemporaries, who consult future tellers" (Smith and Preston, 1977).

Man has developed certain techniques and regulated systems through which he interacts with other human beings and he keeps a definite adjustment to his environment. Beliefs, superstitions, feelings, fears, worship, and attitude of reverence are different aspects religion. In other words we can say "Religious performances are more or less an outcome of mental perception in respect of beliefs, worships, rituals, ceremonies, rites and the supernaturals including gods, goddesses, ghosts, spirits and soul" (Mann, 1979).

"Religion prescribes rules of conduct and in so doing tends to identify them with moral conduct. Religion as we understand the term, implies a relationship not merely between man and man but also between man and Superpower. Religion has come in frequent conflict with moral discernments responsive to changing social needs. It has frequently menaced the autonomy of judgement which
is the prime condition of an enlightened adult morality. The more conservative religions have resisted the fresh moral insights and the social application derived from advancing science" (Maciver and Page, 1962).

A society in which all aspects of life are guided by religion is not suitable for novelties and change. On the other hand, when the effect of religion is limited to the relation between man and god, or man and the universe and when the effect of religion on the other aspects of life becomes less powerful, there is a scope for the introduction of novelties and change because there is a greater confidence in man's ability to control the forces of nature as well as the social institutions. The basic problem of Indian society is to develop a humanistic outlook so that the poverty and suffering of any individual is not tolerated and those individuals who are better off help those who are engulfed in poverty, ignorance and superstition.

Some of the religious practices involve inter-caste relations. In these activities religious sentiments and feelings of the individuals are involved, organization of Sanagat is an example of the social functions of religion.
"As a social institution there are following characteristics of religion. Its universality, its rituals, its sacredness and its persistence" (Smith and Preston, 1977).

Due to faith in empirical science the persistent presence of religion as a fixed force in the routine life of individuals may seem queer to some. Yet a careful inquiry of the major social functions disclose that the institution is still in service of mankind in contemporary society. It is major denominating factor both for personal and social change and for stability. Religion can console us and give us strength in times of personal difficulty or in familial and national crisis, and it can inspire us to bring about change both in ourselves and society.

Although religion like caste has changed, it continues as a very real and major force in the lives of people throughout the world. In India today, as well as in other countries regardless of declining attendance at temples we remain a nation of believers. In our country we do not have systematic studies regarding attitude towards religion yet an assessment can be made through observation of behaviours. "The religious revolution of late sixties and early seventies saw the rise of the systematic beliefs and religious denominations such as Krishna Murthi, Jesus
people, Divine Light Mission and World Unification Church, and represent a major revitalization of religious emotionality and spirituality among the young. "Religion is a determinant as well as reflection of social structure. It helps in understanding the whole united life of a man. Radcliffe and Brown (1950) too have indirectly supported the view by stating that a real social anthropologist studies religious behaviour as a part of a social life. They have stressed that caste is, in its essence, a religious group, membership of which entails ritual observances. The rules of caste behavior are the rules of religion."

Thus, it can be commented here that several attempts have been made in respect to the religion and untouchability, however, of not much sociological importance and the student community has been virtually ignored. Therefore, the present study is an attempt to explore the student's opinion regarding this issue with various aspects in mind. This group represents new generation and has newer outlook towards various social problems. How far the attitude of this group has changed and how they view the problem in broader social context is the main theme of the study.
(i) **Objectives and frame of the study:**

To study the interrelationship between socio-economic status of the students and their attitude.

To find out the attitude of students towards religion and untouchability.

Indepth study of Social, economic, religious and political factors which have strengthened the base of religion and caste.

To find out the awareness and possible impact of Untouchability Act among students.

To find out from students the role of land reforms, urbanisation and industrialization in relation to religion and untouchability.

Students perception of the problem whether untouchability and religion have become part of the social mores.

Students attitude towards providing special privileges to the politically and economically exploited group in the legislative bodies and towards reservations in the jobs and education.

(ii) **Conceptual aspects of the study:** Attitudes refer, relatively, to enduring organizations of feelings, beliefs and behavioral tendencies towards other persons, groups,
ideas or objects (Krech, Crutchfield and Ballachy, 1962).

As man in his finite world is repeatedly forced to adjust with the same object, the repeatedly evoked cognitions, feelings and response dispositions become organised into a unified and enduring system. "This entire package of particular beliefs, feelings, and response tendencies is henceforth always there, on the ready, whenever the individual is confronted with the appropriate object. In other words he now has an attitude towards the object" (Krech, Crutchfield and Ballachy, 1962).

(a) Caste System: "A caste system is one whereby a society is divided up into a number of self contained and completely segregated units (castes) the mutual relations between which are ritually determined in a graded scale" (Hutton, 1961).

(b) Untouchability and Untouchables: Untouchability is the noun derived from the adjective untouchables. "The untouchables or Harijans officially described as the scheduled castes are Hindus, though kept outside the Hindu pale. They are, however, subjected to the Hindu sanctions and rules governing their lives. Earlier and even now in many places they have been made unseeable, unhearable and untouchable" (Majumdar, 1964).
(c) Religion: Religion is an unified system of beliefs and practices which relate to sacred things. "Religion amounts to an enduring belief in a cosmos that simultaneously includes and transcends man" (Mann, 1979).

(d) Attitude Scales: "The typical attitude scale consists of a series of short but carefully formulated statements or propositions dealing with several selected aspects or many appropriate aspects of issues, institutions or groups of people under consideration" (Young, 1977). The individual reacts verbally with expressions of approval, agreement or disagreement to the items on the scale. These reactions purport to measure a persons's position on controversial issues or problems or the degree to which existing social institutions are approved.

(iii) Socio-economic Status of the Respondents: So far there has been no agreed social classification in India. If importance is given only to occupation, it would not reveal the true economic status of the individual as the wages are not usually fixed, and quite an appreciable section of population depending upon trade and agriculture, belongs to different economic groups. Therefore, one should take into consideration both family occupation and the economic status to decide the class. In the present study,
following classification as suggested by the Central Statistical Organisation, Government of India (1983), has been used to determine the socio-economic status of the students. The monthly income has been altered keeping in view various pay revisions done by Govt. of India since 1962.

Class I. Principals, Professors, Doctors, Lawyers, Engineers, Military Officers, such as Captains, Majors, Senior Executives and Business proprietors (Monthly income above Rs. 1500=00).

Class II. Junior Executives, Higher Secondary School Teachers, Small Businessmen, other employees of moderate income groups (Monthly income Rs. 1000 to 1500).

Class III. Clerks, Primary School Teachers and skilled labourers such as Mechanics, Electricians, Rly. Guards etc. (Monthly income Rs. 500 to 1000).

Class IV. Unskilled labourers such as Peons, Sweepers, Porters, Shoemakers, Washermen and domestic servants. (Monthly income upto Rs. 500).

For the purpose of the present study socio-economic status of the students has been taken into consideration as it is one of the determining factors of the attitude formation and further the interrelationship
between socio-economic status of the students towards
religion and untouchability has been studied.

(iv) **Attitudinal Perspective**: Attitudes have long been
of major interest to Social Psychologists. Attitude is
defined as "relatively enduring organization of feelings
beliefs and behaviour tendencies toward other persons,
groups, ideas or objects" (Krech, Crutchfield and Ballachy,
1962).

Indeed, at one time the study of such reactions
dominated the field. This situation has changed somewhat
in recent years. But even today the study of attitudes
remains one of central concerns for social scientists.
The reasons for this are clear. Attitudes play an important
role in every aspect of social life. First, they put forth
a strong effect upon the nature of our relations with
others. For example positive attitudes toward particular
persons lead us to seek them out, to do things for them
and to initiate their actions, while negative ones lead us
to avoid, reject and possibly even harm them. In a sense,
thus many of our reactions to others may be viewed as
attitudinal in nature. Second, attitudes influence many
of our most important decisions. Our choice of political
candidate, colleague, professor and life style are
strongly guided by attitudes, and often originate directly from them. And finally, they determine our position on many crucial social issues and in this manner indirectly shape the nature of the society in which we live.

It is, thus, apparent that attitudes have an important influence on both individual and society. Generally, investigations of attitudes have focussed on one of the two major topics: the manner in which attitudes are formed and the ways in which they can be altered or changed. Some studies are being mentioned which were done in order to find out the determinants of attitudes.

One study was done to show that individual develops attitudes in order to satisfy his wants. Rosenberg (1960), a social Psychologist at Yale University, has demonstrated that "the sign and intensity of feelings toward the object of an attitude are associated with what the individual believes to be its instrumental value in facilitating or blocking the achievement of goals."

One hundred and twenty college students were given an attitude questionnaire that contained an item dealing with the issue of whether members of the communist party should be allowed to address the public. Each student
was required to check his choice among five alternative
statements that ranged from extreme disapproval to extreme
approval of allowing members of communist party to
address the public. This questionnaire, thus, yielded
a measure of the sign and intensity of the subjects
feelings concerning the issue. Analysis of the data
showed that the sign and intensity of feelings towards
freedom of speech for the communists were significantly
related to beliefs about its instrumental value for
achieving goals important to the individual.

This study suggested that attitude objects which
are seen as means of goal achievement are evaluated
favorably, whereas those which are seen as sources of
frustration are evaluated unfavourably. The findings also
support the principle of consistency, the components of
an attitude system tend to be congruent in valence.

An illustrative study which suggests the role
of displaced aggression in the formation of ethnic prejudice
is by Campbell (1947). In this study, a representative
national sample of 316 white non Jewish Americans, was
interviewed to obtain information on factors in their
personal situation which were associated with negative
attitudes towards Jews. Each subject was then rated for
(1) attitude towards Jews, (2) degree of satisfaction with his own personal economic situation and (3) degree of satisfaction with the national political situation.

The latter two ratings were made independently of the rating of attitude towards Jews.

It was found that persons who were rated as dissatisfied with their own economic situation, expressed hostile attitude towards Jews more frequently than those who were economically satisfied. Only 10 percent of the economically satisfied subjects expressed hostility in contrast to 30 percent of the economically dissatisfied subjects. Here it should be noted that prejudice was not consistently related to level of income, degree of dissatisfaction with one's income at whatever level was the significant factor.

There are various studies carried out on attitudes for several purposes and it is also true that various studies have been done to measure the attitude of various groups towards religion and other social issues. "Attitudes for the purpose of this study is a concept that is generally regarded as a readiness to take an action or respond or a degree of preparation for a certain kind of behaviour" (Young, 1944). This we can really observe by itself or
we infer it from the behaviour that we observe. The concept tends to put too much emphasis upon the effect of nature of the individual in determining what his behaviour will be and too little on the effect of situation in which he acts.

It seems, therefore, that the attitude formation is a very complex system of behaviour of which attitudes towards religion and untouchability are very important subsystems, but not independent of the larger system of which they are a part. The measurement of attitudes is a part of the problem of measuring and explaining the entire system of family behaviour of the students. Hence, it might be attempted as part of the larger studies not limited to religion and untouchability only but with other problem of attitude and behaviour. A more fundamental and scientific approach will be essential to the ultimate success of the enquiry.

(v) **Attitudes towards Untouchability and Religion:**

(a) Untouchability: There have been many studies about caste as an institution and as a social group both in sociological and anthropological literature. Many including Nesfield (1885), Ketkar (1909), Dutta (1931), Blunt (1931), Hutton (1946), Ghurye (1950), Srinivas (1952), Karve (1953),
Marriott (1953), Stevenson (1954), Bailey (1957), Mayer (1960), Pannikkar (1961), Wiser (1959) and Dumont (1970) have worked on various aspects of caste.

"Though studies of intercaste relations in the earlier Fiftees had reported some changes in peoples attitudes (Kuppuswamy, 1956; Mahar, 1956; Rath and Sircar, 1960) but no attempt was made to determine the extent of changes in intercaste attitudes" (Anant, 1968).

A research project was undertaken by Anant (1968) in order to measure the effect of various constitutional and legislative measures which tried to root out the evils of the caste system and of various socio-economic changes on inter-caste attitudes. The responses to various questions were analysed in order to study the regional, rural, intercaste and educational differences. A followup study was made in early 1972 to study the changes in attitudes. The comparison of the responses of the two studies show that intercaste relations have improved in recent years due to industrialization, urbanization, adoption of egalitarian values and spread of education. This liberalization has been more strongly marked in the spheres of interaction which are relatively personal and central to the traditional caste ideology.
The results of the follow up study show clearly that social behaviour with Harijans is becoming more generous with the passage of time. However, there is very little change in the attitude concerning interpersonal behaviour such as the acceptance of food from Harijans. The generosity is towards untouchables in public spheres of life such as access to temples, wells or water taps while conservative attitudes persist on questions of interdining and inter marriage and other relatively private matters.

The paper published by Glen and Johnson (1978) examines the major changes contributing to social mobility among untouchables in India. It examines the cultural context of mobility for untouchables, Government programmes supporting mobility, political activities of untouchables, individuals and group mobility and religion and mobility.

The study exhibits sufficient social mobility among untouchables but notes the serious obstacles which remain. It emphasizes the effect of Government policy and potential political mobilization which opened the opportunities for untouchables. It concludes that the protective discrimination policy especially in education has laid the foundation for further progress, yet it also
acts in a contrary direction and shows various opposite side effects. The attempts to build on this basis and to widen the dimensions of mobility for untouchables will depend on a persistent Government effort and on the development of more widespread and comprehensive research data on which policy can be based. Research is especially needed in the areas of attitudes and perceptions of both untouchables and caste Hindus.

Kuppuswamy (1956) studied the attitude of college students in the Composite Madras state in 1949-50. Some of the items of the above study were utilized by Santosh Singh Anant for his study on some adult groups of Agra, Delhi and Varanasi regions. While Anant's study published in 1972 was done in the North on adults of different educational levels in 1968, Kuppuswamy's study was done on college students in the south before the constitution was adopted in 1949. Summary of the results of the two studies is depicted in Table 1.

The comparison of the results of the two studies show that the bitter feelings against caste system are much higher in the South than in the North. The results show the significant effect of education on opinion. The whole group responses in 1968 study are more in favour of the caste system than the graduate group.
Table 1

THE RESPONSES OBTAINED IN THE TWO STUDIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>1949 Study</th>
<th>1968 Study (a)</th>
<th>1968 Study (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. Caste is</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tolerable</td>
<td>32.2</td>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intolerable</td>
<td>35.8</td>
<td>39.7</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Caste system</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should remain</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>26.3</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be modified</td>
<td>36.9</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>43.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be abolished</td>
<td>58.0</td>
<td>36.6</td>
<td>42.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Response</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. When you meet a person do you wish to know his caste and creed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>17.6</td>
<td>44.7</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>53.3</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Do you think you have been victimized because of your caste and creed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td>25.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>57.7</td>
<td>68.1</td>
<td>72.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:— 1968(a) gives the responses of the whole adult group.

1968(b) gives the responses of those adults who have taken the B.A. Degree.
In the opinion of the Kuppuswamy (1979) it would be interesting if the study is repeated in the South among the college students as well as among adults to determine changes in attitude.

Various studies reveal a gradual change in attitude towards untouchability which is the most important thing if the practice of untouchability if to be completely rooted out. Gandhiji was fully convinced that human beings are capable of changing their attitude not by force or compulsion but through the influence of mind upon mind. The present study also is an attempt to measure the attitude of the students towards untouchability as they are the future nation builders of the country.

(b) Religion: There are many studies regarding religion also, though conducting research on religion in the Indian subcontinent has not been an easy task for the social scientists. All major religions with diversified sectarian ideologies along with tribal belief systems, reformist schools and cults founded by pragmatist Gurus, pervade the society.

There are many studies on Hindu religion as well as on non Hindu groups, as Giri Raj Gupta (1978) writes "Hinduism did not escape the attention of great pioneers of social sciences like Emile Durkeim, Max Weber and
Karl Marx, however systematic studies on Hinduism have only been conducted relatively recently. Commentaries, discourses and interpretive analyses though common in the past, were generally either philosophical, mythological, propagative or normative."

As in the present work the main concern is with the attitudinal studies of religion, therefore, only such studies will be quoted.

1. Religious leaders and political socialization of north Indian youth (Malik, 1978): In this study the hypothesis has been developed that as a result of special mobilization and modernization taking place in Indian society, the traditional agents of socialization such as the religious leaders, no longer significantly determine the socio-political values and attitudes of the youth. "The youth have developed a generalized support for the system, and their party identifications and perceptions of the political system are determined by secular considerations rather than by sacred norms." The findings presented supported propositions. The analysis of the data, however, also demonstrated that socio-economic origins of an individual determine the extent and the degree of his exposure to modern and secular norms.
2. Religion among overseas Indian communities: Continuities and changes in the practices of Hinduism and Islam were studied in the context of overseas Indian communities because of the light they may shed on general processes of evolution within the religious traditions of India itself. The Indian communities in the main geographic areas of migrant Indian settlements (South-East Asia, the Pacific Islands, Africa and the Caribbean) were surveyed in terms of denominational distribution, religious personnel, formal religious organizations, ceremonies and beliefs and values. "Certain structural features of the overseas communities, which developed historically in response to the nature of the local populations among whom the Indians were settled make for a wide divergence of "little tradition" practices within both religions. Adherence to one of the traditional religions is seen, in general, as a means of maintaining Indian ethnic identification in a situation of socio-cultural pluralism. Hence, changes in the religions are not necessarily to be seen as symptoms of social or cultural degeneration, but as steps in the process of the adaptation of the ethnically conscious migrant community to a series of polities whose living style and value system are distinctly at variance with traditional Indian practices" (Angrosino, 1978).