2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the theoretical premises of ‘Occupational Sociology’, the basis of the present work.

In India, ‘Occupations’ are a major societal phenomenon since ancient times; so much so that whole of the traditional caste system is woven around it. Occupations also constitute a primary laboratory for the sociologists for the conceptual study of the social organization. In modern times, however, an understanding of the occupations has become central to systematic human resource development planning by the Government agencies. The Sociology of Occupations, therefore, is a prerequisite for a comprehensive manpower planning.

2.2 CONCEPT OF OCCUPATIONS

In daily life, the term ‘occupation’ is widely used, but with diverse meanings. The character and meaning of the term changes considerably from one time and one place to another time and place. Hence, from the viewpoint of the occupational sociology, a specific conceptual formulation is needed.

Arthur Salz has suggested that the notion that occupation must cover three basic conditions, namely, technological, economic and social. Accordingly, he defined ‘occupation’ as “that specific activity with a market value, which an individual continually pursues for the purpose of obtaining a steady flow of income; this activity also determines the social position of the individual”. Occupation is one of the most revealing characteristics concerning an individual and the society of which he/she is a member.

From a sociological point of view, work in an occupation is more limited, precise and specific. A man or woman carrying out a particular work task in isolation, in a solitary way, and with little interaction or cognizance of other individuals who also carry out similar work, is not viewed as ‘behaving occupationally’ by sociologists.
In contrast to the paid employment, every occupation has an enduring superstructure characteristics that exist as occupational traditions even before an individual enters it or even after he leaves it. Thus, there is a sense of corporateness to the occupations; and surrounding them, there is some explicit or implicit ideological notion. An occupation is a complex normative system within which people work for production (of goods or services), economic sustenance, social status and the fulfillment of the meaning of that particular occupation.

The sociological concept of occupation may be defined as a patterned set of human relations having to do with specific work experiences. The integration of the patterned work relations results in the development of occupational structures and the manifestation of occupational ideologies. Ideology and identity are central to the sociological notion of occupation.

The integral components of the sociological concept of occupation include career, status, prestige, mobility, images, customs, culture, structure, recruitment, remuneration and control. The career stages in the occupation might be hierarchically organized so that one enters at a low level, and under given conditions, progresses through a hierarchy and by the normal expectations, reaches a higher level prior to retirement from the occupation. The status and prestige of the occupation are reciprocally achieved by its participants and are rewarded by the society.2

2.3 Occupations and Urbanized Social Organizations

The occupational structures of a society are intrinsically related to the social organization of that society. Observations of agrarian society, industrial society and employee society provide considerable insight into the occupational structures and the social organization of a society. Alba M. Edwards has written,

... There probably is no single set of closely related facts that tell so much about a nation as do detailed statistics of the occupations of its workers. The occupations of the people influence directly their lives, their customs, their institutions - indeed, their very numbers.3

Arthur Salz has gone so far as to develop a typology of societal organization, ranging from corporate to occupational. He identifies corporate social organization as a nearly static condition, most exemplified by caste system of stratification. Occupational social organization, he asserts, is characteristic of an open or free societal development. Modern societies, according to this typology, are characteristically at the open or free occupational end of the continuum, but fall short of the ideal type. This is to say, modern societies lie somewhere between the two extremes, because of the occupations in the contemporary social life are developing something of a manifest corporate organization in and of themselves. Professions, exemplified by clergy, law, teaching and medicine, tend to take on a corporate existence as they manage to maintain a considerable boundary around their organizations. By contrast, in many other occupations, there is a great
fluidity as one moves into and out of the type of work.

Freedom of occupational choice and notions of *laissez faire* followed in the new industrial urbanized societies. Workers in the labour force were theoretically free to seek employment and sell their services at will. This was facilitated by a technology which provided rapid transportation and rapid communication of employment opportunities in various areas. From this period onwards, there developed the norm of mobility, whereby people were expected to move for occupational opportunity.

Notions of occupational specialization, in contrast to occupational generalization, have grown from the writings and experiences of men like Adam Smith and Frederick Taylor. The first was concerned with the economic efficiency and the latter was concerned with the training and utilization of men, much as if they were machines. Such notions of job specification were implicitly more addressed to societal conditions than to worker satisfactions.

While theoretically free to choose an occupation, there are no adequate mechanisms in the society whereby occupational aspirants are given a basis for understanding the multiple occupational opportunities on the one hand, and for evaluating their occupational aptitudes, on the other. In short, most employees enter the job market with a limited range of knowledge and experience. One’s choice of an occupation is more influenced by his immediately social space than by a rational approach to the total labour market. Hence, in the free society, there is a considerable dilemma in the processes of recruiting highly capable and highly skilled manpower into those occupations where they are most needed for the societal organization. There is no ideological space whereby the political institutions are given power to assign men to specific jobs. The freedom-of-choice recruitment mechanisms often do not function in the greatest interest of individual or the total society.

When occupations are extensively organized, their fluidity adds complexity to the total social organization. In the rapid changes of the contemporary Indian society, some jobs have gone out of existence completely, e.g. lime-makers, charcoal-makers, ink-makers, saddlers, etc.; and new jobs have come into existence, photographers, motor drivers, linotype operators, artificial inseminators, computer programmers, etc. In other cases, a job title may continue but the content of work that is in the job may be changed. Furthermore, the social prestige of an entire work category may increase or decrease in accordance with other changes in the social organization. The configuration of a society is sharply changed when many agricultural jobs are replaced with industrial jobs.

Occupational fluidity in India has become so great by the last quarter of the 20th century that the normal amount of vocational training which one receives in the schools is no longer adequate to provide occupational skill for the complete duration of one’s work years. Until the mid-20th century, one largely gained an occupational skill by the participant-observation method. By the beginning of the last quarter of the 20th century, occupational skills became so diversified that much of the educational institution in the
country was in effect a vocational training mechanism. By the last decade of the 20th century, it became apparent that vocational training must be a continuous experience throughout the employment years. This specific condition can be observed in many vocational classes, programmes for continuation of education, correspondence and distance education, and a whole variety of the so-called short term courses which are aimed at enabling the on-the-job workers to maintain a current conversancy with the ever-increasing number of skills need in the occupational world of the urbanized social organization.

During the middle of the 20th century, there were major shifts in the country’s labour force. During this period, it became clear that the owners of small farms, small businessmen, and fee-taking professionals were being relegated more to the area of history and away from the dominance of the occupational organization of the nation. This era saw the end of the captains of industry and rugged individualism. They were replaced by the organizational men, other-directedness and the employee society. While-collar workers were experiencing the greatest increase ever.

Changes in the labour force during this period further illustrate the movement of workers out of primary sector, namely, agriculture, and into the secondary sector, that is, manufacturing and construction. By the closing decades of the 20th century, the country’s tertiary sector began to bloom and people began to move into various service industries - public administration, financial services, real estate, insurance, entertainment and recreation services, and the professions.

2.4 Occupational Mobility

In a caste society, occupation is primarily a matter of ascription. The caste society in India as well as those in some other Eastern countries are examples of such social organization. On the other hand, in an open-class society, occupational mobility is greatly determined by the nature of social organization. Theoretically, occupation is a status to be achieved, rather than ascribed. Given this position, occupations are determined more on the basis of merit than on the basis of inheritance, at least theoretically. It is an ideology of opportunity and an ideology of success and achievement.

Three types of occupational mobility may be enumerated: a change in position in relation to one’s colleagues, shifting from one occupation to another, and the increasing or decreasing in prestige of a total occupation. 4

The main problems associated with the occupational mobility concern its extent of increase or decrease. There is also a matter of concern about the techniques whereby an individual may achieve mobility. Factors which have historically contributed to the increasing occupational mobility mass of immigration, industrial growth and increasing birth rates.

The shifting of jobs and career achievement constitute an area of great significance in occupational mobility. Career achievement and its less glamorous counterpart, career
decline, are also important types of occupational mobility. In the prestige-status-oriented urbanized society, the occupational norms, particularly in the professions, are organized in such a way that the practitioner is encouraged, if not required, to work towards career achievement.

An entire occupation may be shifted virtually from the top to a point of near obliteration or from a point of obscurity up to prominence. This kind of occupational change is clearly seen in the downward movement of farming, as it continues to be characterized as a generalist occupation in an age of specialists; in the upward movement associated with the national power; in the downward movement of the importance of clergy in the face of advances made by many scientific occupations, and in the upward movement of nuclear scientists in an atomic age. Entire categories of occupational practitioners are, accordingly, thrust into occupational mobility as the importance of their occupation is increased or decreased.

From various perspectives, it is clear that occupation is a thing to be achieved in the ideology of an open-class society. Informal factors and social organization may limit, indeed in some cases, inhibit the occupational mobility. But in the main, such mobility is an overt experience of an open class society. In a nearly naive way, freedom in occupational mobility supports the general ideology of individual freedom in decision-making. A more perceptive examination of the situation reveals that there are only a few mechanisms in the society for the dissemination of a widespread knowledge of occupations. In fact, what the majority of people experience is the choosing among a few occupations, usually those closely associated with the parental generation.

2.5 Occupational Status and Prestige

Occupations are everywhere ordered into status hierarchies. Moreover, there is a differential prestige associated with the occupations in a particular stratus as well as between strata. In urbanized societies in general, occupations are differentiated on the basis of income, rights and privileges, and other forms of remuneration that are given to their practitioners. Occupations are differentiated on the basis of cleaness or dirtiness of work. They are differentiated into manual and mental categories. More recently, occupations have been emphatically differentiated by the style of dress, into the so-called white-collar and blue-collar categories. This is not an exhaustive list of the bases for ranking occupations hierarchically, but it is sufficient to suggest multiple directions such hierarchical rankings can take.

Occupations constitute one category of statuses utilized in organizing a society. At the same time, there is no clear or final answer concerning the basis for the hierarchical ranking of occupations. Davis and Moore have suggested one of the most provocative possible answers in their assertion that some occupations are functionally more important and others less important. Their position is that a society has a vast range of different tasks to be accomplished in order to assure its survival. These various occupational tasks are different in the amount of training required, the amount of sacrifice necessitated,
the amount of education, which is appropriate, and the general attractiveness of the work. In the voluntaristic society, where the social organization maintains most occupations as achieved, rather than ascribed, differential rewards constitute a primary mechanism for enlisting people into the several occupations in the hierarchy. The various occupations have differential importance for the society, and, within limits, they must be fulfilled. The social organization and the occupational organization must, therefore, be integrated in such a way as to induce an appropriate number of persons to enter the several occupations. This in no way suggests that a society must reward an occupation in terms of its intrinsic value, but only that it must arrange for a sufficient reward to attract an adequate number of occupational men.

Occupational prestige is of particular importance in urbanized societies. The merit which is attributed to an occupation is both a challenge and a reward to potential occupational practitioners in a society where achievement is normative. What people believe about the worth and value of an occupation, whether the belief is valid in fact or not, is important in job aspiration and career behaviour.

The sociological milieu of occupational decision-making includes four major types of influences on the choice decision process: personal variables, impersonal social and cultural factors, perceived interpersonal relationships and values of reference groups. Examples of the influences of personal variables include chronological age, physical health, mental ability, and sex. In terms of all these, the decision for or against specific occupations is considerably differentiated. Broadly speaking, some occupations are so frequently selected by women and others by men that they are referred to as women’s or men’s occupations. Other occupations have specific age entry levels as well as, evermore frequently now, specific age exiting levels.

Occupational decision-making is vastly influenced by socio-cultural factors. In the Renaissance Period of the Western world, for example, a precocious young man was directed by his cultural conditions to select an occupation in the arts for high prestige and recognition. A similar young man in the second half of the 20th century in an urban society would select an occupation in science, technology, or the white-collar professions.

Similarly, the interpersonal relationships which are associated with various kinds of occupations influence their being selected or rejected. The gregarious individual might select an occupation that involves high rates of interaction with people, for example, sales. An individual who is less favourably oriented for dealing with people might in juxtaposition select an occupation like forestry or mining, where intensity and high rates of interaction with people are less characteristic of the occupation. Or, similarly, the impact of interpersonal relationships influences the awareness of occupations and accordingly decisions for or against them. This is illustrated by the empirical findings that many occupational people can identify parents, teachers, counsellors, friends and others as having influenced their choice for or against a designated occupation.
The concept of occupational choice is further refined by W.P. Kuvlesky and R.C. Bealer. They specifically observe that occupational choice has to do with psychological preferences and desires of individuals regarding work statuses. Accordingly, choice or aspiration is but one part of the total process of occupational attainment. The notion of aspiration is differentiated into three analytical elements, namely, a person or persons, wanting (orientation), and social object (goal). The individual in his orientation to goal elements typically is concerned with multiple factors simultaneously, for example, occupation, residence, education, and income. The orientation of the individual to the several goals may vary from strong to weak. In sum, this refinement of the occupational choice process illustrates the need to know both whether the goal is high or low and whether the intensity of the orientation is strong or weak.

2.6 Review of Literature

The Central Institute of Road Transport, Pune, in the first half of 1993, conducted a ‘Roadside Survey’ of 1,242 goods truck drivers in five major metropolises, namely, Bangalore, Madras, Bombay, Hyderabad and Delhi. The data, after processing, churned out interesting findings as under:

1. **Age**: Nearly 88% drivers were between the age of 18 and 40 years, while there were 5.88% drivers above the age of 45. It indicates that for majority of the drivers, the main career is finished by the age of 45;

2. **Education**: 80% drivers were under-matriculates; only 15% were matriculates; since 78.5% of them were below 35 years of age, the inference is that majority of them had attended the school only upto middle-level;

3. **Learning of Driving**: 8% drivers had learnt driving on their own without attending driving training school;

4. **Driving Licence**: 73% drivers were found to possess Heavy Vehicle Driving Licence issued within preceding 12 years;

5. **Crew Set**: Almost all drivers are assisted by a cleaner; 57% vehicles involved a crew of one driver and one cleaner; the remaining 43% vehicles, mostly on long inter-State trips, involved a crew of two drivers and one cleaner;

6. **Domicile**: 80% drivers operated the vehicles registered in the same State as that of their origin/domicile; the remaining 20% vehicles were registered in a State different from the driver’s State of origin/domicile, indicating that the goods road transport industry creates substantial employment opportunities locally;

7. **Rest Periods**: 52% drivers returned to their respective bases between 1 and 7 days, 34% between 8 and 15 days and the remaining 14% between 16 and 30 days. It was also seen that 34% drivers availed rest between 1 and 3 days and 37% availed rest between 4 and 7 days. Adequate rest between trips is necessary to ensure safety and minimize road accidents.
8. **Other Occupations**: 32% drivers stated that they had other occupations besides driving. The remaining 68% drivers mentioned that truck driving was their sole occupation.

9. **Vehicle Ownership**: Nearly 83% drivers mentioned that they were employees, 9% stated that they were sole owners and 7% stated that they were partners.

10. **Vehicle Insurance**: Nearly 93% drivers mentioned that their vehicle had a comprehensive insurance cover.

11. **National Permits**: Two-thirds (67%) vehicles operated with national permits.

12. **Vehicle Utilization**: 5% vehicles reported above 600 kms per day running, 33% vehicles between 300 and 400 kms and 27% vehicles between 200 and 300 kms.

13. **Driving per day**: Nearly half the drivers (48%) reported average 5 to 10 hours driving per day, while 31% drivers reported 10 to 15 hours per day.

14. **Wayside Amenities**: 36% drivers mentioned that they used the roadside for night halt, while 41% mentioned petrol pumps as night halting place, 23 mentioned other sites for night halting.

15. **Cargo Carried**: Miscellaneous items were carried by 58.67% vehicles, followed by 17.20% vehicles regularly carried industrial goods, 9.56% vehicles carried foodgrains, the remaining carried perishable goods, domestic goods petroleum products, building materials and cement.

The study came to the following conclusions, among others:

(1) The goods road transport industry comprises small operators, accounting for as much as 85% of the total fleet. The industry generates considerable local employment opportunities. Nearly two-thirds of the drivers are engaged on a full-time basis.

(2) The industry’s productivity could be further improved since only one-third of the trucks operate between 300 to 400 kms per day and about 12% trips are empty without load.

(3) Truck drivers belong to the age group between 18 and 40 years and are mostly educated upto under-matriculation level. A high percentage of the drivers (88%) have learnt driving without attending driver training schools.

(4) Drivers suffer to a great extent in the absence of proper arrangements for night halts and other wayside amenities.

Within the industry itself, it is a proven fact that 75% road accidents occur due to the driver’s fault.8
Of late, the truck drivers, especially in the developing Asian countries, have come in for increasing citations for the spread of HIV/AIDS infection. A typical article on the Internet begins, “In India, long distance lorry drivers during their journey, pick up sex workers from ‘Dhabas’ (which usually provide food, rest, alcohol and drugs) on roadside, use them and leave them at some other Dhaba, where they are used by other drivers and local youth. In a study from India, 87 percent of long distance lorry drivers were found to be sexually promiscuous, of whom only 11 percent used condoms during commercial sex. In the 21-30 age group (n=1766), 78 percent unmarried, sexually-promiscuous men reported having 31-60 sexual partners during the past 12 months. Indian long distance lorry drivers have an HIV infection rate of 10/1000, far higher than the Indian national average of about 0.5/1000.3

An article about a Bangalore-based self-made tycoon in freight trucking and tea-blending, Shanmugappa, appearing in Tehelka, mentions that his company owns nearly 100 trucks and hence, he is naturally worried about his workforce. He mentions that “In 1998, about two drivers died in a day (of AIDS), today, it is about 38. Earlier, drivers were very disciplined, today they are indulgent. All are afraid to reveal their disease status and often die unattended.” He further states that, “All that the truck driver needs on a highway is a decent restroom and some recreation. But even when companies like Indian Oil Corporation build them for truck drivers using government funds, our drivers are turned away saying they are not eligible. The company staff end up using these rest rooms. Why build them at all?” He is pushing for better highway patrolling to avoid truck thefts. He continues, “Bribing the highway patrol police is a serious problem. Every truck of ours is stopped. They slap cases as a routine without reason.” He puts the amount paid as bribes at a dramatic Rs.25,000 per annum and says that truck drivers have no choice but to pay it.10

The Times of India (Pune edition) reports about an anti-AIDS project being implemented exclusively for the benefit of around 1,000 long distance truck drivers coming to industrial units in Pimpri-Chinchwad area every day for loading and unloading goods. The project’s outreach workers catch them here as the work takes time. They are assembled at one place, shown slideshows, posters and films about HIV/AIDS. There are some who are socially inclined and want to work for their fraternity. They are spotted and trained in some aspects of HIV prevention. Later, these truckers start working as ‘key peer facilitators’ among their own class. As they are more aware of the problems faced by their peers, they can communicate the ideas better and drive home the message. The project has been sponsored by the Travel Corporation of India (TCI) through its sister concern Sevadham Trust. The project’s director added, “Along with 26 outlets, we have established around 16 condom-vending machines and through these, we sell around 5,000 contraceptives every month”.

The truckers identified as HIV-positive or carrier of STD are given treatment at the centres. The project is running one static clinic in Nigdi and one mobile clinic for STI (sexually transmitted infections) treatment. Through these two clinics, around 300
to 350 STI patients get treatment every month. The managing trustee of the Trust said that around 47,932 truckers are contacted and educated on STI, HIV/AIDS, use of condoms and general health care. Around 2,929 STI patients are identified every year and given treatment.\footnote{11}

It has emerged that nearly 85\% truck drivers work in the unorganized sector. India, being a Welfare State, regularly appoints commissions on labour to study and recommend on the welfare of the workers. Accordingly, a National Commission on Labour was appointed in 2002, whose second term-of-reference was “to suggest an Umbrella Legislation for ensuring a minimum level of protection to the unorganized sector workers”. Meanwhile, the Planning Commission of India had found that “out of a total employment of 337 million, the unorganized sector accounts for 309 million, i.e. 91.7\% of total employment. Sector-wise shares of unorganized sector in total employment reveals that agriculture accounts for 99.3\%, manufacturing 83.5\%, construction 92.1\%, trade, hotels and restaurants 98.7\% and community and personal services 62.7\%.”

In the proposed umbrella legislation, the basic approach is the recognition and protection for all types of workers regardless of industry, occupation, work status and personal characteristics. Unorganized sector is not a homogeneous category, but is spread over the entire economy in a variety of forms. A worker in the unorganized sector could be an apprentice, casual or contract labourer, home-based worker, service provider, or self-employed (agriculture/service, directly or indirectly though a contractor, to do any manual, unskilled, skilled, technical, operational teaching, sales promotion, clerical, supervisory, administrative or managerial work for hire or reward).

The proposed umbrella legislation aims at the removal of poverty of the working population through improving their productivity, quality of work, enhancement of income earning abilities and increasing their bargaining power.

\textbf{Ruddar Datt and K.P.M. Sundharam} have offered an in-depth assessment of the said umbrella legislation (formally known as ‘Unorganized Sector Workers (Employment and Welfare) Bill, now pending before the Parliament). According to them, the National Commission on Labour (NCL), 2002, should be complimented for making a detailed analysis of the problems of unorganized sector. The NCL has suggested the following significant steps in this regard: \textit{Firstly}, the NCL has enlarged the definition of ‘worker’ to include self-employed and home-based workers, thereby breaking the barrier of employer-employee relationship, the basis of defining the worker. In this way, it has enlarged the scope of labour welfare legislation, helped the formation of workers unions among unorganized workers and thus initiated a process of bringing them into the hold of the labour movement, 90\% of the total workforce neglected so far. \textit{Secondly}, the NCL has put the obligation of ensuring/helping workers to secure identity cards on the employers and the State. These identity cards will have all-India validity and the workers will not be required to secure fresh identity cards even if they shift to some other State. The identity cards will provide official recognition to the unorganized sector workers.
Thirdly, the NCL has proposed a 4-tier institutional structure to coordinate and implement the umbrella legislation. It has also clearly defined the functions at each level. Fourthly, the NCL has made a genuine attempt to protect unorganized labour against unfair labour practices. The Commission stipulates that “no employer shall dispense with the services of an employee employed for a period of not less than six months, except for a reasonable cause”. This provision is motivated by a noble intention to protect this very vulnerable section of the working population, though it comes in conflict with the recommendation of the NCL pertaining to establishments employing between 100 to 300 workers to grant permission to hire and fire workers without the permission of the Government and without observing condition of ‘reasonable cause’.

The Commission should have developed some rough estimate of resources needed for the provision of social security to unorganized sector workers. The Commission has reviewed the work pertaining to social security in Tamil Nadu and Kerala as also some Central Schemes and concluded, “the Central and the Kerala models represent two extremes, one the minimalist approach, the other the maximalist approach. Neither can be considered ideal for the future development of welfare funds in India as far as benefits to the workers in the unorganized sectors are concerned. What needs to be done is to prepare a standard list of benefits which may be provided from the welfare funds and to prioritize them, somewhat as follows: health care, invalidity, old age and survivor benefits, maternity and child care, educational assistance and housing.”

The Commission has rejected both the minimalist and maximalist approaches, and thus, it intends to follow the middle-path. It has merely talked of preparing a ‘standard list of benefits’ to be provided. It should have prepared atleast a 10-year plan on the basis of standard list of moderate benefits and then quantified the amounts required to reach the intended goals. What proportion of funds should be generated by the workers, local bodies, State and Central Governments should also have been delineated. The NCL Report is thus restrictive. Though the Commission has stated that, “we do not feel that terms (of reference) are too narrow for a comprehensive review of all critical issues”, yet in actual practice, the Report of the Commission falls short of the expectations generated therefrom.


These were instituted as an intervention to reduce resistance to sexual pleasure-seeking behaviour; and where free tea, drinking water, low priced condoms and cigarettes, board games and clinical services. Free tea was popular from the beginning, but the drivers exhibited great reluctance to enter the clinics. But after one and half year, the clinic is a familiar experience. The tea parlours also have a community-based aspect, employing sex workers and drivers who have aged out of their respective occupations.
The attempt to create a different social space for the truck drivers cannot be expanded without further funds. Possibly, these could be corporatized along the lines of American truck stops, which are vigorous and profitable enterprises, and largely successful in excluding commercial sex and drug traffic from their premises.15

The American truck stop is like an African or a Thai roadside settlement or an Indian Dhaba. The drivers fulfill their basic needs there. They take meals, shower, shave and wash their clothes, have the use of large banks of telephones (or find phones at every table in the restaurant) to stay in touch with their companies and the loved ones; find coins or phone cards and fax machines; use ATMs; commit paperwork to US postal or overnight delivery mailboxes; buy fuel, get their trucks washed and repaired; obtain cash from their companies through on-line services; and avail themselves of other services and amenities, including large driver lounge rooms where they may converse, play video games or watch TV while waiting for a load or before going to sleep. Whereas African and Indian drivers melt into dispersed settlements where these services and amenities are scattered or non-existent, the American drivers find these focused in a single space within which commercial sex and drug dealing are absent or very limited and covert; a space circumscribed by a fence or an abrupt break to a different landscape such as forest or agricultural fields.

American truck stops can be vast, some cover most of a square kilometre, and designed to exclude access to parked trucks by persons other than their drivers. The truck stops also have a clientele among the general motoring public, but accesses to the property are normally different for cars and trucks, as is pedestrian entry to the main building for drivers. ‘Fuel desks’ are situated for ease of service to the truck drivers buying diesel, but also have a full view of the only pedestrian entrance to the truck parking area.

While circumscribed, multi-purpose locations may be difficult for individual interventions in Africa or Asia to build and maintain, an American truck stop model would not require a single wealthy proprietor or intervention programme to put everything in place. American truck stops may be run entirely by some company or individual. But in many instances, segments of a truck stop’s commercial activities are owned and managed by people who lease their space to other proprietors being the core business of the overall location’s owner.

Possibly by securing locations and expanding outwards from the Indian Free Tea Parlour model, HIV interventions could fund clinical and community-based work through the sale of diesel fuel and rental of space to restaurants, hotels, convenience stores, laundries, mechanics, truck cleaners and other vendors of goods and services typically sought by drivers in their working day. A secure place for trucks would be created where drivers could escape the vigorous sexual culture that now permeates their world and employment would be generated for the rural hinterlands around them.16
K.V. Ganesh Babu, et al.’s article titled “Micro-evaluation of Physiological Reactions of Drivers to Variable Message Signs under Foggy Conditions on a Simulated Section of Expressway” reports the findings of a controlled experiment. They state that adverse weather conditions, such as fog and rain reduce driver perceptions, increase stress and affect performance if speed and distance. Due to poor visibility, the level of risk and stress are high and there will be impact on physiological reactions. In most of the countries, drivers have no information on speed, etc., that they should follow other than posted speed limit signs. If road authorities provide real time advisory information, it will have influence on physiological reactions, which will improve road safety. Variable Message Signs (VMS) are one of the best tools available for providing traffic advisory information to the drivers. The objective of the study was to find the effect of advisory information provided through VMS under foggy conditions on physiological reactions (heartbeat) on a simulated section of expressway.

They concluded that this experiment shows advisory information provided through VMS under foggy conditions had marginal effect on physiological reactions. The result of this experiment is limited to the considered foggy situation where same message is shown in VMS panels on a simulated expressway. It is essential to note that understanding and reaction to the system by drivers is a pre-requisite for its success. If drivers do not react by changing behaviour then the provided VMS system will fail and further implementation may cease.

From this study, it is evident that the countries that are planning to implement intelligent transport systems for achieving better road safety through enhancing driver speed control behaviour should give thought to the installation of VMS by considering the local conditions. The result of this experiment is limited to the provided message and considered situation.

The above brief literature review reveals that there is an absence of a research study on truck drivers on sociological point of view. Through the present work, the researcher desires to justify the of truck drivers as a socially useful occupation holders.
References

16. Ibid., p.97.