Chapter VI

DISCUSSION

The present study enabled us to garner some important facts regarding the nature and probable causes of political alienation among the Indian Muslims and their Hindu counterparts. Since it would not be possible to identify the specific nature of political alienation and its causes among the members of minority group without identifying in what respect they differ from majority community in regard to political alienation and its causes, a sample of Hindu was also employed for this purpose.

First of all we have to examine whether Hindus and Muslims differ with respect to the different components, which when integrated, form the syndrome of political alienation. Our findings show that Muslims have less faith in the norms of democracy but they do not differ from Hindus as far as their isolation from political engagements are concerned. A finding which is contradictory to our expectation and hence deserve special reference is that as compared to Muslims, Hindus were found to have greater feeling of political powerlessness. This can be attributed to the
fact that Hindus being the majority community expect to have greater amount of power to exercise control over the political on goings of the country. But the present democratic system does not suit this aspiration. In fact, a common Hindu is far away from those who rule the country, and feels helpless to bridle the behaviour particularly when it has to do with conflict with the groups which are regarded to be less Indians. Consequently, one feels less efficacious as far as his influence over the happenings of the country is concerned.

Muslims' lack of faith in the political norms may either be attributed to their religious belief or the lack of political socialization. However, the attribution of lesser faith in the norms or democracy to religious ideology implies that a common Muslims has been exposed to only those interpretations of the Muslims dogmas which are stressed by fundamentalists to be the fundamental beliefs of Islamic theocracy and not to those liberal point of views which emphasize peaceful coexistence of different religious groups. The matter of fact is that a typical Indian child whether Hindu or Muslim is, perhaps, least exposed to socializing experiences directed towards the inculcation of the democratic norms.

Before considering the contribution of different predictors towards the prediction of the three aspects of
political alienation it would be worth while to have a look on the nature of difference between the two groups with respect to each of the predictors. The most striking difference which emerged between the two groups is that to each of the items included in the measures of Subjective Rank Disequilibrium, and Just Desserts Frustration, Hindus' responses indicated the absence of feeling of SRD and JDF. Subjective Rank Disequilibrium, as explained earlier, is the indication of discrepancy in individual's standing on different dimensions of social stratification. This feeling emerges when an individual feels that, for example, that the prestige value of his job is not commensurate with his level of education. As against the mean score of '0' for Hindu sample, the mean of the Muslim sample for this variable is 1.316. It may be mentioned that the highest possible score of SRD is 9 which is obtained when on each of three items of this measure of SRD the subject gives a response of 3. On the three point response categories used in the measure of SRD, 1 indicates the lowest extent of the feeling of disequilibrium and 3 the highest. It is therefore, obvious that even the Muslims do not have the high feelings of SRD. In the Muslim sample 22.7 % subjects have reported SRD.

While the SRD is the measure of intra-individual comparison with respect to standing on different criteria of
the stratification the Just Deserts Frustration is a measure of an individual's level of satisfaction with different aspects of his quality of life driven from what a person perceives to be getting and what he has been expecting. Gurr (1970), who gave the concept of Just Deserts Frustration while referring to the feeling of relative deprivation has mentioned the fact that the expectation which serves as the comparison level for the generation of feeling of satisfaction and dissatisfaction may be anchored to one's own past and/or one's reference group. The comparison of means of the two groups in terms of mean JDF scores yielded the findings which were similar to the difference between two groups with respect to SRD. In the case of Hindu sample not a single subject indicated that he was not getting what he feels to be deserving. In contrast to this, the mean of the Muslim group is found to be 3.26. The maximum possible score which an individual can have for the measure of JDF is 5. The measure of JDF requires the subjects to say 'Yes' or 'No' in response to each of the 5 items and for each of 'No' response a score of 1 is given.

In order to find out the source of dissatisfaction created by the difference between what one is getting and what one deserves, the subjects were required to attribute the responsibility of their dissatisfaction to one of the following: self, family, community, majority community, and...
government. As reported in the previous chapter, majority of Muslims who have reported JDP have blamed the government for their dissatisfaction. It may also be recalled that 21% Muslims reported JDF.

The fact that majority of those among the Muslims who do not feel satisfied have blamed the government instead of blaming themselves, their family or their community indicates lack of individual or group initiative for the improvement of their lot and the tendency to look towards an amorphous agency for the support and affirmative action. This attribution may also be an indication of diffusion of responsibility and dependency in which the external agencies are expected to create the conditions that are likely to take one out of adverse/difficult circumstances. This tendency leads to making demands which are often perceived by a section of majority group to be unjust and illegitimate. The attribution of responsibility to the government rather than to self augurs the attribution theory (Jones, 1965) rather than to Learner's (1965) Just Word hypothesis. The attribution theory predicts that adverse outcome should be attributed to external agencies rather than to self.

In the present study the subjects of the two groups were required to indicate their extent of satisfaction and dissatisfaction with different policies. It is to be mentioned that asking the subject to give their reactions to different
policies implies the awareness of subjects regarding the different policy issues and their relevance to the life of the person in such a way that prolonged dissatisfaction with the policy stance of the government would gradually undermine System Affect that would ultimately lead to political alienation. However, even in the absence of awareness of the relevance of policy stances to the personal life of the individual, one may assess non-specific dissatisfaction with the policies of the government in general.

Making comparison between Muslims and Hindus with respect to the ratings of satisfaction dissatisfaction with different policies, we find that Muslims are more dissatisfied with the policies of the government regarding language, centre-state relations, defence, culture, and rural development programme. It is rather easier to understand and interpret Muslims' dissatisfaction with language and culture policy in terms of Muslims' perception of support of the government to the cultural chauvinism of majority community and the perceived failure of the government to protect and promote the language and culture of the minority. The reason of Muslims' dissatisfaction with defence policy and the policy of centre-state relations is difficult to understand without referring to the possible underneath resentment of Muslims towards defence preparedness to the disadvantage of Pakistan. However, this kind of interpretation presumes
that there is lack of System Affect among Muslims -- a pre-
sumption which is not supported by our finding. With regard
to Muslims' dissatisfaction with centre-state relationship,
we may refer to the fact that if this kind of dissatisfaction
has its root in Muslims' sense of social/communal identity
then the only state about which they might be concerned is

In the absence of the information regarding the reasons
of dissatisfaction with the policies with which Muslims are
more dissatisfied than the Hindus and in view of the fact
that Muslims are dissatisfied with most of the policies (even
where they were not found to differ with their Hindu counter-
parts), the only statement that can be made is that this
diffuse dissatisfaction may be a manifestation of somewhat
lack of trust in the system. But then the mean score of
Hindus for the variable of System Affect indicates that even
this group does not have high System Affect.

In order to determine the contribution of different
factors to the prediction of the three aspects of alienation,
Path Analysis was undertaken because this kind of analysis
gives information about the cause-effect sequences that
ultimately lead to the impact on the dependent variable. The
findings of the study can be used to answer the following
questions which have certain theoretical implications:
1. Are the three aspects of alienation accounted by the same variables?

2. Do the same variables account for the three aspects of alienation among Hindus and Muslims?

3. Do the paths of influence envisaged in the causal model fit the data?

The first question is of theoretical importance because the answer to this question help us to ascertain whether the three aspects of alienation are the manifestation of a general state of alienation. The intercorrelations among the three components even when found high and positive cannot answer this question because the evidence of unitary nature of alienation can be furnished only through the study of the relationship of the three components with the variables which are supposed to be the antecedents of alienation. In the present study the relationships between the pairs of two out of three components of alienation taken at a time were found to be significant and positive for both Hindu and Muslim samples. However, in both the samples the relationships between powerlessness and normlessness and normlessness and isolation are higher than the relationship of powerlessness and isolation. Thus, powerlessness and normlessness and normlessness and isolation share some thing more in common than powerlessness and isolation.
Studying the correlates of three kinds of alienation we observe that none of the variables was found to be significantly correlated with all the three components of alienation in the Muslim group. The fact that powerlessness and normlessness share something more in common is evident by the finding that in the Muslim sample the following variables were found to bear significant relationship with both powerlessness and normlessness: the policy for Centre-State relations, defence, welfare, and Just Deserts. In the Hindu sample also the same trend is indicated by the fact that two variables (cultural policy and welfare policy) are associated with both powerlessness and normlessness but none of the variables are related with both powerlessness and isolation. The fact that there are four variables which are related to each one of the components of alienation among Hindu sample but none is there in case of Muslim sample seems to reveal that there are more common antecedents of different aspects of alienation among Hindus. Nevertheless, when direct path coefficients were considered (which are the same as standardised partial regression weights), the conclusion of common antecedents of the three kinds of alienation in the Hindu sample is to be modified because the inter-dependence among the predictors is partially out their correlation with the three criterion are reduced to the extent of becoming insignificant. We arrive
at an interesting finding when we consider the direct influence of the different predictors on each one of the three components of alienation in the Muslim sample. The interesting finding is that while the variable, Subjective Rank Disequilibrium was found to bear significant correlation only with powerlessness, it was found to influence all the three aspects of alienation when the interdependence among the predictors was removed in the process of multiple prediction.

In order to understand the sources and processes of political alienation we have proposed a causal model according to which dissatisfaction with the policies of the government gradually leads to feeling of two forms of relative deprivation, JDF and SRD, and to the negative evaluation of the treatment meted out by the agents of the government. The feelings of deprivation, the negative evaluation of the treatment by the agents of the government and the general dissatisfaction with the policies of the government accumulate to undermine the System Affect which ultimately leads to different manifestations of political alienation. While we envisaged that the same sources and same processes will be involved in the alienation of both majorities and minorities, the fact that the JDF and SRD were found to be operative among the Hindus came in the way of the applicability of the same model to both the groups. Because of the
absence of these two predictors (which are also expected to be correlated with other predictors) it is difficult to compare the relative contribution of the two sets of variables towards the prediction of different components of alienation. With JDF and SRD having been found to lack variability among the Hindu sample, the remaining variables which can be considered to be carrier of influence of policy to the different aspects of alienation in both the samples are Treatment Evaluation and System Affect. We shall therefore, make an attempt to understand the intervening role of these two variables in giving rise to different forms of alienation. This attempt is to begin with the study of predictability of these two variables by satisfaction-dissatisfaction with the policy stances of the government. In the sample of Muslims satisfaction-dissatisfaction with reservation policy and the policy of law and order are found to be significant contributors in the prediction of System Affect. The multiple R between the System Affect as the criterion and the policies as the predictors was found to be 0.540 indicating that the predictors could explain as much as 29.37 % variance of System Affect. In the sample of Hindus satisfaction-dissatisfaction with the same two policies, i.e., Reservation policy and the Policy of Law and order are found to be significant contributors in the prediction of System Affect. The multiple R between the System Affect
as the criterion and the policies as the predictors was found to be 0.557 indicating that the predictors could explain as much as 31.02 % variance of System Affect.

In the sample of Hindus, satisfaction-dissatisfaction with the Defence policy and cultural policy are found to be significant contributors in the prediction of Treatment Evaluation. The multiple R between the Treatment Evaluation as the criterion and the policies as the predictors was found to be 0.553 indicating that the predictors could explain as much as 30.58 % of Treatment Evaluation. As for the sample of Muslims, none of the policies are significant contributors in the prediction of Treatment Evaluation; the only variable which has significant contribution for the prediction of Treatment Evaluation is System Affect. Thus, Treatment Evaluation could not mediate the influence of any of the policies as the predictors of the three aspect of alienation. This fact is also confirmed by the very small value of indirect effects of policies through Treatment Evaluation. However, in the sample of Hindus though the two variables, defence policy and cultural policy, are significant contributors in the prediction of Treatment Evaluation, the value of indirect effect of the policies are very small. Scanning through the tables, it becomes evident that System Affect is a better predictor as well as a better mediator as compared to Treatment Evaluation.
It is to be pointed out that Easton and Dennis (1964) and Sydny and Verba (1964) regard System Affect to be the most important determinant of the stability of a political system. Being repository of experiences accumulated in relation to political institutions and being an index of diffuse political support and good will for the regime which does not wax and wane with transitory vissitude, SA may render an individual or a group of individuals either affiliated or alienated from the political institutions. Even when the low level of SA may not be an immediate source of threat to the political institutions because the group with low level of SA might not have been mobilized enough, it may obstruct the unpopular but necessary reformative initiatives by the political institutions because the affected section may lack trust in the government.

The variables which could make independent contribution toward the prediction of different kinds of political alienation among Muslims as indicated by their direct path coefficients, are SRD, JDF and System Affect. Out of these, the only variable which could contribute towards the prediction of all the three aspects of alienation is SRD. While according to the theoretical expectation System Affect was supposed to be one of the main contributors towards the prediction of all the three aspects of political alienation, SRD emerged as the important contributor towards the prediction
of alienation among Muslims. Although dissatisfaction with the policies was expected to contribute towards prediction of alienation, none of the policies could make significant direct affect towards alienation perhaps due to the overwhelming impact of SRD. Miller and Jukam (1970) have reported that the feeling of Subjective Rank Disequilibrium, particularly of those who feel that their standing on different dimensions of social stratification is not commensurate with their level of education, create a class of 'intellectual proletariat' whose accumulated discontent would render them to be the harbinger of militant movement and political violence.

Whereas SRD was found to be the only important predictor of powerlessness and normlessness among Muslims, isolation was predicted by SRD, JDF and System Affect. The fact that even the two additional predictors could not make a difference in the amount of variance of isolation explained, suggests that we have to look for other relevant social and psychological factors which can account for greater amount of variance of the criterion. While the theoretical rationale of the relevance of System Affect as the predictor of alienation has been discussed earlier, we have to understand the implication of Just Deserts Frustration for political alienation. Like Subjective Rank Disequilibrium, Just Deserts Frustration is a measure of deprivation, caused
by the feeling contingent upon equating the existing quality of life with what a person considers himself to be rightfully entitled to. It is the comparison of expectation determined by a person's best possible level of a need or expectation with that of one's best of acquaintances.

When we considered the predictors which could make significant independent contribution towards the prediction of alienation in the Hindu group, we find that satisfaction-dissatisfaction with defence, welfare and economic policies contributed towards the prediction of the component of powerlessness, and the policy for Centre-state relations contributed for the prediction of isolation. There seem to be no obvious reason as to why dissatisfaction with defence, welfare and economic policies would lead to political powerlessness. The only statement which one can make in this regard is that those who have greater feeling of political powerlessness are persons who are of the view that they are unable to influence the decision makers to change the policies in the direction desired by them. Similar statement can be made regarding the association of isolation with the dissatisfaction of policy for Centre-state relations. In the absence of relevant information, it is difficult to say whether the association between political isolation and the dissatisfaction with the policy of Centre-state relations has to do with their opinion about the availability of more power to the Centre or to the state.
It is to be observed that while SRD and JDF could not be the predictors of political alienation among Hindus due to lack of dispersion of these variables in the group, System Affect which is regarded to be the most important determinant for the prediction of political alienation by the political scientists, could not make significant contribution in the prediction of any kind of alienation.

As indicated by the statistical test of goodness of fit, the model proposed to account for the relationship of exogenous and indogenous variables was found to fit the data for both Hindu and Muslim groups. But this should not blind us to the fact that the variables considered in the present study could not account for very high percentage of variance of different forms of political alienation. Further research is to be undertaken for better understanding of the sources of political alienation in which such personal, social and situational factors are to be explored that would give us a better understanding of the sources of political alienation.