CHAPTER – VI

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY PROFESSIONALS
CHAPTER-VI
SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND IT PROFESSION

6.1: INTRODUCTION: SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND IT PROFESSION.

Social structure is a concept which is now being widely used in sociology as well as in anthropology. Structure as been defined as a property of empirical data. It is a property of objects, events and series of events. It is known through observation or analysis. According to "Korebar" Structure appears to be just yielding to a word that has a perfectly good meaning but suddenly becomes fashionably attractive for a decade or so like streaming and during its vogue tends to be applied indiscriminately because of the pleasurable connotation of its sound.

Karl Mannheim (1936) defines "social structure is the web of interacting social forces from which have raised the various modes of observing and thinking."

It has been rightly pointed out by Meyer Fortes (1900, 1953) that, notable advance have been made in the theory of social structure homogeneous of societies. According to S.F.Nadel, however, the term is still on trial and discussions about it tend to be polemical. This concept was widely used by Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim.

One of the sociologists M.Ginsberg (1947) in his study says, the study of social structure is concerned with the principal forms of social organisation, i.e., types of groups, associations and institutions are the complex of these which constitute societies..... A full account of social structure would involve the review of the whole field of comparative institutions.

Thus, social structure includes firstly, the inter-personal relations or social relations or the patterns of interaction, secondly the inter-group relationships or the
social system and the organisation and thirdly, the social environment of groups and organisations. Micro-sociology studies the inter-personal relations. Micro-sociology studies the communities and societies.

6.2: FAMILY AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

Family is a universal social institution found in all the societies. In the 20th century there was a considerable concern among sociologist that the family was losing its functions. In 1929 the American sociologist William F. Ogborn, reported that trends in American society indicated that economic, protective, recreational status-endowing educational, and religious functions of the family were being transferred to other institutions. The major function remaining in the families were affectional and procreative. Other sociologists, such as Ernest W. Burgess, considered the shifting of a family functions to outside agencies as a form of adaptation to modern urban society.

Following World War II there was a resurgence of interest in the family as a social institution. William Lloyd Warner indicated how family and lineage were closely interwoven with the social class system in contemporary society. Other sociologists turned their attention to ways in which family life and kinship affected an individual's destiny. Assistance given by parents to their married children, visiting between kinsmen, and the organization of voluntary associations among relatives have suggested to social scientists that family and kinship institutions have retained important functions in modern urban society.

The relationship between social trends in modern society and the character of family and kinship is complex. First, some trends in society and family have continued in the same direction over a long time. Second, although other social trends have continued, their effect on family relations seems to be reversed after a certain point is reached. Third, still other social trends have changed and have produced corresponding modification in family and kinship.
The family affects characteristics of the society. Much of the study of family problems has come from the conception of the family as a unity of interacting personalities. This conception has stimulated research to discover those factors that disrupt family unity and create problems in interaction.

The role of the family in developing healthy personality attributes has received attention. Studies of children in institutions show the necessity of mothering, such as carrying, touching, and talking to the infant to void emotional and intellectual deficiencies in young children. Lack of a father may also inhibit the development of appropriate behavior patterns in boys and girls.

Man is a social creature. His personality development reflects his experiences with other people. Interpersonal relationships contribute to individuality rather than similarity of development, for no two of us have exactly the same acquaintances nor do we have an identical relationship with the people we do know in common. Even parents relate to their various children in somewhat different ways. The experiences of love and hate, of friendship and distrust, of shared experience and misunderstanding which marks our association with other people are in each case unique.

Although we have many kinds of interpersonal relationships in the course of our lives, those that have the greatest influence in shaping our development are those with our parents and with members of our peer groups.

Family and social relationships are very crucial for normal functioning of the individual in society. If family is affected it will produce series of problems on individuals performance and leads to underdevelopment.

In our present study it was found that due to enormous pressure of work the IT professionals are unable to cope up with family demands. Leading to malfunctioning of family relationships and the dissatisfaction of family members.
Some time leading to divorce (Refer Table No.) Due to the work nature the
family members have to take family trips which keep them away from problems.

a) Malfunctioning of Family Relationships

IT professionals are not exactly on the spot when it comes to a good work-
life balance, a happy marriage, and in many cases, work satisfaction. Despite a
high disposable income and the glamour of consumerism, employees in the
information technology (IT) and IT-enabled services in Bangalore are not a happy
lot.

According to a study by Gopal Mahopatra and Naga Siddartha of the
National Human Resource Development Network, Bangalore Chapter, the main
reason for many IT professionals having a lopsided work-life balance is the long
working hours. They are left with little time for themselves or their families and
this tells on their mental and physical health.

The study says that among the factors affecting work-life balance,
overwork and long working hours account for a good 58 per cent. The work
environment accounts for 40 per cent, uneven workload for 38 per cent, a
demanding spouse or immediate family 32 per cent, and social changes 20 per
cent. The last is considered significant in the case of many professionals who
come from small towns and are suddenly plunged into the westernised and
cosmopolitan culture of Bangalore.

The long working hours and work overload is typical of the IT industry,
according to many human resources managers. Though most IT firms have a five-
day week, the workload is going up. After the 2001-02 slumps, companies that
downsized did not always hire more people after business picked up. This means
that being called to work on weekends and 14-hour working days have become
synonymous with the sector.
There are also long intervals between projects when many software professionals are sent to training sessions to keep them occupied. They react to such breaks negatively; many feel they are not competent enough or that their potential is not adequately used.

There is also disappointment among newcomers, especially in the business process outsourcing sector. Other studies have revealed that IT professionals suffer from deep feelings of inferiority owing to factors such as working during nights and not really using their technical skills.

The skewed work-life balance affects health and family life. Among the respondents in the study, 80 per cent have some health problem. Considering their young age, 78 per cent have heart problems, 50 per cent suffer from chronic headaches and insomnia, and 31 per cent have high blood pressure.

Interpersonal relationships are also affected. At least 62 per cent report malfunctioning of family relations, 28 per cent have strained marital relations, and 22 per cent are either divorced or are on the verge of it.

**TABLE NO. 6.1.**

**FAMILY PLANNING**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whether one is rich or poor, one’s planned family of two or three children is ideal.</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be family planning has some advantages, and therefore there is no harm in adopting it.</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Since the number of children in small family is less, it leads to low family income.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>288</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family planning does not conform with the cultural traditions of our country.</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children are gift of god and man’s interference in this matter is undesirable.</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
With regard to family planning, about 260 respondents feel that whether one is rich or poor, one’s planned family of two or three children is ideal and about 286 said family planning has some advantages, and therefore there is no harm in adopting it.

Almost all, 288 respondents do not agree that since the number of children in small family is less, it leads to low family income. A majority, 251 said family planning does not conform to the cultural traditions of our country.

However, about 260 said Children are gift of god and man’s interference in this matter is undesirable. This shows that the contradictory nature of IT professionals with regard to have children. Though, there earnings are well and good they don’t get time to maintain familial aspects and as such.

6.3: INTERCASTE MARRIAGE.

**TABLE NO 6.2**

**MARRIAGE ASPECTS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VARIABLES</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The freedom to select one’s own life may lead to both good and bad results.</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter caste marriage is useful in society and must be encouraged.</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The love marriage is better because in arranged marriage the expenditure is generally unbearable for parents.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The old people frown at the idea of selection of life mate by must, and myself therefore, he discouraged.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The individuals and societies propagation of the inter caste marriage must be boycotted.</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The co-educational institutions should be closed so that inter caste marriages may not takes place.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young boys and girls must be given enough freedom so that they may choose their spouses from different castes.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
278 respondents felt the freedom to select one's own life may lead to both good and bad results and about 213 said yes to the statement that inter caste marriage is useful in society and must be encouraged.

All the respondents said the love marriage is better because in arranged marriage the expenditure is generally unbearable for parents.

All the 300 respondents disagree that the co-educational institutions should be closed so that inter caste marriages may not take place and about 205 disagree that young boys and girls must be given enough freedom so that they may choose their spouses from different castes.

6.4: KINSHIP NETWORK

One of the most important areas of social science is the study of the family as the basic social unit for reproduction, residence and economic life in nearly all societies. But family structures and family relationships (kinship) do have different forms in different parts of the world. Kinship is the most basic principle of organizing individuals into social groups, roles and categories. Some form of organisation based on parentage and marriage is present in every human society. In modern industrial communities, family structures have been weakened by the dominance of the market economy and the provision of state-organized social services, however the nuclear family household is still the fundamental institution responsible for rearing children and organizing conception. In non-industrial contexts kinship units normally have a much wider array of functions. They often serve as basic units of production. Political representation and even as religious bodies for the worship of spiritual beings, who are themselves considered members of the kin group.

In case of kinship it is recognition of relatives either through a blood relationship which is the technically called consanguinity or through marriage which in the language of anthropology and sociology is called affinity. The
relatives when considered as a class does have certain special status which they maintain and they are guided by certain rules which provide them appropriate attitudes and standards of behaviors towards each other. These rules that we are talking about are protection, affection, care and concern, familiarity avoidance of physical, speech or visual contacts, then difference, respect interventions and obedience. Kinship is basically arises from the exogamous principle on which the family is based.

Universal features of kinship systems that have been proposed include the following.

1) A lengthy infant maturation period that requires a major commitment from one and usually both parents to nurture and educate dependent children.

2) The presence of a marital bond that creates a permanent and ideally exclusive sexual and economic relationship between two or more people.

3) A division of labor based on sex

These postulated universals are subjected to extreme ranges of variation which often challenge the validity of any generalization for example extension of kinship ties and the binding of the individuals into kinship relationships assumes a basic theory of sex and birth however cultures have different views about the "facts" of life and the meaning of marriage, parentage and birth.

A) Kinship in India.

Kinship plays certain important social, economic and political roles in the modern industrial society the centrality of kinship has been eroded which is said to be partially correct. The entire range of kinship ties may not necessarily be important has they were important in the earlier days, but one cannot deny that they have an important supportive or one can say corrective role in the social, economic and political spheres.
Let's discuss some of the features of kinship followed in the northern and southern India and bring out a difference in them. In the north India the basic kinship groups were the matrilineal which were Kula / vamsha, the gotras and jati. The first two i.e. Kula and gotras are the exogamous group, where jati is endogamous. A man is not at all expected to marry in the gotra of his father, mother, father's mother, mother's mother. In the male line, the identity statues and the property were transmitted. Then the members of the linage co-operate in the rituals and the ceremonies and also in some major economic activities. There were groups also which could be characterized by conflicts and feuds that ran from generation to generation. on certain specified occasions, there was an exchange of gifts among the different categories of kin and offence, but there is so much local, regional and jati variation on the matter that it is sometimes impossible convey you in brief narrations. The very important feature that was seen among those who were closely related was that marriages between them were strictly prohibited. Then they rule off territorial exogamy, which was there in some parts of north India further distanced the bride from the bridegroom. Even the rules of the daughters and the daughters in – law are distinguished.

In case south India the general features were the same with certain important exceptions. Here in the south it was pertlinage in some of the communities and matrliniage was there in some communities, but matrliniage dominated the other groups. In the later instead of ones father, the mothers brother exercised the authority in case of these groups, the preferred unions are those between certain categories of close kin like cross – consigns are a maternal uncle and niece, the letter being the daughter of the mans elder sister. The bride in these cases familiar with the family into which she is being weeded. Hence, unlike in the north were the bride takers are superior to bride givers, there is no difference made between the two in the south. These unions have certain advantages i.e. a part from the fact that the property rotates between sets of close kin and does not go
outside the group. The brides in such an environment are less likely to be ill-treated than those in the north, where there are on familiar terrain.

Due to enormous pressure of work the IT professionals are unable to maintain close family kinship relationships. They do not encourage kinship members asking for various favors. Due to tight schedule very rarely they make it family and function. Due to lack of time and hectic schedules they IT professionals maintain very limited contact with their kin.

6.5: INVESTMENT AND EXPENDITURE PATTERN

Investment and expenditure are the two important aspects of the capital economy. The research study on IT professionals reveals that the IT professionals are getting maximum salary in the society compared to other professions. Hence in the study it was assessed how the IT professionals maintain their income. By the study it was clear that all most all of them invest their income of amount in one or the other assets such as lands, shares, buildings, complexes, ornaments and so on.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Property</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lands</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>51.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>38.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank deposits</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>29.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shares</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>87.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business complex / buildings</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>27.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ornaments</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field work study – IT professionals Bangalore

The above table puts light on the preference of investments of the IT professionals. All the 300 respondents have said that they possess ornaments. it can be understood that they invest much in ornaments rather than other assets,
whereas 263 said they have invested on shares and 116 of them are owning sites. About 88 professionals have said that they either bank deposits. As much as 154 respondents have revealed that they have invested different sort of lands like agriculture / business lands. 83 respondents have said that they invest or own business complex/buildings.

6.6: OCCUPATIONAL PRESTIGE AND POWER

A) **Prestige:** A critical critique of occupational prestige studies. Prestige, from their perspective refers to “a particular form of social advantage and power, associated with the incumbency of a role of membership of a collectivity” Prestige is symbolic and it employs meanings and values rather than the exploitation of materials/resources.

A hierarchy of Prestige is formed from relational and attitudinal terms. As such, a prestige hierarchy occurs when actors:

1. Defer to their superiors.
2. Accept their equals as partners.
3. Derogate their inferiors.

Occupational Prestige is defined as “the chances of deference, acceptance, and derogation associated with the incumbency of occupational roles and membership in occupational collectivities” IT professionals enjoy high prestige in the society.

B) **Power:**

Sociologists usually define power as the ability to impose one's will on others, even if those others resist in some way.

"By power is meant that opportunity existing within a social [relationship] which permits one to carry out one's own will even against resistance and regardless of the basis on which this opportunity rests."
The imposition need not involve (force or threat of force). Thus "power" in the sociological sense subsumes both physical power and including many of the types listed at power. In some ways it more closely resembles what everyday speakers call”.

More generally, one could define "power" as the more or less unilateral ability (real or perceived) or potential to bring about significant usually in people’s through the actions of oneself or of others. The laws of power are an interpretation of evolution, used by individuals, with the goal to let an individual evolve to the highest level of comfort he can attain in his social setting.

The exercise of power seems endemic to humans as social and gregarious beings. The Spanish word for power is "poder", and the French word is "pouvoir". Both words mean "to be able," and this meaning reflects on the meaning of the English word "power". A second French word is "puissance", which means more potential or virtual power, a capacity of, while "pouvoir" would be actualized "puissance".

Though the IT professional enjoy high status and prestige, however they enjoy very less powers. I T professionals are bound by scheduled work. They don’t have rights to take decisions as they want but instead they will be assigned to do work. They just follow red - tapism.

6.7: RELIGION AND CULTURE.

Religion has been an important dimension of all societies and continues to play an influential role. It virtually touches all aspects of contemporary life. The sociology of religion seeks to understand religion in its varied manifestations as a social institution, as a cultural practice, and as a pattern of beliefs and activities that are shaped by societal conditions and that, in turn, shape these conditions.
The Latin word “religo” means “good faith”, “ritual” and has other similar meanings. The term was taken over into English with its meaning unchanged. Religion is something that humans follow and so the study of religion is about the study of people and cultures. It looks at questions on how people are different – how cultural and religious differences across the world can be understood and put into the context. In this sense the study of religion is comparative, since comparisons are made between different religions and different types of religious practices.

Religion is instinctive to man. Man is the only religious being. As a reason distinguishes him from animals, he can similarly be distinguished through religion. Man is finite; infinite being. From the time when he opened his eyes on this planet, he has been desirous of knowing and being acquainted with the conscious power in nature. As and when he was compelled to face natural hardships and dangerous, storms, floods, lightening, epidemics, famines, deluge, scarcity, dangerous animals etc. Man has looked up to some invisible power for assistance, motivation, strength and help. Thus, this religious tendency awoke in man when he was gripped some times by fear and at other times by curiosity. And, man tried to realize this intangible power for reasons such as to obtain salvation from the sorrows and transience, death, birth and old age. Similarly, man, when he got fed up of the worldly, sensual love, conceived god has the object of love in the supreme aesthetic forms. There is no relation which men did not attach to god. People tried to attain god in the relation of father, friend, husband, master, lover, beloved, verily in form of relationship. In this way man, time and again attempted to quench his urges in that supreme person the search of which is religion.

As religion seems to be more important for human being in the society, hence the present study focused to assess the IT professionals views and insights about the religion and it’s perform. Below is the table shows how IT professionals perform the religious activities.
TABLE NO 6.4
RELIGION AND SUPERSTITION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It is better to consult a doctor rather than an exorcist or fakir.</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The religious rights which are approved on the criteria of science must be accepted and the rest discarded.</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who do good deeds go to heaven and those who do bad deeds for to hell.</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every event of man’s life is predetermined by fate.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>However, important work it may be, the journey must be cancelled if a cat passes the path or anybody sneezes.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It does no matter whether one goes to place f worship (Temple, Church, and Gurudhwara) or not.</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There is no greater religion than helping others.</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With regard to religion and superstition, all the 300 respondents agree that it is better to consult a doctor rather than an exorcist or fakir and about 285 said yes to the statement that the religious rights which are approved on the criteria of science must be accepted and the rest discarded.

All the 300 respondents believe that every event of man’s life is predetermined by fate. All of them disagree with superstition that however, important work it may be, the journey must be cancelled if a cat passes the path or anybody sneezes. Almost all of them said there is no greater religion than helping others. This shows that the IT professionals are with contradictory nature. On one side they say that they are scientific oriented and at other side they believe in superstition aspects.
6.8: CONCLUSIONS

The chapter VI is devoted to Social Structure and the IT Profession. The research study reveals how the IT profession and Social structure are co-related, the inter-relationship between Social structure and the IT profession has been assessed here. Institutions like family relations and kinship network are studied in the research. Research was focused on marriages among IT professionals. The attitude towards Intercaste marriage also studied. Investment and expenditures of IT professionals are also discussed; occupation prestige and powers of IT professionals are identified to know the status in the contemporary society. Finally, research was focused on the aspects of religion and culture. In the next chapter the research is focused on concluding part.
6.9: REFERENCES


5. Gopal Mahopatra and NagaSiddartha of the National Human Resource Development Network, Bangalore Chapter.