CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are the main conclusions of the study entitled *Significance of Religious Precepts in Attitude Formulation Towards Modernization of Muslim and Buddhist Dards of Ladakh- A Comparative Study*. The study was delimited to two sample villages, Dah and Kharboo. Dah in Leh district and Kharboo in Kargil district exclusively inhabited by Buddhist and Muslim Dards respectively. Two scales for measurement of religiosity and modernization were devised and applied to both sample subject numbering 250 each, first to assess religiosity and second to assess attitude towards modernization. The correlation between religiosity and Modernization alongwith comparisons have been reported in chapter no. IV. Correlations and comparisons thereof are based on Buddhist/Muslim, highly religious lowly literate / illiterate, highly mobile / lowly mobile and age splits of the samples to ascertain significance of religious precepts in attitude formulation. The study reveals:

1. That the conversion of Dah to Buddhism (from Bon) and Kharboo to Islam (from Buddhism) led to momentous changes through endogenous processes. Historically conversion in both cases has been a contact of two traditional worldviews.

2. That changes sought about and much more still in the offing by modernization are of far greater intensity and scope, besides being exogenous. These changes are a result of cultural encounter through the process of challenge and Response. Both of the traditional structures consider its (modernization) normative structure characterized by equality, secularism, humanism, scientific outlook, and pragmatism, a threat to their identity on one hand. On the other hand seek and aspire for it

\[1\text{ See the list appended to the chapter for reference}\]
(modernization) because of its universal features of economic development and growth.

3. Although theoretically both religious orders are antithetical to modernization, there has been a development of rationalization and compartmentalization where religious values, precepts and sanctions and day to day requirements have been isolated. New value systems are evolved other than religious to justify the actions, especially where there is intense desire for material goods social status, prestige and power which go with wealth and political office.

4. In fact religion leans heavily on the side of status quo in family structure and organization, marriage, relationships with outsiders in political and economic obligation. However, respondents of both traditions show a willingness to give their minds ways of increasing production and a willingness to experiment. Both communities find new versions of otherwise old religious traditions to cope with day to day challenges, where in they find guidance codes of conduct and inspiration entirely different from their old versions. The tendency of revision and reinterpretation of Dogma is associated with NGO’s and Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council and in Kharboo case it is associated with Khomeini and Jamate-Islamic versions and interpretations. Respondents do not always act in accordance with the religions they profess. On the contrary clergy in both communities is expected to be more strict in their behaviour. Generally people tend to ignore religious precepts which conflict with their economic interests, unless otherwise politicized. In Dal case clergy (Lamas and monks) are not themselves engaged in economic activities like agriculture, trade, manufacture or other pursuits. On the contrary in Kharboo case priests have not deflected from economic pursuits but have remained ideal types in educational achievements, employment, adoption of new
cultural values, innovations, political mobilization and above all high social status associated with these processes.

In both communities there is a high degree of inconsistency in the application of instrumental values with regard to terminal values. Despite such inconsistency, the religious values have a marked influence on the actions of the respondents by defining and enforcing the moral limits of their behaviour.

That the world view of the respondents of both sample villages maintain several sets of cultural forms: an ideal religious model (based on Kanjur and the Quran) world view and a behavioural model world view based on the conception of naturalism and social relationships inherently manipulative and transactional in nature. These two sets are positively fused in both traditions reinforcing each other similar to ethos and world view. Philosophical and practical versions of the religions while responding to modernization stimuli respondents hardly consider binary conceptions such as spiritualism and materialism traditional and modern or virtuous and sinful. There is a great deal of social pressure towards religious conformity with regard to marriage forms and patterns, family organization, sex, food habits, kinship and other social relations. In these areas there is a significant degree of genuine faith. In the areas like economy, development and growth, politics, physical and social mobility and above all education, the social pressures lead to mere superficial conformity.

In both sample villages the respondents express modernity in their attitude. The difference is revealed in magnitude only. The religiosity as well as modernity score of Muslim respondents is generally higher than Buddhist respondents. In both communities there is a significant correlation between religion and modernization i.e. the increase in religiosity is correlated to the low scoring on modernization scale. However, it is much lower in
Buddhist respondents. The majority of respondents fall into the category of “blend of Modernism and Traditionalism”.

Regarding the rational attitude, pragmatism, efficacy of science, experimentation and risk taking, the Buddhist respondents of Dah lag behind the Muslim Dards of Kharboo. The ratio of attitude towards education and educational attainment is quite high in Muslim respondents. On the whole majority of respondents from both communities uphold an amalgam of modernity and tradition.

8. That Buddhism in Dah is still a case of compatibility between ethnic tradition (Bon) and the adopted religion (Buddhism) there is an apparent discordance common to many converted ethnic communities. In absence of a concerted redemptive movement and religious re-socialization, the discordance still exists in Dah respondents reflected in their fractured value system. Such compatibility has been overcome in Kharboo case through redemptive agencies like Tableegi Jamat, Khomeni group and Jamait Islami.

Regarding attitude formulation the study reveals:

1. That the responses that are regarded as attitudinal are basically evaluative in nature, where evaluation is defined as an imputation of some degree of goodness or badness to an attitude object (Modernization). Thus evaluative response are those that express approval or disapproval, favour or disfavour, approach or avoidance, attraction or aversion or similar reactions. In both communities the basic standard to evaluate is provided by religious ethos of the society. Therefore very significant in attitude formulation.

2. Responses that express evaluation are divided into three classes: cognitive, effect and behaviour classes. In all classes especially in cognitive class which contain thought and beliefs that people
have about an attitude object, the religion plays a significant role. While testing hypothesis no. 5 stating “there is a significant difference between attitude and behaviour”, the study reveals that the perceived moral obligations representing people’s beliefs and cognition of attitude object and not verbal or non verbal instructions as part of a deliberate persuasive process forms the basis of evaluation. The main information source of information being religion, hence very significant in attitude formulation.

The study supports the view point that attitudes and behaviour can best be understood by placing them in the context of psychological as well as sociological factors. Habit, norm and self identity being some of the important psychological dispositions, while as religion, value systems, comprising of moral standards are no less important sociological factors related to attitude formulation. In both communities the behaviours are contra-attitudinal indicating a high degree of religious influence in absence of modernization factors, on early childhood through socialization agencies like family, peer groups, role models, reference groups and overall social milieu. As A-B relationship is revealed to be strongly positive in some areas and weak in other areas of modernization, the B-A relationship in contrast is quite strong. The set behaviours influence attitudes more than attitudes influence behavior. In most cases especially in HRGA and HRGB the behaviors well act back on the attitude. In such cases, message based persuasion make certain beliefs plausible and salient for recipients and those beliefs influence attitudes.

Attitude are acquired behavioral dispositions, the focus is always on the information basis. All the six sources of information are titled towards traditional conservative behavior patterns in SSA and SSB. However there is a degree of variation as the information basis of SSB (Muslim respondents) is more widened through physical mobility and overall simplicity of their religion which gives more room to individual action. Same applies to the
religious attitude of the subjects which gets polished, refined and redefined through frequent discourses on Friday congregations and on special occasions. Such discourses are socio-religious in nature reflecting not only upon purely religious or other worldly issues but contemporary social problems as well.

As a fundamental principal established viewpoints, attitudes and beliefs are vulnerable to persuasive attack by opposing arguments (Modernization elements). Protection against such attack is strengthened by exposing them to weakened forms of attacking messages. A relatively weak attack in SSA (Buddhist respondents) encourages their system to develop defenses against while not changing their attitude and beliefs. In SSB case such attacking messages are strong and constant, therefore, continuously weakening the defensive mechanism of traditional structure making it readily available for change.

Continuous exposure to new influences leaves an individual with a somewhat shifting view of reality as happens to the most mobile groups of SSA and SSB. These subject possess many sets of attitudes. Where such shifting view is absent as in case of low mobile segments of SSA and SSB, the attitudes cemented through religious sanctions are not easily discarded in presence of weak persuasion. In such cases established view points are rigid and resistant to new ideas.

5. There is a basic antinomy between openness to change and desire to preserve an established, religiously sanctioned and socially approved conviction. The pressures towards change are equally countered by pressures toward conformity and status quo. In such cases the religious viewpoint and sanctions as part of the approved conviction play a significant role.

6. A very important aspect of attitude formulation is the role of reference group. In both SSA and SSB, the reference group is a small portion of the whole universe. In SSA it is the high mobile and educated employed group mostly settled at the urban centre
of Leh, having occasional visits to native village Dah. There is marginal amount of feedback, thus restricting imitation and acculturation. On the other hand for SSB it is the highly religious clergy and highly mobile groups settled mostly in the sample village Kharboo, readily available for normative and comparison references. Normative category setting standards for appropriate attitudes towards attitude object with a delivery of rewards and punishments in accordance with people’s conformity to or deviance from these standards, while as comparison category devise comparison points against which rest of the community evaluate themselves and others. Reference groups become more important in the situation where attitude objects have no clear-cut physical reality. People in such situations turn to social reality to evaluate such objects. A viewpoint, an attitude, a belief is correct if it is anchored in a group of people having similar beliefs and attitudes. In SSA the role of this reference group is significant but marginal. On the other hand being readily available for normative and comparison references, its role in SSB is significant and constant. The reference group (Clergy, aghas and Akhoons) are pioneers for modern mass education, employment other than agriculture, political participation, development of positive pragmatic approach towards social problems despite being leading figures in religious activities. Like Brahmans in Hinduism, the Clergy in SSB have been forerunners of modernization. They have successfully combined the roles of religious elite and political elite, thus helped in gaining popular support for mass education programmes, community development and social welfare schemes associated with modernization. Besides, mobilizing popular support for transport and communication facilities as a reward of political participation.

It holds good for respondents of both SSA and SSB to divide evaluative continuum with latitudes of acceptance, rejection and non commitment. Different aspects of different areas of
modernization find a place in one or the other latitudes rewarded with favourability or un-favourability with regard to attitude object.

Above all attitudes in all societies are linked to larger structures, which takes the form of ideologies\textsuperscript{15}. Especially affect class of attitude, which are emotion laden. Attitude towards free-mixing, co-habitation before marriage, extramarital relations and women status in SSB case; intermarriages, relation with out groups, food habits, personal hygiene and abortion in SSA is conditioned if not wholly determined by a larger religious ideology which by nature is intolerant of deviance from traditional social norms. Therefore, the ideology (religious) has a significance in formulation of attitude towards modernization. The study reveals a significant difference between attitude and overt behaviour of the respondents of SSA and SSB. Generally an individual’s attitude effect his behaviour and moulds his actions. The difference is mostly manifest in the areas of ritualism, marriage, family compositions, sexual relations and women’s status. The difference in A-B cuts across all barriers of age, education, economic status, religiosity and mobility measures.

The study revealed that both Dah and Kharboo are variants of the same general Ladakhi Culture comparable in ethnic and ecological setting. Besides both share a historic-cultural experience of being a peculiar cultural entity resulting in ethnocentrism. The study reveals three outstanding differences.

a) Open space versus tight land forming and associated differences in settlement pattern, compact village around a mosque versus isolated small form house types;

b) The relative nearness and isolation from the main high way leading to politically and economically important district headquarter and culturally rich urban centres,

c) The differences in value system (main source religion) stressing upon individual action versus stress upon cooperative community action.
That before occupational differentiation the cooperative social arrangements centered around the Badi Masjid (Jamia Mosque) had a strong influence upon community structure not only in Kharboo but also in all Muslim Dard settlements all over Drass Valley. It is significant that as the population expanded due to polygamy and Kharboo shifted from farm economy to labour on highway, government service and trade, this cooperative tendency reinforced by Akhoons and Aghas, coupled with kinship, helped in overcoming the economic problems. In Dah case, ever since its first settlers the community preferred a place of isolation, reinforcing their strong ethnocentrism on one hand and Buddhist stress on individuality weakened phaspoon institution. The Gompa which was built long after the settlement, failed to serve as the mosque did in Kharboo case. A fractured and blended faith reinforced value stress on individual action resulted in chronic in breeding through endogamy. Till date Dah Dards still prefer this way of life.

Of further interest is the fact that when Dah Dards move to some urban centre like Leh or Kargil (though the number is very small) the stress upon individualism and ethnocentrism goes along resulting in the development of small isolated colonies; shun the development of new contacts, grow least social relationships, therefore, block the ways of influence of new culture patterns. The study takes strong cognizance of situational factors i.e., had the Kharboo Dards not been able to settle on highway, they could not have been influenced so fast. In Dah case however, the site of narrow Indus gorges was selected from among several possible sites. (Dah means arrow) ascribed to Gyal Singhe, the founder of the settlement, who led the migration from Chilas and selected the place by shooting an arrow. The Dah is settled where the arrow pierced into a rock. The rock is still worshiped.

Same pattern of isolated settlements are repeated in the chain of Buddhist Dard villages like Garkoon, Darchik, Hanu and Batalik. The situational factor had a marginal influence on contrasting community structures of Dah and Kharboo. It set certain limits but above these limits, religion and religious precepts influenced the formulation of two different sets of attitudes.
The study reveals a transitional version of modernization for both communities SSA & SSB. Both of the communities manifest traditional, modern, and traditional-modern ramifications. There is no structural disconnection or break down. On the contrary neo-traditionalism is going along with modernization. Both communities are conscious of the high ground where the near and distant past can still be seen while before them lies present and future.

Schools and educational facilities are accessible but all that has so far actually increased is the desire to literacy and education rather than education itself in SSA (Dah Budhists). The time is ripe for a strong drive in the field of literacy and education especially in the areas of adult education. There is a need of integrated effort to arrest the tendency of illiteracy.

Another striking feature is the absence of organization in production. Agriculture and Horticulture, vegetable production, animal husbandry and sheep breeding need to be backed by high yield variety seeds, fertilizers, technical equipment, and technical guidance. There is a great scope in agro-social, and socio-psychological research. Successful farming has to proceed hand in hand with rural industry. The need is to identify and organize areas of such rural industry. The spheres showing willingness to rapid change are those of education, agriculture, health & hygiene and village industry. which present an opportunity for research and development of schools, desert farming, aorestation, animal and sheep breeding.

The present study should be replicated on a larger sample including changpa and mons of Ladakh. Studies should be undertaken to analyze the problem of literate and illiterate parents and impact thereof on their children at the various stages of their development.

There is a great scope for comparative studies on urbanization and associated issues on Kargil / Leh. Such psycho-social studies can be both descriptive as well as problem oriented. There is great scope for research in the language spoken by the two communities. Above all a socio-medical research is needed for SSA sample to study unique food habits, identify causes of
sterility to arrest the trend of dwindling population. There is a high degree of inconsistency in attitude and actual behaviour. In-depth psycho-social studies are needed with more standardized measurement scales, keeping in view the peculiar language and dialects of Dard community.

Until recently Dard traditional system in particular and Ladakhi tradition in general had seen very little change over centuries. In the last twenty-five years when some of the regions including Dah was opened to foreigners, the community has come under pressures and influences of an alien culture. Without causing upheavals the influences are slowly eroding the local culture. The pace of change needs to be controlled so should be influx of money. Ironically the consequences of development based on the pursuit of economic growth only, cause unplanned urbanization, pollution, waste, dehumanization of work and community life. In Ladakhi case a special development project is needed to identify specific problems of development. The crucial period of transition from isolation to participation calls for serious socio-historical research.
References:

5. Imtiyaz Ahmad: *Education and modernization of Muslims in India*. Jain Monohar Publisher, New Delhi, 1986 P 36.