CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The earlier chapters focused on the meaning and function of work within industrial settings from both theoretical and practical points of view. An attempt is made to understand the concept of alienation as a general social phenomenon and to locate it in the sphere of work. Consequently, the problem of work alienation emerged which is assumed to be reflected in modern industrial work. Hence, the present study concerns itself with identifying the sources and determining the extent of work alienation among supervisors in industrial settings which is hereinafter referred to as alienation.

Statement of the Problem

Alienation at work, reflected through feelings of powerlessness, self-estrangement, meaningfulness, and social isolation continues to be an important research issue in sociology and related theory because it takes a heavy toll on workers' lives and productivity. The concept of alienation is a central but controversial aspect of Marxism, which he elaborately explained in his earliest work (1932). Marx commented that the workers become alienated from the object they produce because it is owned and disposed by another. Few decades later, Josephson (1968), understood alienation exclusively as a psychological state, including a variety of psycho-social conditions like
anxiety states, anomie, depersonalization, apathy, loneliness, powerlessness, meaningfulness, isolation, and the loss of values. In the new globalised economy and its high-commitment s, alienation is supposed to be a psychological relic of the past. However, recent analysis highlights that alienation remains a serious problem for workers and their employing s and that under modern theories of managerial control, alienation at work has only become worse (Bacharach et al (2002)). As such the present study intends to study the problem of alienation among industrial employees and to locate its sources and their consequences on their work behaviors.

Once the problem is formulated and the subjects for the study are decided it is essential to specify the actual means for carrying out the research study. This chapter reflects the overall plan of the proposed research study and includes, aims of study, objectives formulated, research design, area of study, sampling procedure, methods and tools used for collecting data, statistical tests used for analyzing data.

Aims of the Study

The aims of the study include a careful examination of the sources of alienation and to ascertain the extent of alienation among supervisors in industrial s. It also aims to determine the independent predictors of alienation from among a host of selected personal and work related factors and to corroborate with studies available.
In view of these aims certain specific objectives are formulated which focus clearly on the specific areas of studying and analyzing the concept of alienation among industrial employees.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the nature and extent of problem of alienation among supervisors.

2. To ascertain the influence of demographic, economic, social, and personal aspects of supervisors on alienation.

3. To examine the association between the different dimensions of job satisfaction and overall job satisfaction and alienation.

4. To study the association between work attitudes and alienation.

5. To examine the influence of certain work attributes on alienation.

6. To study the association between expectations from work and alienation.

7. To identify the factors which contribute to alienation.

8. To determine the correlates and predictors of alienation.
Hypotheses

1. The less control supervisors have over their work, the more they feel alienated.

2. Personal factors of supervisors like, age, religion, caste, marital status, family, education, income years of service and number of years worked become predictors of alienation.

3. Work related factors such as satisfaction with pay, work, coworkers, superior, promotions and overall job satisfaction are predictors of alienation.

4. Job attitudes and communication patterns are significantly associated with alienation.

5. Expectations from work and certain attributes of work situation are significantly associated with alienation.

Research Design

The problem of alienation is a complex phenomenon, which needs to be studied both in its personal and work contexts. A careful way by which specific attributes of personal identity and those of work environment can be related to alienation can lead to foster an understanding of the incidence and source of alienation. This helps in identifying the roots and to predict the
factors that could produce change in the work behaviour of supervisors, thus a change in their feelings of alienation.

Keeping in view these aspects and considering the objectives of the study, a descriptive design of research is adopted. Social, phenomena is very complex, inclusive of many dimensions. Hence, it becomes difficult to describe and analyze social situations reliably without quantifying them. As such, use of quantitative methods for analyzing data and to assess the problem studied in its entirety is made. The responses used are quantified in order to measure the attitudes, opinions and levels of satisfactions being studied. Once this is done, the answers to these questions are subjected to statistical analysis and the significant variations and associations are identified and explained. Further the variables that were related to one another are subjected to further analysis in a way that would show how change in one variable would result in a change in another. The precise analysis and description of relationship established between the independent and dependent variables thus made it possible to test the hypothesis identified.

Area of Study and Sample

As stated in the objectives, the study aims to identify the causes and to examine the extent of alienation among supervisors in industrial s.
As such it was decided to make supervisors as the units of analysis. Supervisors are expected to perform a host of functions and their job description is not clear and specific. As such it was decided to select those industries, which clearly specify the role of supervisors and have a clear job description. After investigating it was found that in the small and medium type of industries the duties and responsibilities were not specified and wherever they were, it was found that they were vague. Most of the large-scale industries seemed to have clear job specifications. On further investigation it was revealed that job description was formulated on the basis of their actual functions. Thus it was decided to cover large-scale industries, employing more than 1000 employees, where job description of supervisors was clear. This was with a view to comprehend what factors lead to alienation, provided their work role is specified.

Against this background sixty industries were found to fulfill this criteria of selection. These industries were visited by the researcher and it was found that there were a total of 2460 supervisors.

Hence, after determining the exact number of industries to be selected and keeping in view the large number of supervisors employed, a multi-stage random sampling procedure was adopted. This denotes sampling carried out in different stages to arrive at the desired sample size.
At the first stage it was decided to list out and give serial numbers to all the 60 industries, by the sequential list method. This was followed by selecting every 10th industry making a total of six industries to draw the sample of supervisors from.

In the second stage it was investigated to find out the total number of supervisors in the six industries. It was found that a total of 432 supervisors were employed by these industries and it was decided to study 50 per cent of the supervisors by using of tippet random numbers. Thus the final sample of 216 supervisors was drawn.

Method and Tools of Data Collection

Being a descriptive design of study, a wide range of techniques could be employed for collecting and processing the desirable data. At the same time having freedom of selecting any method makes it imperative to carefully plan and obtain complete and accurate information. As such keeping in view the objectives of the study the questionnaire method of collecting data is used. The tool is divided into two parts covering a wide range of factors.

Part I, consists of questions to elicit information regarding the personal, familial and social aspects of supervisors. These factors assume importance as far as they provide background information determining their
personal identity as personal factors are assumed to form leading predictors of alienation Morgan (1962). Hence the questionnaire concentrated on these aspects to aid in making conclusions on the sources and extent of alienation.

Part II, of the questionnaire, includes tools for measuring selected work related variables. Review shows that work milieu, al context and work group are important determinants of alienation. As such, the study assumed that immediate work situation and feelings about its different components have far reaching consequences on the work behaviour of supervisors. Consequently some of the variables are selected to independently predict alienation and determine the sources of alienation. The variables considered in the study and the scales used are – work, pay, coworkers, superior, promotion and over-all job satisfaction, job attitudes, communication patterns, expectations from work and attributes of work situation as independent variables and alienation as a dependent variable.

Conceptualization

Definitions of the concepts used are given which will help to understand their usage in the context of this study. Conceptualization of these terms is necessary in understanding their application and relevance to study the problem of alienation.

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Work

Work refers to the assigned functions or duties that employees perform by virtue of occupying some position in the al structure for which remuneration is paid.

Alienation

Alienation is the major factor which the study attempts to explain with reference to its incidence and sources. Alienation is perceived as a result of a number of different objective conditions and subjective feeling states, which emerge out of certain relationship between employees and the socio-technical settings of work place.

Attachment

A positive condition in the absence of alienation, when ever respondents have not reported tendencies of alienation it is assumed that they are attached to the job.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction levels of the respondents are assumed to have direct influence on their alienation and attachment. As such it is considered as an important source of alienation or attachment. It is conceived as the overall measure of the degree to which employees are satisfied and happy with
various aspects of the job such as pay, work, coworkers, promotions and superior.

Attributes of work Situation

This is another measure for alienation. The attributes of work situation are certain on-the-job aspects which explain employees perceptions and values which they hold.

Expectations from Work

Conceived as a measure for determining tendencies of alienation or attachment, they are some of the aspects which reflect the expectations that employees have from the work they do and from the employers.

Communication Patterns

The pattern of establishing functional contact in the hierarchy leading to upward and downward communication.

Powerlessness

It is one of the factors of alienation which means the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behavior cannot determine the occurrence of the outcome and the reinforcement he seeks.
Self Estrangement

A factor of alienation which is defined as a situation where people experience themselves as aliens and detached from the work they do.

Social Isolation

This is also a factor of alienation. It is defined as the psychological condition of the individual who has lost the ability to interact meaningfully with others and thus feels detached from others.

Description of Scales Used

Condensed details of the parameters with respect to the scales used, its reliability and suitability to the sample under study are given below.

A Measure of Work Alienation

Much of the early empirical research on alienation has as its focus man’s relationship to the machine and its, a characteristic stemming directly from Marx. The catalyst for the conversion of Marx’s idea of alienation to a measurable concept was Seeman’s (1959) article “On the Meaning of Alienation”. Whereas Marx’s perspective was societal and in particular how the capitalist labour process gave rise to alienation on a universal scale, Seeman considered alienation from the standpoint of the individual. Falling in line with Seeman, those who studied alienation as being subjective,
experienced powerlessness to control ones work activities in a variety of settings were Clark (1959): Seeman (1959); Pearlin (1962) Neal and Relting (1963), Hipsitz (1963) Seligman (1964); Smith (1968).

In an effort to measure alienation, several definitions and factors which explain the condition of alienation have been given. As a lack of commitment to the work role, lack of sense of belongingness, lack of effective control over the work process and self estrangement. To sum up alienation is usually described as objectively experienced feelings of powerlessness, meaninglessness, self estrangement and isolation.(Neena1978) It is conceptualized as a lack of feeling of satisfaction and pride in one's job( Murdia1998).

As this study intends to locate alienation and analyse its sources among industrial employees for the purpose of this study, a measure of alienation by Pearlin (1962) who studied alienation among nursing personnel and a measure of alienation by Miller (1967) who studied alienation among industrial scientists and engineers is adopted. The scale adopted constitutes three aspects Viz, self-estrangement; powerlessness; and social isolation. A five point response pattern from strongly disagree to strongly agree is provided. This helped to determine the levels of alienation i.e., whether supervisors were less, moderately or highly alienated. The reliability coefficient is found to be .68.
Satisfaction with Work

Satisfaction with different components of work are also important predictors of work alienation. (Wilensky1963). The study also assumes that satisfaction with work place, can lead to having lower levels of alienation. Hence, a measure of satisfaction with work by Smith et al (1969) is adopted having a five point response pattern ranging from satisfaction to a very large extent to a very lesser extent. The reliability coefficient of alpha was .64.

Satisfaction with Pay

Some of the studies in the past which focused on satisfaction with the pay or salaries received, have found that pay ranks below some other factors when people are asked to let what they like most about their work. (Herzberg1957). Some other surveys also suggest that security and certainty are more important than more income. (In克莱1960). Consequently, information regarding satisfaction with pay is elicited as it is assumed to effect alienation among the supervisors under study.

A measure of satisfaction with pay by Smith et al (1969) is adopted. A five point response pattern from a very large to a very lesser extent of satisfaction is given to determine their levels of satisfaction with pay. The reliability coefficient of alpha was .58.
Satisfaction with Coworkers

Co-workers form an important part of the work group. The formal and informal interaction with co-workers reflect upon their growing intimacy or discontent, depending on the extent of satisfaction, and the value they place on it. As such dissatisfaction can lead to discontentment and withdrawal not only from the work group but also from work itself. A scale by Smith et al (1969), is adopted to measure satisfaction with co-workers. A five point response pattern is provided to reveal high to low satisfaction levels. The reliability of the scale was found to be .76.

Satisfaction with Superior

As observed earlier, superiors assume important roles within the work environment. Their fundamental tasks are to guide and supervise the work of their subordinates and help increase their participation and performance. However, supervisors may sometimes find their superiors as misleading or indifferent and exacting or reliable and concerned. Hence they may either be satisfied or dissatisfied with their superior depending on how they view them and their role in the overall functioning of the . The extent of their satisfaction or otherwise can lead to indifference or alienation among them. Hence to measure this aspect a scale by Smith et al (1969) was adopted with a five point response pattern ranging from higher satisfaction to low satisfaction. The reliability coefficient of alpha was found to be .65.
Satisfaction with Promotions

Moving up the ladder in work is one of the important growth oriented aspects. After a certain period of time promotions to a higher office are expected but these depend on the policies framed by the management. Consequently failure to move up or forced stagnation may create dissatisfaction. Sometimes supervisors who have been promoted also may report dissatisfaction. In order to determine their satisfaction levels, a scale by Smith Kendall & Hullin (1969) was adopted with a five point scale to show higher to lower satisfaction. The reliability coefficient is found to be .71.

Overall Job Satisfaction

Studies on job satisfaction and impacts on the total work life of a person have emphasized the value job has and the meaning of work for a person. Satisfaction is related to many work related behaviors. Hence, it is important to study the impact of overall job satisfaction with the job and to find out whether it affects alienation among the supervisors. The measure of Job Satisfaction adopted from the Job Descriptive Index by Smith et al. (1969) consisting of 49 items with a five point response pattern ranging from higher satisfaction to lower satisfaction on each of the items. 68
Job Attitudes

Job attitudes are reflected by how people feel about what they do when they work. Job related attitudes show positive or negative evaluations that employees hold about aspects of their work environment. As such it is necessary to assess the attitudes of supervisors under study towards their job in order to determine the extent of influence they could have on their feelings of alienation. Hence a job attitude scale is formulated. The scale has a five-point response pattern from highly favourable to unfavourable attitude. The reliability coefficient of alpha is .52.

Communication

Communication patterns in industrial s determine to a large extent the type of interactions among people. The means of work flow in hierarchy are generally from top level to bottom. This creates a pattern of communication which help channelizing information and instructions which enable work to be performed. Any lag or indifference in communicating will effect work and may create negative responses. As such it is assumed that it can lead to feelings of alienation among supervisors. Hence a measure of communication based on( Wilensky1964) is made to assess the opinion of supervisors on the pattern of communication in their industries. The reliability coefficient is .72.
Expectations from Work

Work expectations arise out of the work environment. Employees may introduce their own incentives and expectations both financial and non-financial and expect them to be implemented. These incentives may often be used as means of spurring employees towards some goal. Bluni & Naylor (1984) When these go unnoticed and expectations whether justified or not fail to be-fulfilled, supervisors may show negative work behaviour. This is bound to affect their work and the attitudes towards it. There may be tendencies of indifference towards work. Keeping this in view, a measure of expectations from work has been adopted from (Wilensky1964). The scale consists of 5 items and a five point response pattern. The reliability coefficient of alpha is .78.

Attributes of Work Situation

The specific job characteristics form the attributes of work situation. These relate to the qualities ascribed to different work situations. They become relevant as they help in developing work values and social relations at the work place. Organisations which fail to provide opportunities for combining work attributes with that of the self concept of employees may find several of them as non-involved, and non-committed. Hence a scale for measuring the opinions of supervisors on different aspects of work
situation based on Borrow (1969) is used. The scale consists of a five point response pattern. The reliability coefficient of alpha is .67

**Analysis of Data**

The data collected is analyzed to help examine the objectives of the study. The variables measured were given scores and the total scores divided on the basis of quartiles showed the different levels of satisfactions, opinions, expectations and alienation.

The profile of the supervisors is analyzed to aid in understanding the demographic, personal, family and social factors. To test whether the variables were associated the chi-square test of association is used. This helped to understand the significance of association between alienation and personal and work related factors. A test of correlation was used to determine the type of relationship between alienation and personal and work related factors.

Further to establish the degree of relationship and to determine the contribution to alienation from among a host of personal and work related factors a stepwise multiple regression analysis was used.
Chapterisation

To aid clarity of concepts and logical flow of thought the thesis is divided into seven chapters.

Chapter I Introduction


Chapter II Review of Literature

In this chapter an overview of Literature on the concept of Alienation, and the problem of Work Alienation have been narrated.

Chapter III Methodology of the Study

In this chapter the aspects explained are: The Research Problem, Aims of the study, Objectives of the Study, Hypotheses, Research Design, Sampling Procedure, Method and Tools of Data Collection, Conceptualization, Scales used and procedure of data Analysis.
Chapter IV Profile of the Respondents

This Chapter describes the socio-economic profile of the Respondents.

Chapter V Factors of Alienation among the Respondents

This chapter is concerned with analysis of data and consists of aspects like variables considered for the Study, Score Analysis of Variables, Analysis of Data including Chi-square test of association, Test of Correlation, and Regression Analysis.

Chapter VI Interpretation of Personal and Work Related Factors

This chapter includes interpretation of the results obtained and discusses the results in view of the different tests used to establish the association between the dependant and independent variables considered in this study.

Chapter VII Summary and Conclusions

This chapter summarizes results obtained, and makes conclusions based on them.

Chapter VIII Implications for Managements of Industries.

Recommendations and suggestions are provided to managements of industrial s as a consequence of the results obtained and discussed.