CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM FORMULATION

This Chapter has been divided into three major sections. In the first section, I have discussed the concept of alienation and its relevance in the Indian context. In the second section, I have given a brief review of the literature, and in the third section, the need for the present study has been described.

Section 1

The phenomenon of alienation is one of the most prominent and crucial conditions of the present day society. The term alienation is derived from the Latin work 'alienato' which in the societal context denotes an individual's separation or estrangement from other men, from his country or from the Gods. However, at present, as Keniston(1965:13) has observed, the term has become synonymous with whatever the user believes to be the central evils of modern society. Feuer(1962:133) goes
even so far as to indict intellectuals for projecting their own alienation on every facet of discontent in society. In fact, alienation has been dominant in the writings of men since the nineteenth century though the fundamental notion of alienation is as old as man itself.

A. Alienation - Origin of the Concept and Major Sociological Approaches:

Implicit in the definition of the term 'alienation' is the idea of alienation from something, i.e., there is a focus or an object of alienation. Frequently, the focus of alienation is one or another social group (the alienation of an ethnic minority from the rest of the society, the alienation of the intelligentsia from the masses etc.) According to Josephson and Josephson (1962:12,13) alienation has been used "to refer to an extraordinary variety of psychological disorders, including the loss of self, anxiety states, amnesia, despair, depersonalisation, rootlessness, apathy, social disorganisation, loneliness, atomisation, powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, pessimism, and the loss of beliefs or values".
The concept of alienation is most often traced to Karl Marx. It is to Marx that the credit goes for developing alienation as an empirical and sociological concept rather than a metaphysical or theological one. His ideas are elaborated in the much quoted "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844" which depicted alienation as the crux of the capitalist order. According to Marx, it is the property relations of the capitalist society, which basically contributes to the alienation of the employees. The worker is propertyless and has nothing to sell but his labour power. Moreover, since he has no legal or social claim to the product, he is alienated from the product of his labour. This gives rise to an employee's sense of isolation from the system of organised production and its goals. Lastly, when work activity does not permit control, evoke a sense of purpose, or encourage larger identifications, employment becomes simply a means to the end of making a living which for Marx was self estrangement - the very core of the alienation idea.
The following lengthy quotation from Marx (1859: 72,73) explains his use of alienation.

"What, then constitutes the alienation of labour? First, the fact that labour is external to the worker, i.e. it does not belong to his essential being; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He is at home when he is not working, and when he is working he is not at home. His labour is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is forced labour. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a means to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labour is shunned like the plague.

External labour, labour in which man alienates himself, is a labour of self-sacrifice of mortification. Lastly, the external character of labour for the worker appears in the fact that it is not his own but someone else's, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself but to another".

The impact of the Industrial Revolution on man had a great influence on Marx's concern with alienation, which he dealt within a specific institutional context - the economy. Marx distinguishes four aspects of alienation, which emerge directly from the work situation.
1) **Alienation from the product of his work**

(which from the Marxian point of view also means alienation from nature). The worker 'loses' the product of his own labour which thus acts an external force.

2) **Alienation from the act of producing, from labour as life activity**. When work no longer remains an activity, in the sense of daily production, it becomes 'alien' and no longer belonging to man's own being. For Marx, this is the main aspect of self alienation.

3) **Alienation from the 'Species Being'** When man becomes alienated from his daily work activities, he automatically is unable to experience himself as a human being. To quote Marx, "alienated labour alienates man from his own body as well as external nature, his mental life and his human life".

4) **Alienation from the fellow man**: This comes about as a result of being alienated from himself.
These four aspects of alienation are inextricably linked together. In Marx's view, alienation was the outcome of activities in the economic sphere which led subsequently to estrangement from one's self, and others, in different spheres of life as well. Alienation thus is a process by which man is progressively turned into a stranger in the world his labour has created—a theme central to both Hegel's Phenomenenlegy and Feuerbach's "Essence of Christianity" (1832).

The chief problem thus was alienated labour under capitalism: work was forced on the worker rather than being spontaneous and creative; he had little or no control over the work process; the product of his labour was expropriated by others to be used against him, and the worker himself became a commodity in the labour market. Alienation consisted of the fact that man did not fulfill his "species being" in work; the essence of man remained unrealized. (Seeman, 1974:374)
In recent years, it has been Eric Fromm who has been the most active proponent of the classical Marxian theory of alienation. Fromm (1955:130) defined alienation in "The Sane Society" as

"a mode of experience in which the person experiences himself as an alien. He has become, one might say, estranged from himself. He does not experience himself as the centre of his world, as the creator of his own acts - but his acts and their consequences have become his masters, whom he obeys, or whom he may even worship. The alienated person is out of touch with himself as he is out of reach with any person. He, like the others, is experienced as things are experienced with the senses and with common sense, but at the same time without being related to oneself and to the world outside productively."

For Fromm, the only thing virtually from which man is not alienated is society. His belief is that man in modern times is an *automation conformist* - all too completely at one with society. Whereas many sociologists conceive of alienation as some form of separation of the individual from some aspect of society, Fromm views conformity as going hand in hand with alienation, as through which man becomes alienated from himself.
Next to Fromm, one of the most well known interpreters of Marx's concept of alienation has been Herbert Marcuse. According to Marcuse (1964:11) alienation in the modern world has become entirely 'objective' meaning that "the subject which is alienated is swallowed up by its alienated existence. There is only one dimension and it is everywhere and in all forms". The fact that people are unaware of their lack of liberty is precisely proof of the totality of alienation.

The Marxian tradition, however, represents only one stream of thought concerning alienation. Other nineteenth and twentieth century sociologists who were concerned with the alienation of man from the industrialized society were Émile Durkheim, Ferdinand Tönnies, Max Weber and Georg Simmel, each of whom lamented the gradual disintegration of the traditional society and the consequent loss of the sense of community. Modern man lost his sense of identity in this new and impersonal world and was uprooted from his age old traditions and
values. Perhaps the clearest expression of this theme is to be found in Durkheim’s concept of ‘anomie’ (derived from the Greek ‘anomia’, “lawlessness”) which reflects the conditions of social de-regulation and disintegration as described in his works “De la division du travail social” (1893) and his “Suicide” (1897). He made it clear that anomie referred to a property of the social and cultural structure and not to a property of individuals confronting that structure. However, since this concept became useful for understanding various forms of deviant behaviour, it was later used to refer to a subjective condition of individuals rather than of their environment. The concept of the anomie suicide was thus developed by Durkheim, which rests on the idea that only when there is a restraint upon human desires and aspirations, can the social community function and that “the passions must be limited. Only then can they be harmonised with the faculties and satisfied” (Spaulding and Simpson, 1951:246-254).
In a further elaboration of this concept in "De la division du travail social", Durkheim maintains that a sense of organic solidarity which could exist between an employer and his worker is no longer maintained. He noted, moreover, that the incidence of suicide increased both in times of poverty and prosperity. However, he was primarily interested in studying the effects of anomie during economically prosperous times and maintained that when social conditions are relatively stable, mobility is restricted and man aspires for limited goals. It is only when social conditions deteriorate and become unstable that these limits are removed. "The limits are unknown between the possible and the impossible, what is just and what is unjust, legitimate claims and hopes and those which are immoderate. Consequently, there is no restraint upon aspirations —— with increased prosperity, desires increase".

(Spaulding and Simpson, 1951:252).

The theory developed by Ferdinand Tönnies in his
Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft has had an important influence on the theory of alienation. Tönnies believes that a distinction should be made between the two bases of human association - thus "gesellschaft is a relationship contractual in nature, deliberately established by individuals who realise that they cannot pursue their proper interests effectively in isolation and therefore band together. The other named Gemeinschaft is a social unit which does not primarily come into being through conscious design: one finds oneself belonging to it as one belongs to one's home" (Pappenheim, 1950:66). According to Tönnies, society has moved away from an age where Gemeinschaft was predominant towards an age where Gesellschaft prevails and this change has been brought about due to the Industrial Revolution. With this change has come about the increasing mechanisation of human relations in the modern society.

Both Weber and Simmel extended further the theme of Durkheim. Weber postulated that it is not just the
industrial workers who were alienated from the means of production but also the bureaucrats, engineers, soldiers, and many others. It goes to his credit that he emphasized that the workers' alienation from the means of production (facilities) is but a single case of a general societal trend (Gerth and Mills, 1946:50). Alienation from facilities may lead to a sense of powerlessness which are reflected in such songs as sung by pre-Nazi German workers as for instance "We are like marbles rolled against the wall". This is an expression of man's sense of powerlessness and separation from social problems he does not understand.

According to Weber, both capitalism and socialism require bureaucratic organisation. Discipline and control, in Weber's opinion, are equally important to capitalism as well as socialism and in this sense some degree of alienation is unavoidable. The development of capitalism creates "an urgent need for stable, strict, intensive and calculable administration" (Weber, 1968:223).
The principle of rationality operates as a force independent of human controls and in Weber's analysis, rationality and technology have become reified - the impact of both on society may be modified but not completely brought under control.

Among the social theorists, it was Georg Simmel who influenced Lukács's interpretation of Marx and the first to emphasise the reified tendencies of modern society. The social world for him, consists of a large variety of cultural objects which confront man as alien, immutable forms. These objects belong to man's cultural development and are part of man himself, but now they attain a 'fetishistic' character as objects independent of man, becoming "more and more linked to each other in a self contained world which has increasingly fewer contacts with the subjective psyche and its desires and sensibilities" (Simmel, 1965:22). This split between the producer and the product is tied to the division of labour which in Simmel's opinion creates over specialised
functions so that the individual becomes "a mere cog in an enormous organisation of things and powers which tear from his hands all progress, spirituality, and value in order to transform them from their subjective form into the form of a purely objective life" (Simmel, 1950:422).

In the social sciences, the person who is chiefly responsible for bringing some order out of the chaos which has resulted while defining the term alienation, is Melvin Seeman. The theoretical discussion on this concept has been greatly influenced by Seeman's article 'On the Meaning of alienation' written in 1939. In this, Seeman has distinguished five and later six meanings or 'variants' of alienation as subjectively felt states of mind. The six meanings are the following:

- **Powerlessness**, derived by Seeman from the works of Marx and Weber, is defined as 'the expectancy or probability held by the individual that his own behaviour cannot determine the occurrence of the outcomes, or reinforcements, he seeks'.


- **Meaninglessness** characterised by "low expectancy that the satisfactory predictions about future outcomes of behaviour can be made".

- **Normlessness** characterised as "a high expectancy that socially unapproved means are necessary to achieve given goals".

- **Isolation** characterised by the alienated who in "the isolation sense are those who, like the intellectuals, assign low reward value to goals or beliefs, that are typically highly valued in the given society".

- **Self-strangement** which in Seeman's social learning theory means that "to be self-stranged is to be engaged in activities that are not rewarding in themselves".

- **Social Isolation** defined as "the individual's low expectancy for inclusion and social acceptance, expressed typically in feelings of loneliness or feelings of rejection or repudiation".
In Seeman's analysis, according to Munshi (1979:76) "one gets at best some aspects of individual psychological disposition --- one does not get the logical relations between the various dimensions selected by him". However, in spite of the fact that there have been some who have criticized Seeman's formulations, his contribution in this area cannot be minimized.

Scott (1963) describes alienation from a sociological point of view, in regard to its sources which are to be found in

a) lack of commitment to values
b) absence of conformity to norms
c) loss of responsibility in roles
d) deficiency in control of facilities

Though he lists them in this order, he begins in his essay to discuss them in a different order. Taking into consideration first, the lack of control of facilities, Scott postulates that the worker suffers psychologically because of his separation from the means of production. He adds,
moreover, much in the line of Seeman, that alienation arising from lack of control over the means of production leads to a sense of powerlessness. Next he comes to the lack of responsibility of roles as a social source of alienation. He limits his discussion to what he calls the 'primary status-carrying role'. Thus for instance, man in an occupation is believed to suffer from frustration because under an advanced division of labour he is not responsible for his role, because he is simply an employee responsible to somebody else - generally the higher authorities. Alienation as a lack of conformity to norms is for Scott, rooted in a mistrust of others because of a conflict of ethical codes. Lack of commitment to values is the last social source of alienation which Scott discusses in his article although it is the first that he lists. According to him, no society or culture is in a state of equilibrium with regard to values except the stagnant ones. Indeed, conflict in values is precisely the basis for modern democracy and compromise of conflicting values is its essence though
sometimes this compromise is bought at so high a price for man's intellectual underpinnings that it becomes a retrogressive force.

More recently, Robert Nisbet's (1966) use of the term 'alienation' as the 'antithesis and inversion' of the ideas which in seventeenth to nineteenth century European philosophy were expressed by the terms "progress and individualism", helps to bring some clarity in what is meant by alienation. The use of this term denotes the fact that man can no longer experience his world as 'known', that there are increasing aspects in his world that is alien to him and that he has become estranged from himself as well. Man feels limited not only in his personal existence but in his social existence as well, and this is what is implied when we say that he is alienated. According to Nisbet (1953:15) alienation "has become nearly as prevalent as the doctrine of enlightened self interest was two generations ago. It is more than a hypothesis, it is a perspective".
Harold Wilensky (1967:165) defines alienation in terms of the violence which the work role does to a man's self image. This suggestion is based on his own studies in the Detroit area which led him to postulate that the specific details of the work role, occupational group and organizational context are more important causes of work alienation than is social class alone. His conclusion about the vast majority of Americans, for example, is that they are neither strongly wedded to the job nor do they feel it to be an intense threat to their identity. To quote him:

"(If we relate) measures of alienation, attachment, and indifference, that top prized self-image, to specific attributes of work role and workplace, and to the careers and occupational groups that cut across them, we find that a work milieu that provides little freedom, a career that has been blocked and chaotic, and a stage of life where consumption pressures outrun income (all) foster work alienation. Control over the work, pace, opportunity for sociable talk on the job, and an orderly career foster work attachment".

One of the most recent contemporary American social scientists to deal with alienation is Amitai
Etzioni (1968:270). He characterises an alienating society as one which does not cater to the satisfaction of the basic human needs, particularly the need for control or power. Though he recognises the fact that it is difficult to prove that preindustrial societies were less alienating than modern ones, he claims that "large segments of the citizens of contemporary industrial societies feel powerless and excluded, and are uninformed about the societal and political processes which govern their lives".

To sum up, the discussion reveals that the writers differ not only in their definition of the term alienation but also in the assumptions that underlie these definitions. Thus two assumptions that are contrasting to each other are the normative and the subjective: first, those who follow closely the tradition laid down by Marx (like Marcuse and Fromm in U.S. and George Friedmann and Henri Lefebvre in France) treat alienation as a normative concept — "as an instrument for criticising the established
state of affairs in the light of some standard based on human nature, 'natural law' or moral principle" (Seeman, 1974). Moreover, Marxian theorists emphasize that alienation is an objective condition — therefore to be a 'happy robot' at work is to be alienated regardless of the acceptance of the work experience. On the other hand, some writers and particularly the American empiricists stress that alienation is a social psychological fact for it is the experience of powerlessness — the sense of estrangement. This assumption often underlies the description of deviant behaviour and is to be found in the work of such theoreticians as Robert Merton and Talcott Parsons.

In the subsequent paragraphs, we will see how alienation is manifested in the contemporary society.

B. Alienation in Contemporary Society:

In no sphere is the phenomenon of alienation more applicable than that of man's work today. Work is one of the most important social functions of an individual
and the centrality of the occupation in the life of an individual is a fact that requires little verification.

The problem of an individual searching for his identity and seeking his gratification through work has been engaging the minds of scholars for a long time. This becomes particularly important in view of the fact that for the vast majority of the population, work is necessary for one's very subsistence. Besides being a necessity, work does satisfy some of man's most important social needs. Vroom (1964) provides a useful overview of the various factors that are important as work motivations. According to him, man's salary which includes all sorts of financial remuneration associated with the term fringe benefits are of primary importance. A second motivational basis for work is the need to expend physical and/or mental energy. The third motivational basis is the need to produce goods and services which involves the intrinsic satisfaction a person derives from successfully manipulating some part of his environment. A fourth motivational basis is social interactions. Such kinds of
interaction enable a person to exert influence over others and both, to like and control and to be liked and controlled by others. The final basis for motivation, according to Vroom, is social status, and for most segments of the social structure, this status is gained by simply working.

In today's industrial-urban society, one wonders how far man derives satisfaction from his work for modern occupations are largely carried out in large scale organisations, "in work premises located apart from private homes .... The incumbent of a modern occupational role works with tools he does not personally own. Most facilities are owned by corporations (Johnson, 1966:243). In addition to the loss of control, there is a certain amount of specialisation which is inherent in the productive system. This necessitates the division of labour which gives rise to two main problems - (a) when work is fragmented and broken down into several components, it becomes very routine and as a consequence, people become bored
very easily; and (b) the greater the specialisation, the more difficult it becomes to coordinate the work of different persons in the same organisation. It is the monotony of the work and the fact that the individual finds it hard to take a great deal of pride in his own contribution, that tends to produce boredom (Johnson, 1966:238). In such an environment, an individual's autonomy is reduced to a minimum because work tasks are assigned largely from the point of view of efficiency and thus there is little scope for an individual to exercise his creativity or imagination. In the bureaucratic set-up, all the major occupational norms such as recruitment, training, remuneration, status and functions are all "influenced by the norms of general work efficiency which are oriented to the total enterprise rather than to individual occupations or individual practitioners" (Taylor, 1968:92). It is basically the loss of an individual's freedom when he works in any large formal bureaucratic organisation that gives rise to the problem of the loss of one's identity, and to a growing feeling
of a sense of powerlessness — a problem that is fundamental in present day society.

The legal framework of modern capitalism and the modern division of labour leads to the objective alienation of man from the product and processes of work. "The worker does not own the product or the tools of his production. In the labour contract he sells his time, energy, and skill into the power of others..... The product as the goal of his work is legally and psychologically detached from him, and this detachment cuts the nerve of meaning which work might otherwise gain from its technical processes. Even on the professional levels of white-collar work, not to speak of wage work and the lower white collar tasks, the chance to develop and use individual rationality is often destroyed by the centralisation of decision and the formal rationality that bureaucracy entails. The expropriation which modern work organisation has carried through thus goes far beyond the expropriation of ownership; rationality itself has been
expropriated from work and any total view and understand-
ing of this process. No longer free to plan his work, much less to modify the plan to which he is subordinated, the individual is to a great extent managed and manipulated in his work" (Mills, 1951:225,226).

Under modern conditions, for the majority of the employees there has been a steady decline in meaning in so far as the direct technical processes of work is concerned. However, other features of work - income, power and status - have gained in importance. It must be pointed out at this stage that man works essentially to earn a living, because cash nexus is the basis of society. Both Dubin (1958:4) and Bogardus (1954:164) have emphasised 'pay' as a distinct criterion of work and occupation. To Sahl (1944) an occupation is a 'specific activity' continuously pursued by an individual to obtain a steady flow of income. Apart from being a source of income, work is also a means of gaining status at the place of work and in the general community.
There is a differential status value attached to different types of work and in different occupational levels. For instance, the status associated in the society with a school teacher's job would be different than that associated with the bank job. Thus a bank job carries more status than a school-teacher's job in a modern society, but even within the bank, the job of an officer for instance, is more rewarding than that of a clerk. Also work carries various sorts of power over materials and tools and machines, and more importantly, over other people.

There is no clarity about the attributes associated with the concept of work. Friedman and Havghurst (in Moscow and Form, 1962:53-54), however, in their study of five occupational groups arrived at the following conclusions with regard to work (1) workers of lower skill and socio-economic status are likely to see their work as having no other meaning than that of
earning money, (2) the five occupational groups all value 'association' about equally as a meaning of work, (3) work is a routine which makes the time pass, is recognised about equally by all five groups, (4) all groups discover self-respect and secure respect or recognition from others by means of their work, (5) the physician showed a high awareness of the 'service' to others - meaning in their work, and (6) work is important as a source of intrinsic enjoyment for all four groups but there may be reliable differences between them in this respect.

The meaning of work has changed for the vast majority of employees. Work has no uniform meaning for "the underlying assumption is that people have experiences develop attitudes and form values in response to forces or pressures which their environment creates" (Inkeles, 1960:2). Thus for the person who cannot derive technical gratification from his work, it is the 'money' which he earns that is the compensating factor. The emphasis on
securing higher wages therefore, is but a reflection of
the loss of meaning that work has come to have for the
individual. As Taylor (1964:34) puts it, "success
notions and mechanisms of achievement are central to the
occupational specialisation of the urbanised society".
The modern industrial societies are thus characterised
by the dominance of secularism, industrial economy, the
diversification of the occupational structure, achieved
or open forms of stratification and social mobility.
"As the work sphere declines in meaning and gives no
inner direction and rhythm to life, so have community
and kinship circles declined as ways of 'fixing man into
society'..... No longer is the framework within which a
man lives fixed by traditional institutions. Mass
communications replace tradition as a framework of life"
(Mills, 1951:237-238). This holds true especially in
the metropolitan cities where the contacts one has are
short-lived and superficial as compared to the more inti-
mate relations one had with his family and neighbours in
the days prior to industrialisation. It is not merely
that work is alienating because the very goal towards which man is striving is legally and psychologically detached from him but the leisure time too in the more advanced countries of the West is "made hollow by status snobbery and the demands of emulation consumption" (Mills, 1951:236).

There are several reasons why alienation is prevalent amongst the modern white collar workers. Today's offices with their thousands of square feet of work area are not necessarily informal or friendly places. Congested lay-outs, lack of privacy, drag and beat work with 'production unit' like tempo certainly provides an environment where alienation can breed steadily (Mills, 1951:204). With increased tendency for mechanisation and automation, routine jobs requiring enormous effort in data preparation are on the increase. Giant offices have also resulted in building a huge cadre of clerical and typing personnel. The filing and despatch departments that accompany these 'paper-factories'
are also on the increase. The jobs associated with the white-collar occupations described above are certainly very monotonous and build alienation (Mills, 1951).

In the employee society as is prevalent today, not only is there a hierarchy of occupations, but there is also a hierarchy within each occupation. Thus among the people who are employed in formal organisations, we have the professionals, the executives, the white collar and lastly, the blue collar workers. Although the concept has most often been applied to the blue collar workers, it is evident that alienation can be experienced at all levels of the occupational structure. Generally in formal organisations, it is the high degree of centralisation and formalisation that promotes alienation which however, tends to decrease as one goes up the hierarchy. Thus it is presumed that the executives with relatively greater freedom for taking decisions, would experience less alienation, than say, the white collar workers, who in turn would presumably experience less
alienation than the blue collar workers at the very bottom of the hierarchy. In contrast to this, it is generally found that for the professionals who are self employed, "work is something of a nearly total way of life" (Taylor 1968:309). The work of the professional is a dominating life interest unlike the work of most salaried employees, who especially at the lower level, seek in their occupations, remuneration to provide themselves with a living. This is not to say that professionals do not experience any feelings of alienation, whatsoever. However, their focus of alienation is likely to be something other than work.

Innovativeness is one of the most rewarding features of one's work. The professionals, working on their own, are likely to have maximum opportunity for creative expression. Perhaps in case of the professional, alienation from work is at its minimum mainly because there is a deep personal involvement in the form of many years in education and training.
The professional is the master of himself and of his own acts and not controlled and manipulated by an impersonal system such as technology. Moreover, he sees the ultimate meaning and purpose in his work, since there is no one else but him who can be responsible for the final product. In addition to this, he also has complete opportunities for self expression and therefore, has little chance to become self-estranged for lack of being able to exercise control and initiative in his work.

The professional stands at one end of the continuum, as it were and at the other extreme, we have the much researched about assembly line worker who is supposed to experience a high degree of alienation from his work. This is because as Blauner (1964) points out, in today's industry, the modern worker, at all levels, is separated from ownership and that the vast majority of all workers at all levels are separated from the decision making process. As a consequence, he feels no connection between the parts (his own work) and the whole (the complete
product or service). This comes about due to the increased division of labour which reduces the size of the individual worker's contribution to the total product. Such an assembly line worker, therefore, has little chance for self expression and all of these conditions make him so depersonalised and detached that they ultimately lead to his feeling self estranged. The self estranged worker is detached from his work, viewing it as a means to an end and having no pride in what he is doing, nor any feeling of intrinsic satisfaction from it.

In between these two extremes, we have a host of other workers working in a variety of occupations who experience varying degrees of alienation. However, next to the assembly line worker, it is the people who are employed in formal large scale organisations that are bureaucratic, that experience a high degree of alienation. Within the broader framework of class struggle in the Marxian interpretation, bureaucracy is one specific instance of the general process of alienation, a concept
which is central to Marxist thought.

In contrast to the professionals - like the doctors, lawyers, chartered accountants, etc. - who work in an independent realm and presumably experience a very low degree of alienation, it is those people in professions such as banking, which cannot be practised independently that are likely to experience a high degree of alienation. In contrast, although, even the professional teacher has to accept his superior's authority in many areas, he nevertheless has his own free and independent zone of decision making in the privacy of the classroom. It is precisely this real autonomy that makes employment in a bureaucracy bearable for the teacher. The content of his teaching is his to determine, however, defined the curriculum. The banking industry, however, by its very nature, has been a closed system. The organisational set-up has been highly bureaucratic. Perhaps the most striking feature is the degree of control over the occupationally related activities of...
the bank employees which is exercised by the employer, i.e. by the policy makers in each banking organisation (the Government in the case of the nationalised banks). The hierarchy of authority in a bureaucracy, though necessary for coordination, often produces among its lower echelons profound feelings of dissatisfaction and apathy which impede identification with the organisation's objectives.

This then is the picture of the contemporary industrialised society, where the rising criticism of modern industrial work is its very dehumanisation. Work for the majority of the people has merely become a means for the satisfaction of other needs. Thus the increased division of labour, greater specialisation in work and the decline in the importance of the primary group are the important reasons for the growth of alienation in the modern industrialised society. In the subsequent paragraphs, we will study the relevance of alienation in the Indian context.
C. The Relevance of Alienation in the Indian Context:

The primary reason for emphasising the relevance of alienation in the Indian context is because the Indian development has been of a very special nature. The process of modernisation started when India was a colony and gained momentum after independence. It is in this context that it would be worthwhile to begin with the question as to whether the phenomenon of alienation is present in all the societies? In Western societies along with the complex organisation of production, there has been a decline in the role of the primary institutions. So perhaps when a society is confronted with mass production, anonymity and the decline of the primary relationships, the phenomenon of alienation may be more noticeable (Pearlin, 1962). It is in this background that the incidence of alienation in a society which is developing itself, may be of great interest. Do the developed, the underdeveloped and the societies in the transitional stage experience the phenomenon of alienation alike?
The transition from a traditional society to a modernised one has begun in India as in many other developing nations. In India, modernisation started mainly with the advent of the British rule. Thus as Yogendra Singh points out, "the Western contact had a special historicity which brought about many far reaching changes in culture and social structure of the Indian society .... The basic direction of this contact was towards modernisation, but in the process a variety of traditional institutions also get reinforcement" (Singh, 1973:202)

He further adds that "micro-structures like caste, family and village community have retained their traditional character; caste has shown unexpected elasticity and latent potential for adaptation with modern institutions, such as democratic participation, political party organisation and trade unionism, and it persists unabatedly. Joint family loyalties and particularistic norms continue to prevail .... On the Indian scene it appears that, despite continual tensions and contradictions, chances of the institutional break-
down are minimal; democratic values have fairly institutionalised in the political system, cultural gap which has recently widened between various levels of the elite does not go far enough to introduce major conflict about the ideology of modernisation. Caste, which represents institutionalised form of inequality sanctioned by tradition now fights battles against inequality and egalitarianism by its own rational self-transformation into associations, many independent or categorical values of tradition have shown a surprising degree of elasticity to adopt themselves to the cultural system of modernisation" (Singh, 1973:200,213). Thus the modernisation which has occurred in India is in a different setting (Singh, 1978:168). Therefore, it is likely to face problems which may not be similar to the problems faced by the fully industrialised society.

An important attribute of a modernised society is individualism, by which is meant an active concern to strive to find one's own identity. Moreover, it is
also one of the pre-conditions for breeding the feelings of alienation. In India, traditionally the dominant themes of cultural values "were characterised by 'hierarchy', 'holism', 'continuity' and 'transcendence'... the contact of India with the West had indeed both cultural and structural ramifications which have led to the evolution of contemporary challenges in our cultural values" (Singh, 1978:179,183). India, however, is still struggling in the process of industrial change to pass from Riesman's 'tradition-directed' stage (representing the personality type of a society where sanctions and established norms govern the pattern of action) to the 'inner-directed' stage (representing the individualistic action orientation and elements of radicalism in behaviour norms). Thus unlike in the highly industrialised countries of the West, where the individuals are continually engaged in a quest for identity, in this country the emphasis on 'individualism' is not equally stressed. (Dubey, 1975). According to Ross (1973:286) also
"As the educational system of a society evolves to assist children to take over adult roles, it can only be judged in terms of the type of society the children will meet as adults. In the highly industrialised and individualistic countries of the West, the qualities which educators try to develop are initiative, independence and creativeness for these are the qualities which they believe will best enable the child to survive in a highly competitive world. But these are precisely the characteristics which will make a child unfit for life in a simple, tightly structured society, such as the isolated Indian village, where he must fit into a niche in a system of closely integrated primary groups - his family, caste and community".

Further in India, the modern concept of achievement is of recent origin. The Indian society has been viewed as an ascriptive society where the status of an individual is determined by his birth and heredity. (Dubey, 1975:25). Instead of a pragmatic perspective, the 'fatalist' outlook is still dominant in the country as the bulk of the masses still feel that fate plays a greater role in the determination of one's status than personal merit and achievement. This being so, "the role of an individual is invariably decided by the
existing social image; unless one is conditioned through continuous suggestions of these images, one can hardly decide one’s role; actually the roles are determined in the social context” (Ganguly, 1977:23). Thus for example, due to the high rate of unemployment in the country, it is inculcated in the children at an early age that one cannot be selective in choosing one’s occupation for not all are fortunate in getting a job after their heart’s desire. Since the people in India have to compete in an employment market in which the supply of jobs is far below the demand, they become accustomed to accepting the inevitable. Even the routineness of work and the monotony that accompanies such work is accepted graciously. The lack of authority to take decisions is not often questioned because the very need to assert oneself is not felt. The concept of ‘moksha’, ‘dharma’ and ‘karma’ has lowered the levels of human aspiration and “placed a premium on passive acceptance rather than on amelioration of the human situation whether by hard work or social reform” (Weber, 1938).
The emotional support given by the family, neighbourhood setting and friends has also an important role to play in determining the feelings of alienation. The Indian society is often characterised by 'familism' which refers to "the deep influence of the family and parents in the life of the average Indian" (Dubey, 1975:187). The family fulfills many important social needs of the individual. Thus as Gore (1968:121) has reported in his study, the two most important reasons why persons choose the joint family are (1) its value as a system of social security, and (2) its value as a 'primary group' - a system of effective relations. The joint family in particular enables the individual to "identify himself with the group to such an extent that his aspirations and fulfillment are in terms of the family as a group ... This group orientation and group dependence are important aspects of the individual's personality .... There is a richness of emotional experience in the joint family where the members are identified with this common entity" (Gore, 1977:25). However, the "expectations of children
would be different if they grow up in nuclear families.

Nuclear family leaves the child to his own devices, gives him opportunity to experiment with his behaviour and learn from these experiences instead of depending on people as he would in the environment of a large joint family" (Dayal, 1978:58). In fact as Vaid(1966:138) has demonstrated in his Kota study, a very significant factor in enhancing the employees' commitment to the industrial way of life was their perception of the security afforded to them by the factory system. Thus it was perceived by the employees that the basic security against unemployment and illness etc. was provided by the joint family; while the need for social intercourse and emotional security were met within the caste group and village community. It was seen that unless the factory system is able to provide alternative systems to meet these needs in the new environment, the workers are more likely to continue keeping their ties with the traditional system.
Thus in the Indian society which is on its way to industrialisation and which is still having the advantages of certain primary groups, the phenomenon of alienation may not manifest itself in the same manner as it is manifested in the fully industrialised society dominated by secondary groups. In the next section, I propose to give a brief review of the literature by describing some select studies from the advanced countries of the West and some select studies that have been carried out in India.

SECTION II

Review of the Literature:

In recent sociological literature the context in which the term alienation has been most frequently applied is that of the relation of the individual to his work. However, the conditions of modern work and particularly those in industry are alienating because the
individual is deprived of control over the means and product of his labour and therefore, he loses something in and of himself. Empirical research on alienation in the social sciences has been concentrated on two main areas: the world of work and the political system (Geyer and Schweitzer, 1976:27). Since it is the alienation from work which is of primary interest in this study, the focus of alienation is directed accordingly.

Unfortunately, there has been no uniformity in the way "alienation from work" or "alienated work" is defined, although the influence of Marx on those who have used this concept of alienation from work is very obvious. According to Schacht (1970:169) such alienation "is variously conceived in terms of dissatisfaction with one's job, the experience of one's work activity as not being intrinsically rewarding and its experience as being insufficiently self-directed, meaningful and self expressive".
A. Selected Studies from the Advanced Capitalist Societies:

Much of the early empirical research on alienation focussed on man's relationship to the machine - a characteristic that stemmed directly from the influence of Marx. The notion of alienation as conceived in terms of subjectively experienced powerlessness to control one's work activities, has been studied in a wide variety of blue-collar and white-collar jobs.

It goes to the credit of Clark (1959) who first argued that it is much more meaningful to study alienation in terms of a specific situation i.e., a work setting. He defined alienation as "the degree to which man feels powerless to achieve the role he has determined to be rightfully his in specific situations" (Clark 1959:849). The membership of an agricultural cooperative organisation was studied as a social system and the results indicated that alienation is highly related to the member's satisfaction with his organisation.
Pearlin (1962) in his study of alienation of nursing personnel, focussed his study on three aspects of the organisation of a mental hospital: its authority structure, its opportunity structure and work groups. Amongst his findings were the following:

1) Intense alienation occurred most frequently where authority figures and their subordinates stood in great positional disparity to each other, where authority was communicated in such a way as to prevent or discourage exchange and where the superior exercised his authority in relative absentia.

2) Alienation was highest among limited achievers and quite low among high achievers, but alienation accompanied dissatisfaction with pay, promotion and social mobility among high achievers, while satisfaction with these factors among limited achievers was accompanied by a relative lack of alienation.
3) Alienation occurred less among those who had extra work friendship relations with coworkers especially when friends were part of the same face-to-face work group.

Other studies (Neal and Rettig, 1963; Lipsitz, 1964; Seligman, 1965; Dowdy, 1966; Smith, 1968) have similarly demonstrated that the resultant effect of powerlessness is dissatisfaction not only with the work itself but also with the organisation.

In particular, interest has been largely focussed on the automated industry, where the individual is farthest removed from the products of his labour. Castillo (1967) has drawn attention to the contradictory findings that have emerged concerning the effect of automation on the worker. Some studies have revealed that because of the menial nature and routineness of the work feelings of impersonalisation and alienation had increased among the employees and there was a consequent loss of personal identification with the work and loss of control over
destiny (Faunce, 1958; Champion and Dager, 1968; Levens-stein, 1968). On the other hand, a study of manual workers in four different factory technologies revealed that in automated industry the alienating tendencies of modern factory technology are showing a reverse trend: alienation tends to decrease as employees gain a new dignity from responsibility and a sense of individual function (Blauner, 1972, 1984). Recent studies have also shown that 'automation introduces basic changes in the man-machine relationship and may reduce the amount of alienation and anomie characteristic of earlier stages in the development of industrial technology (Faunce, 1968).

This shows that the machine in and by itself is not a crucial factor in causing alienation — for man's ability to use the machine intelligently and to gain respect and dignity in the workgroup situation are also crucial.

Alienation has also been conceived in terms of "a feeling of disappointment" with one's job. Thus Aiken and Hage(1966) consider alienation to exist to the extent
that "one is not 'satisfied' with such things as one's position relative to other workers, the recognition extended to one by one's superiors, and the degree to which one's job measures up to one's career expectations". Thus they are more concerned with the professional status of the job than with the nature of the work performed. According to them, the limitations imposed by the occupation of one's position in the employment hierarchy causes dissatisfaction which leads to alienation from work.

They studied the relationship between two types of alienation (which they defined as 'alienation from work' and 'alienation from expressive relations') and two structural properties of the organisation—centralisation and formalisation. The sample was obtained from the professional staff and management of 16 welfare organisations. They defined alienation from work in a quite limited way, as "reflecting feelings of disappointment with career and professional development and with the inability to fulfill professional norms". Alienation from expressive relations was defined as "reflecting dissatisfaction in
social relations with supervisors and fellow workers”. In general, they found high degree of formalisation and centralisation in the organisation accompanied by greater alienation of both types. Alienation of both types was related to the absence of opportunity to participate in decision-making and to the presence of strict rules (rigidly enforced) governing jobs.

The importance of the work group situation has been studied not only among the blue collar workers but also among the white collar and professional workers as well. Alienation is found to exist in highly centralised and highly formalised white collar organisations. Thus Miller (1967) in his study examined the relationship between the type of organisational structure in which the professional performs his work activity and his experiencing feelings of alienation from work. This relationship was explored for each of four empirical indicators of organisational structure for all professionals and separately for professionals differing in
length and type of professional training and for professionals working in two very different organisational units. In general, the findings revealed that alienation from work was a consequence of the professional bureaucratic dilemma for industrial scientists and engineers. Differences in type of supervision, freedom of research choice, professional climate and company encouragement were associated with the degree of work alienation in the expected manner.

In contrast, studies have also shown that those who do not value work activity are more alienated from the job situation than those who do. Thus Zurcher et al (1968) found that employees in a bank were less alienated from work the longer they had been working in the bank, the higher their position, the more satisfied they were with their jobs, and when they planned to make the bank a career. Moreover, the results indicated that particularistic individuals tended to be alienated from work in the universalistically oriented formal organisation of
the bank. This suggests that the compatibility of the individual's value orientations with the expectations of the work organisation is the determinant of alienation from work.

A number of writers in line with Marx have focussed on the degree to which an individual finds the work he does intrinsically rewarding or enjoyable. Seeman (1987) for instance, has examined the consequences of alienation in work among manual workers in a Swedish city - such consequences as are commonly ascribed by the critics of modern industrial society as intergroup hostility, anomia, political withdrawal, status seeking and a sense of powerlessness. As a measure of work alienation, he used a scale comprising of seven items all of which asked essentially whether the respondent found his work engaging and rewarding in itself. The notion that alienated labour results in such outcomes received little support, which made Seeman conclude that "mass society theory and neo-Marxian theory appear to underestimate
by far the social psychological subtleties of the work process. He feels that what is needed is a closer look at the work process as it is lived by the worker, a detailed description of work experience that will explain just how the worker defines his day in terms of gratifications and deprivations. These results may also have something to do with the conditions of life apart from the job in such a society.

In a relatively recent study, Seeman (1972) attempted to characterise the alienation of French workers (using a parallel sample of American workers) in the Spring which preceded the events of 1968 May. Various forms of alienation and their likely correlates were examined (e.g. political knowledge, organisational membership, left-right political stance). Seeman concluded on the basis of his data that powerlessness was the main problem. Both manual and white-collar workers were conspicuously low in their sensed control, and it was this low sensed control which correlated with the politically relevant variables.
Robert Blauner (1964:15) has formulated the notion of "alienation in the work process" as being a "quality of personal experience". According to him, "Alienation exists when workers are unable to control their immediate work processes, to develop a sense of purpose and function which connects their jobs to the overall organisation of production, to belong to integrated industrial communities, and when they fail to become involved in the activity of work as mode of personal self expression".

With the exception of the third factor - inability of the workers to belong to integrated industrial communities - all the other factors used by Blauner relates the alienation of the individual primarily to his work setting. His thesis was that the character of the industry had a strong impact on the presence or absence of alienation from work. According to him, the four main factors which can be identified as giving any industry its' 'distinctive characteristics' were:

1) Type of technology
2) Extent and methods of division of labour
3) Extent of bureaucratisation of the social organisation
4) Economic structure and environment
Since he felt that the type of technology was the most important factor in determining an industry's characteristics, he studied workers in four industries with four different kinds of technology - printing, textiles, an automobile factory and an automated chemical plant. He used four major dimensions of alienation - powerlessness, meaninglessness, isolation, and self estrangement.

A number of other studies have supported Blauner's conclusions. Thus for instance, Arthur Kornhauser (1965) found that the mental health of the worker is directly related to the skill level of his job. A comparison of the factory workers by occupational categories revealed that the higher the occupation (in respect to skill and associated attributes of variety, responsibility and pay) the better the average mental health. His major contention is that "poorer mental health occurs whenever conditions of work and life lead to continuing frustration by failing to offer means for perceived progress toward attainment of strongly desired
goals which have become indispensable elements of the individual's self identity as a worthwhile person.

Persistent failure and frustration bring lowered self-esteem and dissatisfaction with life, often accompanied by anxieties social alienation and withdrawal, a narrowing of goals and curtailing of aspirations - in short, tendencies toward the varied feelings, attitudes and behaviours we have assessed as constituting poor mental health" (Kornhauser, 1968:260).

These have been some of the most important studies done in the field of alienation in the advanced countries of the West. However, most of the studies are social-psychological and not sociological and as Munshi (1979:76) puts it, even in Seeman's work which constitutes a land-mark in contemporary sociology, "one looks in vain for the social process which affect the individual in one or the other manner".

B. Selected Studies from the Indian Context:

The beginnings of modern technology in India can
be traced to the middle of the 19th century. This was the period when the factories were established mainly in the urban centres such as Bombay, Calcutta, Ahmedabad and working force comprised mainly of the rural migrants to the industrial towns. It is interesting to note that on the academic side, the interest in the Indian factories and labour relations was first displayed by foreign economists. Thus scholars like Anstey (1957), Broughton (1924) and Buchanan (1934) noted that the workers in the factories located in the cities were those who were pushed out of their villages because of the sheer poverty that prevailed therein. Since these migrants were absolute newcomers to the urban areas, they could not easily adjust to the factory work and the city life. Consequently, there was a high rate of absenteeism and turnover amongst these workers which led the Western social scientists (Kerr et al, 1960; Moore, 1951; Myers, 1958) to conclude that the Indian workers with their perceived commitment to the traditional
social system, were uncommitted to the modern industrial system. This thesis about the lack of commitment how­ever, led many Indian and Western scholars to concentrate their attention on studying the Indian workers' commit­ment to industry in the context of their social and cul­tural life. Thus as Sheth (1977) has pointed out in his review article, subsequent studies of workers in differ­ent parts of India (Lambert in Poona, 1963; Vaid in Kota, 1968; Sharma in Bombay, 1974; Sheth in Gujerat, 1988; Sengupta in West Bengal, 1975) have exploded the earlier myth regarding commitment among Indian workers. Most of these studies offer evidence to show that the Indian industrial worker is fairly committed to his job and to the industrial way of life. In fact, Sheth (1987) offers evidence to argue that traditional institutions such as joint family may facilitate rather than hinder the worker's stability in his factory job.

Studies of what the Indian workers want in their jobs have been conducted mainly by psychologists
(Ganguly, 1961; Lahiri, 1966; Mukherjee, 1968) and as Sengupta (1970:33) puts it, these studies "overwhelmingly bring out the fact that the workers accord primary significance to the extrinsic job factors (salary, security etc) and not to the intrinsic ones (challenging jobs, autonomy etc.). According to Ganguly (1961:32) the workers' primary need "is an adequate and steady income emanating from a steady job". Other studies have shown that satisfaction in work varies with the status within the organisational hierarchy and the challenge posed by the work technology and promotion opportunities (Lambert, 1963; Sharma, 1973; Vaid, 1968). As industrial work becomes progressively routinised and monotonous in the wake of increasing automation and mechanisation, various categories of workers are supposed to lose interest in their jobs and hence feel alienated (Sheth, 1970). This problem of alienation among workers has lately drawn the attention of social scientists and practitioners in India.
Despite the importance attached to alienation, very few studies have been done in this area. Unfortunately, there is a dearth of empirical research in India. In a country like ours where the rate of unemployment is sky-high, there is bound to exist strong feelings of alienation. Da Costa’s (1971) survey on the Indian youth is a significant step in the attempt to study alienation. In all, 2,000 youth from all over the country were interviewed between 18 and 24 years of age. The findings indicate great uncertainty in the life of the Indian youth and the presence of enough alienation from the rat race.

Sharma (1974) too in his study of alienation among industrial workers of an automobile plant in India attempts to assess the relationship between alienation and a number of sociologically significant variables. His findings indicate that among the work related factors, it is seniority and occupational aspirations that are
most significantly related to alienation. Besides this, favourableness to the Company and involvement with the community one lives in, are also related to alienation.

More recently, Srivastava (1978) has tried to examine the extent of alienation among blue collar workers. His study reveals that the lower one goes down the organisationally hierarchy, the lesser are the efforts put in by an individual to improve his career prospects. People working at lower levels of the organisational hierarchy thus have lower aspirations as compared to those working at the upper levels, and lastly, the tendency to become fatalistic in the orientation to work and to life increases as one goes down the level of organisational hierarchy.

In his study of alienation of the middle manager Mehta (1978) used the discrepancy between perception of work climate and the desired work climate as a measure of alienation. He related his finding with the political
alienation and confirmed that the two types of alienation are related to each other. Similarly, more authoritarian persons also appeared to be more alienated from their work environment.

Pestonjee's (1970) study was carried out to explore the possible influences of occupational levels, alienation and security on job satisfaction of blue-collar workers. The results indicated that job satisfaction is influenced by occupational level, by high and low levels of alienation and by high and low levels of security-insecurity. Thus "lower positions in the organisation may stifle initiative, and the urge to display one's skill, setting the pace of work, participation in decision making processes etc. The denial of such extrinsic factors may alienate the individual organisationally and at a later stage socially" (Pestonjee, 1970:13).

Many attempts are being made to reduce the worker's alienation by redesigning the work technology in specific situations and also by involving workers in the managerial
process. Unfortunately, as Sheth (1977:83) puts it, "in this vital area of industrial sociology, scholars seem to have shown very little willingness to build their generalisations on empirical evidence" and "our present knowledge regarding the motivation and satisfaction of Indian workers (as well as other industrial men) is extremely limited" (Sheth, 1979:107).

SECTION III

Need for the Present Study:

The review of the literature indicates that despite the importance attached to alienation, very few studies have been done in this area in India. Moreover, even the few studies that have been done, have been restricted largely to the blue-collar workers. In view of this, ample scope exists for studying the alienation problems of different groups under different circumstances. I have therefore selected the employees of the banking industry, since the bank job enjoys a great deal of prestige in present
society. Further with the nationalisation of the banks, it has become a large scale organisation, and therefore, I felt that it would provide me with an opportunity to examine how alienation is manifested. Studying the alienation problems in the work setting, can therefore, provide an opportunity for locating the forces, processes or events from which people feel alienated and thus provide an opportunity to trace out the roots of their feelings.

This study attempts to identify and elaborate on the relative importance of the social, personal and work background factors that contribute to alienation in the banking industry. At the very outset, it must be emphasized that this study is not an attempt to explain the issues of ideological commitment of the bank employees. The nature of this study is exploratory-cum-descriptive. It is a sociological study within the framework of work alienation as conceived in industrial sociological studies.
of modern management. The concept of alienation as employed in the present study is defined as the incapacity of the individual to experience an intrinsic pride or meaning in his work. Any individual who is unable to find "self rewarding activities to engage him" and who does not experience an "intrinsic pride or meaning in his work" is experiencing the type of alienation described by Melvin Seeman (1959) as "self estrangement".

The major objectives of the present study are to examine the relationship between:

1) alienation and various social background factors like age, education, the kind of family one has been born in etc.

2) alienation and the conditions of work including such factors as the extent of participation in decision-making, the bureaucratic set-up in which the bank functions etc.

In addition to the two main objectives, I have also made an attempt to understand the phenomenon of alienation in the background of the cultural ethos of the Indian society. I hope that this understanding will provide some insight into the behaviour and attitudes of individuals in modernising society.
The study has been presented in the following order. Chapter I deals with the Introduction and the Problem Formulation. Chapter II describes the Banking Scene in India today. Chapter III discusses the Design of Research which includes the measures used, sampling, data collection and the methods of analysis. The next four Chapters describe the empirical evidence obtained in the study. Chapter IV deals with the Social Background of the Respondents, while Chapter V describes the Conditions of Work. Chapter VI deals with the Perceptions of Work and the Work Environment. Chapter VII describes the Select Interviews of a few respondents. Lastly, Chapter VIII gives the Summary and Conclusions of the study. This is followed by the Appendices and Bibliography.