CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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The nature of goal-oriented behaviour and nature of commitment are discussed in this chapter. In addition, goal-related, commitment-related and household energy consumption related researches are presented.

Gross et al.[48] and Deacon and Firebaugh[27] conceptualised family as an open social system comprised of managerial and psycho-social or personal subsystems. The managerial subsystem is concerned with the instrumental behaviour of the family and deals with the allocation of family resources which forms the basis for family functioning behaviour. Therefore, for the purposes of this research, this subsystem from the total family system is utilized as a basis to explore family goal commitment.

1. Goal-Oriented Behaviour and Related Researches

Goal is a condition or a state of being not yet attained which an individual or a group is trying to or could try to attain. Edwards[32] states that family behaviour can be subdivided into two areas of study of which the second focuses on problem solving or goal-oriented behaviour.

Goals give direction to family behaviour. In addition the sequence of goals one chooses also gives direction for living[20]. If the family is aware and clear as to what its

objectives in life are and as to what it wants to achieve, the optimum use of its resources to attain the goals through management becomes a possibility through deliberation rather than through chance. Heckhausen[50] states that:

> ...direction of performance, goals ... are implicit in the behaviour of a motivated person ... however explicit goal-setting occurs . . . when several possible goals present themselves and thus necessitate a choice . . . or when the future performance phase appears to be specifically difficult or unsafe for various reasons as after previous failure or if long time spans have to be bridged or intricately scheduled. In such cases, explicit goal setting seems to represent a technique for securing and insuring the attainment of the goal by an act of intention (pp.83-84).

The family formulates its goal complex through its goal setting activity. The content of the goal complex varies from time to time and the importance attached to goal also changes, thus resulting in a shuffling of the hierarchical placement of the goals. At any particular time in the stage of life cycle, some goals may be nearing completion, some may be formed, some may be deleted and some may be being strived for. Some goals may endure for the life-time.

An individual's behaviour is directed towards certain ends and that once the ends are chosen the individual possesses positive intentions to act.[19] In other words, it means that once objectives are chosen these are pursued to completion as far as possible. Further, it was pointed out that intents are developed gradually. The strength or intensity

of desire attached to a goal determines the effort extended
in its pursuit. In this process one becomes committed to
actions designed to attain goals. Explicit goal-setting,
which is the outcome of deliberation, is a means for the
attainment of goals.

Though various concepts of home management have been
identified and explored, the concepts related to family
goal-oriented behaviour have not been much investigated.
Since early nineteen sixties attention was paid, abroad, to
researches related to the concept of goals. However, stray
efforts were made here and there in the late nineteen
sixties and seventies in this direction in India. General
aspirations (Stevens[106], Loomis[69], Aughinbaugh[6], McMillan[72]),
location related family goals (Heinzerling[51], Scarpati[100]),
and the relationship of goals to other managerial practices
such as decision-making and planning (Poulston[92], Westbrook[110],
Dhawale[29]) were explored initially.

Fitzsimmons, et al.[34] have related family goals to
major financial decisions. About 896 families were inter-
viewed concerning nine goal areas: financial security and
growth, level of living, housing and environment, education,
family relationships and management, health, community
involvement, income and occupation, and retirement. The
first five years revealed a period of intensive goal-setting;
existence of goal patterns seemed to be related to years of

marriage. Families reported that they had attained about 95% of their self identified family relationship and management, and housing related goals, slightly less their health related goals and about 80% of their education related goals. Factors that seemed to influence the number of goals identified at each stage of life cycle were: (1) husbands' education, (2) income at the time of marriage, (3) current income, (4) net worth, (5) employment status, (6) husbands' occupation and (7) household composition. It was observed that those families with a strong goal orientation tried to seek the attainment of these goals through wife's employment or that the additional income induced these families to establish more goals.

Agrawal[3] related family goals with the managerial process of planning. The main goal areas included in her study were: (1) financial security, (2) standard of living, (3) family housing, (4) education, (5) personality development and (6) retirement. She found that the families gave topmost priority to education related goals; second and third priorities were given to financial security and personality development goals. Financial problem was the most dominating constraint in goal attainment in relation to all goal areas. The extent of goal attainment in financial security, standard of living and family housing was influenced by the income level of the family. Relatively greater proportion of goals were attained by high

income families than middle income families.

Thomas and Paolucci[108] explored goals chosen for un-committed time by wives of male under-graduate students. They found that those women were primarily interested in goals related to furthering their education. They received strong support from their husbands to goals for personal fulfilment i.e. further education and creative activities. However they were less supportive of their wives' goals in the areas of family volunteer work and paid employment.

It was reported that socio-economic class[23], income level[74] and even race[67,11] were associated with variations in goals.

2. Conceptualization of Commitment and Related Researches

The concept of commitment is a widely used term. Many have attempted to elaborate this concept. The under-lying idea in all the varied explanations is that it is a psychological channelising of behaviour to follow a consistent line of action. The term commitment is used to account for the fact that people engage in consistent lines of activity.[36] Line of action refers to behaviours which are organised around the attainment of an objective[58]. Consistent behaviour is followed by people because activity of some kind is considered as right and proper and

because it is morally wrong and/or practically inexpedient to do otherwise.

Abramson et al.[1] conceptualise commitment as a common element in social power. They point out that lines of action rather than single act is required for the attainment of objectives. Three kinds of lines of action are identified by them, viz., open, closed and committed lines of action. "Committed lines are those lines of action the actor feels obligated to pursue by force of penalty . . . bring an actor close to the realisation of his goal . . . are sequence of action with penalties and costs so arranged as to guarantee their selection. . . . Penalties may range from pangs of conscience to criminal prosecution" (p.16). They associate the presence of sanctions with decisions to act or remain committed. They state that:

> Commitment is variously understood as the heigh-
> tening of the probability that an action will be
> undertaken, an ordering of the likelihood of
> actions or a condition of heightened predictab-
> ility of action (p.16).

Kiesler and Sakumura[63] have defined commitment as the pledging or binding of the individual to behaviour acts. In sociological discussion one often comes across the concept of commitment. Becker[9] says:

> Sociologists use it in analysis of both individual
> and organisational behaviour . . . as a descriptive
> concept to mark out forms of actions characteristic
> of particular kind of people or groups . . . a wide

variety of phenomena: power, religion, occupational recruitment, bureaucratic behaviour and so on (p.32).

Kanter[59] suggested that commitment is a consideration which arises at the intersection of organisational requisites and personal experience. Her premise was that in order to achieve group objectives it is imperative that all the members are positively involved in the efforts directed towards the objectives. She visualised commitment as:

> . . . the willingness of social actors to give
> their energy and loyalty to social systems . . .
> the process through which individual interests
> become attached to the carrying out of socially
> organised patterns of behaviour which are seen
> as fulfilling those interests, as expressing the
> nature and needs of the person (pp.499-500).

She further states that there are three types of commitment to link individuals to a social system. (1) Cognitive - continuance commitment which is "commitment to social roles or positions with no affectivity or evaluation attached to the role", (2) Cathectic-cohesion commitment which is "attachment to social relationships which absorbs the individual's fund of affectivity but does not have internal moral imperatives", and (3) evaluative-control commitment which is "commitment to norms, values and inner convictions which morally obligate the person" (p.501). Sacrifice and investment supported cognitive-continuance commitment, renunciation and communion supported cathectic-cohesion commitment, and mortification and surrender

supported evaluative-control commitment. These three sets of dissociative and associative processes distinguish successful from unsuccessful commitment requiring organisation.

Cognitive-continuance commitment is extended by an individual because he finds what is profitable to individual interests is bound up within the system and therefore he commits himself to a role. There is a 'profit' associated with continued participation and a 'cost' associated with leaving. The concept of sacrifice identified by Kanter seemed to operate on the basis of a principle from cognitive consistency theories:

> . . . the more it "costs" a person to do something, the more "valuable" he will have to consider it, in order to justify the psychic "expense" and remain internally consistent (p.505).

She further theorised that commitment to a particular system tied an individual to that and the sacrifices and investments thus made for certain ends deprive: them of other ways of allocating the resources for other ends which are less pressing. Thus sacrifices and investments form two components of cognitive-continuance commitment.

Commitment exhibits an element of voluntariness to the extent that it results in cost implications for the person.[40] This means that, the greater the cost involved, the more committed an individual will be to a particular line of action. If the costs involved in not being committed are

of lesser magnitude, an individual will opt for other lines
of action which he may find more profitable. The decision
to remain committed or not, to a particular end will depend
on how much of freedom of choice the individual has had
initially in deciding to engage in a particular line of
action. This in turn is influenced by the value system of
the individual.

Becker [9] explained that commitment comes into being when
a person by making a 'side-bet' links extraneous interest
with a consistent line of activity. He also visualises
commitment as an act consciously and deliberately, or un-
consciously and without realisation accomplished where an
individual because of a series of 'side-bets' of value finds
himself hard to lose them and therefore sticks to the act.
Then, the individual because of his value orientations
invests his resources in some activity. If the 'side-bets'
are not strong enough or lack staying power, the individual's
commitment weakens and a commitment based on 'side-bets'
stabilizes his behaviour to some other ends. Gerard's [40] view
also coincides with Becker's in that the cost implications
are considered by the individual in his act of being
committed to an end.

He observes further that:

The concept of commitment furnishes the requisite
terms . . . out-lines the mechanisms by which
past actions link extraneous interest to a line
of activity (p.40) [9].

The major elements instrumental to the development of commitment are (1) prior actions of the persons staking some originally extraneous interest on his following a consistent line of activity, (2) a recognition by him of the involvement of this originally extraneous interest in his present activity and (3) the resulting consistent line of activity. In order to understand a person's commitment, an analysis of the system of values or valuables with which side-bets can be made needs to be done.

Kiesler[62] states that it is through behaviour one is committed, i.e. commitment manifests in behaviour. An actor can express his commitment in varying degrees. Commitment may tie a person to a consistent line of activity not because the person is motivated but due to the need to be consistent for commitment in and of itself is not motivating. Gerard[40] proposes that the cognitive accompaniments of a behavioral commitment does not occur in isolation but is generated by the person's need to establish and maintain an unequivocal behavioral orientation towards his environment. Any constraints that operate against changing behaviour serve to commit the person to that behaviour.[93]

Then force of circumstances to which one becomes exposed by virtue of following a course of action is another element in commitment.[66] Becker's theory also implies a rejection of other feasible alternatives by the person and choice of the one that best serves the purpose.

Clayton[25] identified three kinds of commitment viz. belief, identification and obligation commitments. Blackman[12] proposed two independent concepts under the term commitment: (1) obligation commitment either moral or legal bound by a contract and (2) emotional commitment independent of obligations. Singh[104] operationalised commitment as the actor's perceptions of the degree of importance attached to the activity in which he is involved. Shrader[103] through literature survey identified four components in the definitions of commitment, viz., (1) personal dedication to continuance of interpersonal relationship, (2) personal feelings of a sense of interpersonal cohesion, (3) constraint on a personal level due to external forces and (4) conformity to the emergent norms of relationship. Nash[80] conceptualises commitment as an inescapable responsibility. To Goffman[45] commitment is attachment to a position and its role. It is defined as the participation in an activity on a permanent basis and also as the tendency on the part of persons to adhere to an organisation or occupation in terms of the rapidity of mobility.[84] Ritzer[97] and Allutto[4] also have identical concepts as that of Oommen[84].

The person who displays behaviour at the level of commitment is perceived as one holding the value and acts to further the object valued, to deepen his involvement with it and with things representing it. The evidences necessary for testing for commitment are: how long the value has been

held; the investment of energy in it; and the likelihood of continuation of the value to be held.[14]

Buchanan[18] states that commitment in work organisation is examined as the mix of personal and organisational characteristics which increase willingness to exert high levels of effort to remain in the organisation, to accept its major goals and values and to value positively the enterprise.

Knoke[64] proposes that commitment in its extreme form involves identifying ones personal fate with the success or failure of the collectivity. Knoke agrees with Buchanan and states that the membership to social associations will express positive reward or loyalty to the group, its activities and its goals and will show willingness to exert efforts to realise these objectives.

Hanifah[49] defined organisation commitment as a set of values, attitudes and behaviours and a state of readiness of an individual, all oriented towards conforming to the fundamental rules and standards expected by an organisation. Sheldon[102] added the utilitarian motives to the concept of commitment.

Stebbins[105] in his attempt to analyse the complex nature of commitment has pointed out two distinct but related dimensions: value commitment and forced or continuance commitment. Value commitment refers to, "a frame of

mind that arises from the presence . . . of subjectively
defined rewards associated with a particular position or
social identity in which the person finds himself. These
subjectively defined rewards which may also be the absence
of certain costs or penalties ..." (p.526-527). Continu-
nance commitment, on the other hand, is a psychological
state that arises not from the presence of wards but from
the ". . . imminence of subjectively defined penalties
associated with the attempt or desire to leave a specific
position . . . . The basic inquiry in the study of
continuance commitment is into what prevented the actor in
a particular social system from renouncing this position
and taking up an alternative position." (p.527).

Hobart[53] implied, in his article wherein he tried to
predict the future of the American family, that when commit-
ment weakens it becomes necessary to evaluate one's value
system and reframe it to facilitate renewed commitment.
Personal qualities like belief in the dignity and worth of
human being, an honest appraisal of oneself, and love and
respect for oneself provide a strong foundation upon which
one builds commitment.[8]

Hilsdale[52] explored commitment of persons to marriage.
His conceptualisation of commitment included 'an act of
knowing' and 'an act of choosing' (p.139). 'Ideal' and
'existential' levels of personalised commitment were

conceptualised by him (p.138). He found that 80 per cent of the couples were absolutely committed to marriage and said their ability to communicate was the reason for their certainty.

Dean and Spanier[28] defined commitment for purposes of their study, as the strength of an individual's desire and determination to continue a particular marital relationship. They found significant correlations between commitment and marital adjustment.

Johnson[58] proposed two types of commitment i.e. personal and behavioral, while he designed a conceptual structure for commitment to be used in the analysis of courtship system. Personal commitment refers to the extent to which an individual is dedicated to the completion of a line of action and it is a continuous variable and behavioural commitment puts a constraint on the individual so that he must continue the line of action. Social and cost commitments are involved in this. Social commitment depends on the expectations of others while cost commitment is defined in terms of the actor's own value system. Cost is influenced by the immediate consequence the individual has to bear i.e., what investments might have to be forfeited if he terminates his commitment or what side-bets he has to forgo if he withdraws from his commitment.

Schoenherr and Greeley[101] defined commitment as, "the

process which links a person to a position in a social system to the extent that the position provides him a favourable net balance of rewards over costs" (p.407). The rewards and costs are the objects of motivation that form part of the individual's orientation to the commitment situation.[46] These would be cognized, cathected and evaluated as personally gratifying or non-gratifying by the individuals. Parsons and Shills[89] assert that an individual's orientation to a situation reflects his values and motivations. Becker[9], Kanter[59,60] and Alutto et al.[4] have also explained the concept of commitment in a similar strain. Paynter[90] defined commitment as a feeling of determination to attain particular goals resulting in limiting resources for other goals in her study of family commitment to housing goals. She found that level of commitment related in part to rate of goal attainment in the past five years, also that it related to age and education. High school graduates were perceived to be more willing to sacrifice resources related to welfare and security than non-graduates. Families with moderate per capita incomes would sacrifice more resources related to level of living than with higher or lower incomes. Size of the family related to rate of goal attainment.

The concept of commitment has been operationalised for use in studying individual behaviour in relation to utopian social movements[59]; religious and political organizations[66,101]; professional organisations[10]; professions[5,94];

employing organisations[4]; marriage[28,52]; courtship system[58] and family goals[90].

3. Energy Related Researches

From the ecological perspective family is an open energy driven system. It is linked to the environment through energy flow. Family is a critical decision-making unit in the current energy situation. It is largely responsible for the transformation of energy to serve the basic physical, social and mental needs of individuals. The life style families follow, the level of living they aspire for, the amount and sources of energy they consume, and the energy conservation oriented decisions they make are strategic choices that will have implications for years to come. Energy related decisions are present in almost everything families do.

Commercial as well as non-commercial sources of energy furnish the energy requirements of India. The most significant commercial energy sources are coal, oil and electricity while non-commercial sources are fuel wood, agricultural waste and animal dung in India. The sectors of energy consumption and demand in India may be identified as: household, agriculture, industries, transport and others. The household sector is the largest consumer of energy accounting for about 51 per cent of total energy consumption.[70] Families consume energy for many and varied purposes. The

standard of living of man depends on the energy that is
available and harnessed. One of the most serious shortage
of the times is that of increasing scarcity of energy. For
many years the pricing of energy was such that it encouraged
superfluous consumption. On the one side, families in the
quest for bettering their level of living consume more
energy and on the other side, they resort to conservation
of energy resources due to varied reasons of which adjust-
ing to periodical price hikes and desire to improve quality
of life seem to be important ones.

The current energy crisis and the awareness generated
at the international, national, state and local levels have
prompted many researchers to devote their attention to
family's energy consumption behaviour. The observations
made in this area are briefly reported in this section.

The most popular sources of energy availed of by the
urban families were observed to be electricity, natural
gas, liquified petroleum gas and petrol, while kerosene,
charcoal and diesel were used as secondary sources of
energy by a relatively small proportion of families. The
monthly average expenditure on all the sources of energy
availed of by the households was estimated to be Rs.206.00.
The homemakers associated the energy crisis with various
factors like rapid rate of population growth, mechanisation,
careless use of energy and so on. They received information

on energy from various sources of which mass media, husbands, friends and relatives were the prominent ones.[38]

George and Ogale[39] found that homemakers did not have adequate knowledge regarding natural energy resources and its reserves on earth and this formed an obstacle in moulding their beliefs regarding energy situation. The household did not exhibit much energy conservation behaviour. The life style of households were not in line with frugality and total disregard to energy crisis was evident. They pointed out that there was much scope for exercising energy conservation in those households.

A national study[83] of direct energy use showed that as family income increased the energy consumption increased. However the increase in the consumption of natural gas was gradual, electricity was intermediate and gasolene was sharp. The upper income families used one and a half times, over two and a quarter times and five times as much natural gas, electricity and gasolene respectively than lower income families.

Family income was reported as the best indirect predictor of residential energy consumption. Richer families use more energy than poorer families.[42] Yao[115] found that the major predictors of residential electrical energy consumption were price, the social and demographic factors and per capita income. Rapidly rising prices of energy

contributed to families' lowering of energy consumption.[43,44,79] Giles[41] observed that energy consumption is a function of structural attributes and the occupants' life styles which are homecentred. Intensive use of dwelling drives up energy consumption. If more of the activities and time of the family are spent outside the home, domestic energy consumption decreases.

Families in the child rearing stage use more residential energy in general than families without children or at the early or late family life cycle.[42,75] Larger families use more energy than smaller families due to a greater demand for energy on the available facilities. Belief in the reality of the energy problems did not diminish in any meaningful way the energy consumed in a household.[75]

A survey of National Geographic Society members[112] revealed that majority considered energy situation to be 'serious' while 16 per cent felt it to be a 'crisis'. Majority of them, i.e., above 80 per cent were switching off more lights and using less energy for heating and transportation purposes. Thus varying proportion of respondents were found to conserve energy at various points of use. 88 per cent of them felt that conservation was the best alternative to tackle the current energy problem.

Wilhelm[113] reported that a reduction of 1.8 per cent in direct household energy consumption was observed between

1977-78 and 1979-80. Nearly three-fourths of the households
were found to have practiced some voluntary simplicity beha-
viour. Relative cost of the fuel used by the household was
the only significant motivator for direct energy conserva-
tion.

Paolucci[86] stressed the need for creating a life style
based on conservation ethic. Most people were observed to
conserve because they wanted to save money or because they
were unable to pay high prices.[65,91,114] Families' ecocon-
sciousness was linked with their conservation practices.[56]

Morrison et al.[77] found that consumption of energy was
the most in the case of families which were in the expan-
ding stage of family life cycle. Those families that were
ecoconscious reduced energy consumption. There was a diff-
erence in the ecoconsciousness of the husband and wife.
Higher income, well educated, large families in middle
stage of life cycle consumed more energy. Family income,
family life cycle, attitude toward energy and life style
flexibility affected the energy conservation behaviour.
News-broadcasts, news-papers, television, books, magazines,
articles and commercials were the most reported sources of
energy information for husbands and homemakers. Homemakers'
sources included in addition personal sources like husbands,
friends, co-workers and relatives. Morrison et al.[78]
reported that the energy conservers were only slightly diff-
erent from non-conservers in conserving behaviour. The

families did not exhibit accurate energy knowledge which showed that conflicting messages from a broad range of sources had probably inhibited their understanding of the energy problem.[68]

Families where both husband and wife valued ecoconsciousness were more likely to have adopted practices in the home to conserve energy than where the level of commitment was lower or where the husbands and wives differed in their commitment.[54] The importance of ecoconsciousness related both to family's educational level and occupational status.[76]

Ayatollahi[7] found that flexibility and speed were recognized as the crucial advantages of the automobile by commuters. Majority of the respondents believed that real energy problem exists in U.S. though they differed on their views on causative factors. Belief in a real energy problem was not found to differ a great deal across such variables as sex, age, income and occupation but the relationship between belief in real energy problem and education was relatively strong. Those who conserved more were among higher income levels, more educated and more likely in the older age group.

Rich[96] observed that, the trend in the use and effectiveness of conservation measures over time suggested that consumers were willing to adjust fuel use habits in

the short and long run, but that substantial economic incentive was required to create and sustain a significant response. McCutcheon[71] found no significant relationship between age and attitude to energy conservation but age was significant in relation to behaviour. The older the youths, the more energy conservation behaviours were reported.

Newitt[82] found that people with more positive attitude to energy conservation or more knowledge of energy conserving techniques tended to consume less energy than those who scored low on these instruments. It was also noticed that those who lived in energy efficient homes had more positive attitude than those otherwise regarding energy conservation and had more knowledge regarding energy conservation techniques. Lack of knowledge as to how to conserve energy seemed to be a problem with families.[57,85]

Merkley[73] investigated the influence on current energy consumption and conservation behaviour exhibited at the microlevel of past experiences with macro-level crisis. She found that the net effects of aging related factors was a statistically significant predictor of current energy use behaviour and of percentage change in energy consumption behaviour. Households headed by younger individuals who were reared in the affluence of energy resources were not adapting as readily to the current energy crisis as households headed by older individuals who have faced deprivational experience in the past.

Christner[24] identified four categories of variables
that may interfere with the achievement of conservation goals,
viz. personal variables, structural-cultural variables, situa-
tional variables and cognitive variables. Personal variables
include comfort needs, ego needs for status and the like
while structural-cultural one covers such hindrances as
freedom, self-centred interests, life style, role expecta-
tions and so on. Situational variables include the social
and physical factors that affect the individual's perception
about the need for conservation like the degree of crisis
perceived, high prices, behaviour of others and so on.
Cognitive variables include the individual's ability to
foresee the long-term consequences of energy decisions.

Abramson's[1] conceptualisation of commitment as invol-
ving penalties and costs with committed lines of action,
Kanter's[59] sacrifice and investment concepts inherent in
committed behaviour, Johnson's[58] behavioral cost commitment,
Schoenherr and Greeley's[101] concepts of rewards and costs as
integral elements of commitment, Becker's[9] involvement of
additional resources and side-bets, Bauchanan's[18], Kiesler
and Sakumura's[63], Dean and Spanier's[28] and Paynter's[90] con-
ceptualisation of commitment have guided the author in desi-
gning the present study to measure differential levels of
commitment of families to energy related goals.