Almost one third of an individual’s life is spent in school. Apart from family, school influences the youth, shapes friendships and success in life. It is the time of growth and development, a time for change, a time to struggle with dependence and independence, and a time to make mistakes and grow from them (Fenwick & Smith, 1994). Every child needs affection, the feeling of belonging and being wanted, respect as an individual, a favorable setting for growth, development of security, freedom from excessive domination, discipline, and support to allow an active imagination to develop (Torrance & Strom, 1965).

The educational goals and scholastic achievement of an individual are clearly affected by the motivational patterns of the children with regards to their future education and their eventual educational attainment is similarly influenced by the family to the extent that the family determines the cost and class positions of the individual. In our present day society emphasis is being laid on educational expansion. However we cannot ignore the students who show signs of higher potential and yet they fail at various stages of their educational career. (K. Mukesh & D. Rajan, 2011).
Introduction

UNDERACHIEVEMENT

Underachievement appears to be a common phenomenon in the India’s educational system. In spite of an increased focus on education, a large proportion of people in many countries are still being denied its full benefits. In developing countries it is essential that all its resources are fully utilized because a large number of pupils suffer from poor achievement. It is the responsibility of every country to take the necessary steps to ensure their students maximize their academic potential. Realizing the potential of every individual child should be one of the main objectives of education. There are children of all ability levels who, for various reasons, fail to reach their full development and do not attain the scholastic level expected from the majority of their contemporaries. Moreover, among children, many not only fail to reach the academic level of which they are capable, but quite often their school performance is constantly lower than that of their ability peers (Terman and Oden, 1947; Burt, 1962; Pringle, 1970; Whitemore, 1980; Gallagher, 1985).

Underachievement is most commonly defined as a discrepancy between potential (or ability) and performance (or achievement) (Reis & McCoach, 2000). Therefore, a student who appears capable of succeeding in school but is nonetheless struggling is often referred to as an underachiever. Factors commonly associated with underachievement include low
academic self-concept (Schunk, 1998; Supplee, 1990; Whitmore, 1980), low self-efficacy (Schunk, 1998), low self-motivation (Weiner, 1992), low goal-valuation (McCall, Evahn, & Kratzer, 1992), and negative attitude toward school and teachers (Colangelo, Kerr, Christensen, & Maxey, 1993; Ford, 1996; Rimm, 1995). Most of the literature on underachievement suggests that underachievers have lower academic self-perceptions, lower self-motivation and self-regulation, less goal directed behavior, and more negative attitudes toward school than high achievers do. However the majority of research investigating the common characteristics of underachieving students has employed qualitative, clinical, or single subject research methodology. Very few large-scale quantitative studies have examined the legitimacy of these hypotheses (Reis & McCoach, 2000).

Underachievement is widespread and concerns the school population of all ages (Thomas and Hargreave reports, 1984), it seems important to understand the factors within the school situation that are conducive to the onset of the problem (Tannenbaum, 1962; Newsom, 1963; Rutter et al, 1979; Whitemore, 1980; Pilling and Pringle, 1978). A review of the literature has revealed considerable divergences of opinion on what causes underachievement in students. Sousa (2003) observed that a combination of factors both in the home and at school can cause underachievement. On the basis of current
research in cognitive development and reading comprehension, two important reasons for students’ underachievement in any academic area can be identified: (1) their inadequate understanding of how to select, adapt, and monitor strategies for learning; and (2) their insufficient motivation to actively apply the understanding they have (Ryan 1989).

Ryan stressed that reading plays an important role in achievement. His research indicated that for the attainment of any reading or writing goal, an individual has four types of cognitive capabilities available for use: (1) Basic abilities (2) Acquired knowledge, (3) Strategies and (4) Met cognition. Ryan further observed that 75% of underachieving pupils in primary schools had reading problems among other things, whereas only 35% of the other pupils had reading problems. The former group underachieved in all subjects. Adequate attention should be given to reading and writing when the issue of underachievement arises, especially in countries where English is a second language. If pupils do not learn how to read effectively early, when they are in school, they may have difficulty at later stages and may withdraw from learning rather than risk being exposed to shame.

Others have cited a lack of motivation amongst students in secondary, primary and higher education as one of the causes of underachievement (Gallagher 1991, Reis and McCoach, 2000, Sousa 2003). These authors further argued
that lack of motivation provided by either teachers or parents could have a negative impact on children’s performance. For example, Whitmore and Rand (2000) observed that many gifted underachieving students need motivation from their teachers because they have learning styles incompatible with prevailing instructional methods. Another review by Rutter (1974) stated that there is never a unitary cause of underachievement. Instead he believed that some causes are attributed to complex circumstances which cannot be scientifically or easily explained, for example, emotional disorder. There is usually interplay of personality and social factors in this regard. Research by Mroczek and Little (2006) on personality studies contend that the self-concept is learned through the child’s environment, both at home and at school. Negative self concepts can cause underachievement when parents do not acknowledge their children’s abilities or fail to support them. A teacher’s response and feedback given to students also has the capability to shape their perceptions of themselves.

Teachers often mistakenly assumed that underachievement is a simple problem. This is why one often sees on school reports dreaded stereotyping comments such as ‘not working to potential’, ‘lazy’, or worse still, ‘dumb’ but in disguised terms. The review has attempted to address the issue of underachievement in schools, especially at the secondary level. The lack of generally accepted definitions and
agreed causes of underachievement was found to be a long standing problem among educationists. The gifted underachiever was identified as one of the types of underachievers that has attracted greater attention in recent time. The available literature has provided insights into the problem and revealed promising intervention strategies for the remediation of the situation, suggesting that underachieving learners can still learn if provided with the appropriate help. (Ogbonnia Chukwu-Etu, 2009).

Keeping in mind a number of studies addressed to underachievers and factors associated with this, it is felt that underachievers must be taken care of before their potential is spent in unproductive directions. They can in later life become lagers, dropouts or miscreants, which can prove fatal to the society in general and to themselves in particular. Underachievement has gained universal attention and many programmes have already been started in the area of applied psychology, in India in particular. In India although the causes of underachievement were clearly spelt out, no remedial measures were taken to get rid of the wastage of human capital until 1938. Guidance and counselling is being used by developed countries such as America. Now not only the government of India but also some private agencies showed great concern in the field. In 1941 a private vocational guidance bureau was set up in Mumbai, which led to the establishment of
Parsi-Panchayat Vocational Guidance Bureau in 1947. Contribution to its extension was the foundation of the first state Bureau in Allahabad in 1947 by the U.P. after the secondary education commission recommended diversified courses. The provision had no meaning if guidance was not provided in the selection of elective subjects in relation to their intelligence and aptitude. With the result in 1954 the Ministry of Education gave a formal shape to the Central Bureau of Educational and Vocational Guidance which later merged with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 which President George W. Bush signed into law on January 8, 2002, clearly demonstrated a strong national commitment to improving the academic success of all children (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). NCLB legislation is forcing school systems across the nation to focus on student outcomes. This focus on accountability and outcomes puts pressure on administrators, teachers, and school counsellors alike. All of these professionals are responsible for making the changes that are mandated within the NCLB and need to be involved in the process of increasing student achievement, reducing the achievement gap, improving school attendance and graduation rates, and ensuring adequate levels of safety within school systems. Although the specific term “underachievement” was
not used in the NCLB, the law is clearly aimed at all students who do not succeed, whether it is because they can’t or because they won’t. It is therefore the responsibility of every country to take necessary steps to control wastage or underachievement and to ensure the student’s academic process.

**Achievement and its correlates**

Achievement of an individual is an outcome of his mental and physical potential, besides the experience he has gained in the process of exploration and learning. In a study considering the factors of school achievement, it is possible to ignore those aspects in which individuals differ from one another. The starting point may be academic achievement itself where wide-ranging variations occur from the point of non-performance to the point of outstanding achievement. If we consider a group of students, it is normal that a few students are found to be high achievers on the one hand, and a few are underachievers on the other, while a sizable number of students usually appear as moderate achievers. The question arises why such a difference in achievement appears when the schools provide more or less uniform instructional and environmental facilities? Is this difference due to certain psychological factors? Does this difference depend upon inherent qualities? Is there any single factor or host of factors, which account for all differences in scholastic achievement? These questions often appear in the minds of educators, educationists and the psychologists, but
with hardly satisfactory answers. Various investigations have explored numerous factors which are found responsible for academic success and failure. It has been widely documented that the academic achievement of Mexican American students is linked to a number of socio-cultural variables. Among the socio-cultural variables associated with academic achievement are the educational and occupational attainment levels of parents, family income and composition, ethnic and language minority status, and the absence of learning material in the home (Arias, 1986; Rumberger, 1983, Steinberge, Blinde, Chan, 1984).

**Cognitive Correlates**

Intelligence has been recognized as an inherent quality, with unified and stable characteristics, distributed unequally among individuals. It may be explained as the capacity for knowledge and understanding, especially as applied to the handling of novel situations and the power of meeting a novel situation successfully by adjusting behavior to the situation. Binet-Simen and Terman (1916) made investigations taking their intelligence tests as predictors of scholastic achievement. Their findings are similar to those revealed from extremely large numbers of subsequent studies, using various tests and different criteria of scholastic achievement. The co-efficient of correlations commonly fall in the range of 0.40 and 0.50. Today we refer to these predictive studies or investigations as measured values of academic aptitude.
Is intelligence related to academic achievement? Historically this question has been addressed by researchers many times. The relationship between measures of intelligence and achievement is significant to research, if there is a strong relation between them. It might be deduced that the intelligence test has an important contribution in connection with other variables; for instance the curriculum, study program, the teacher, the characteristics of the school, and others in scholastic performance (Naglieri & Bornstein, 2003).

In current years, several researchers have shown more interest in the relationship between intelligence and academic achievement. Researchers mention that there is empirical evidence of a strong association between general cognitive ability and academic achievement. One study suggested that there is anywhere from 51% to 75% of the variance in academic achievement that is unaccounted for by measures of general cognitive ability alone (Rohde & Thompson, 2007). The academic achievement of students in high school strongly correlates (0.50 to 0.70) with intelligence scores (Jensen, 1998). In another study researchers experienced the hypothesis that the relationship between general intelligence and academic achievement was in large part associated with mental speed. At the beginning, the divided variance between general intelligence and academic achievement was nearly 30%. On the other hand, after controlling the mental speed component, the shared
variance between general intelligence and academic achievement was decrease to approximately 6% (Luo et al., 2003). This result shows that items of intelligence such as mental speed have a significant effect on academic achievement.

Extensive research has been conducted to examine the role of psychological and social factors on academic achievement (Aluja & Blanch, 2004; Bruinsma, 2004; Caprara, Barbaranelli, Steca, & Malone, 2006; Dickhouser & Reinhard, 2006; DuPaul et al., 2004; Englundi, Luckner, Whaley, & Egeland, 2004; Evans & Rosenbaum, 2008; Gooden, Nowlin, Frank, & Richard, 2006; Greene, Millar, Crowson, Duke, & Akey, 2004; Guglielmi, 2008; Howes et al., 2008; Martin, Montgomery, & Saphain, 2006; Martins & Alexandre, 2008; Papaioannou, Ampatzoglou, Kalogiannis, & Sagovits, 2008; Schwartz, Gorman, Duong, & Nakamoto, 2008).

The direct relationship between intelligence and academic achievement has also been widely studied. (Ediseth, 2002; Gagne & St. Pere, 2002; Kossowska, 1999; Parker et al., 2004; Smith, Smith, & Dobbs, 1991; Stipek & Gralinski, 1996). Chatterjy, (1983) made a comparison of personality, intelligence, and achievement motivation of successful and unsuccessful students and found that successful students in all the academic groups are significantly superior in intelligence than unsuccessful ones in the respective groups.

In addition, several researchers have investigated the
relationship between intelligence, gender, and academic achievement (Duckworth & Seligman, 2006; Ehrmann & Massey, 2008; Fraine, Damme, & Onghena, 2007; Naderi, Habibollah, Rohani, Abdullah, & Tengku.Aizan, 2008). Laidra et al., (2007) studied general intelligence and personality traits from the five-factor model as predictors of academic achievement in a large sample of Estonian school children from elementary to secondary school. A total of 3618 students (1746 boys and 1872 girls) from all over Estonia attending Grade 2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 10, and 12 participated in this study. Intelligence, as measured by the Raven’s Standard Progressive Matrices, was found to be the best predictor of students’ grade point average (GPA) in all grades. Deary, Strand, Smith, & Fernandes (2007) found a strong and positive relationship between intelligence and academic achievement. This study examined the relationship between psychometric intelligence at the age of 11 and education achievement in 25 academic subjects at the age of 16. The correlation between latent intelligence traits and latent traits of educational achievement was 0.81.

General intelligence contributed to success on all 25 academic subjects. Understanding the nature of the relationship between general cognitive ability and academic achievement has widespread implications for both practice and theory (Rohde & Thompson, 2007). Sarla Paul (2000) investigated some of the probable causes of low achievement on the part of higher education students.
secondary teacher trainees and came with the conclusion that intelligence is a leading cause of low achievement. In another study Watkins, Lei, & Canivez (2007), stated there has been considerable debate regarding the causal precedence of intelligence and academic achievement. Some researchers view intelligence and achievement as identical constructs. Others believe that the relationship between intelligence and achievement is reciprocal. Laidra, Pullmann, & Allik (2007), reported that student achievement relies most strongly on their cognitive abilities through all grade levels. Through a bivariate approach it was found that intelligence showed a significant relationship with achievement, for both boys and girls (Mishra, 1997). A study was done to identify factors associated with poor academic achievement during the early school years and it was found that intelligence is significantly correlated with academic achievement for both boys and girls. To identify factors associated with poor academic achievement during the early years, it was found that cognitive ability, gender, prematurity and social factors contribute to poor academic achievement (Ong, L. C. et al., 2010).

Thus, it can be maintained that the intellectual abilities of students have a positive association with their scholastic achievement. Some children with a considerable intellectual ability fail at subjects in which they should succeed at. This is only partly understood and should be a matter of concern for
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parents and the education system. Hence the importance of non-intellectual factors needs to be studied. For a satisfactory performance it is therefore likely that a certain amount of intelligence or scholastic aptitude necessary for academic achievement must be possessed by the students, along with some favorable non-intellectual variables.

**NON-COGNITIVE CORRELATES**

It is most likely that in the absence of intellectual abilities high scholastic achievement is not possible. At the same time the mere presence of superior intelligence does not ensure higher achievement. Many empirical studies based on scientific investigation have shown that pupils of superior intelligence can be underachievers, while some people with average intelligence achieve more than what is expected of them. In the achievement related areas, \textit{need for achievement} (Need-achievement) has been found to be a significant variable, which contributes to better performances in people (Deshpande, 1984; Sween, 1984; Rai, 1980; Shivappa, 1980; Pathek, 1974; Sinha, 1970; Mehta, 1966,69; Atkinson, 1958). Mehta Preyag (1969) investigated “need-achievement and school performance”. A sample of 974 higher secondary students of Delhi was taken for this study. The need-achievement scores showed a highly significant positive correlation with marks in English and Maths, and a good positive correlation with marks in Science subjects and marks in Hindi and Non-science subjects. The
result clearly indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between need-achievement and school performance. Sinha (1970), reported about a study of the relationship between need-achievement and academic achievement of school going children. He selected a sample of 170 of 10th and 11th class students, using T.A.T pictures of McClelland for measuring need-achievement and school examination marks as achievement scores. He found that the mean of need-achievement scores of the high achievers (5.29) was greater than the mean of need-achievement scores of low achievers (-1.42). The difference was a significant beyond 0.01 level. On the basis of his findings he concluded that there was significant and positive relationship between need-achievement and academic attainment. McCelland et.al, 1953: found significant correlation between academic performance and need-achievement.

The achievement motivation has been studied both in relation to economic growth (McClelland, 1961) and academic performance (McClelland et al 1953, Atkinson, 1958). McClelland and associates (1953) report that for a sample of male students, the correlation between grades and achievement motivation is 0.39. Burges (1956) finds that overachievers are significantly higher on need-achievement than underachievers. Rosen (1956) indicated that T.A.T measures of achievement motivation are directly related to school grade. Using the need-
achievement scale from the Edwards Personal Preference Schedule, Bending (1957), Weiss and associates (1960) observed a positive relation between achievement motivation and academic performance. Riccinti et al. (1955) found a moderate positive correlation between need-achievement and school grades. Lillig and Yeracaris (1965) in their study found that need-achievement is positively related to academic achievement among men but not among women. Uhlinger and Stephens (1960) reported that high achievers show greater need for achievement than do low achievers. Strive (1958) found that boys of high ability who were well motivated for college had a higher need-achievement than equally able boys who were not motivated for college. Pierce and Bowman (1960) found a tendency for able boys who achieved well in high school had a higher need-achievement than others who did not achieve as well in high school. Lum (1960) showed that underachievers differed significantly from over-achievers in achievement drive (0.01 level). Hall (1969) found significant differences in need-achievement between achievers and non-achievers. Davanesan and Paul (1990), found that there is a significant and positive relationship between the achievement-motivation and scholastic achievement of higher secondary students. Badhri (1991), remarked that the causes of poor achievement were low motivation, poor study habits, lack of parental involvement in education and poor teaching. Harikrishnan (1992), found that
academic achievement is positively related with achievement-motivation and the socio-economic status of students. Khan (2000) found that gifted underachievers were characterized by positive need-achievement. Sotankay (1986), found that high achievers had a higher motivation to realize their goals than low achievers.

There is statistically significant evidence of superior learning in a person with high need-achievement than a person with low need-achievement. Many studies have supported the positive relation between need-achievement and school grades. (Morgan, 1952; Meclelland, Atkinson, Clark, and Lowel 1953; Gebhart and Hoyt 1958; Merril and Murthy 1959; Weiss Werthemier and Groesbeck 1960; Rai 1974), found that need-achievement and intelligence were differential personality correlates. (Chaudhari 1975), found that achievement motivation of bright achievers was higher than that of bright underachievers.

The role of study habits in academic achievement has been studied repeatedly during the past four decades. Jain (1967), found that bright achievers were characterized by better study habits and higher achievement motivation than dull achievers. (Shivappa 1980), found that study habits and educational aspiration were positive correlates of academic achievement. Regarding the study of over-achievers and under-achievers, a review of the literature shows these two groups
differed significantly in regard to their study habits. Over-achievers had better study habits (Diener, 1960; H.G. Gough, 1953; De Sena Paul, 1964; Sorenson, 1964 and Smith Leland, 1965). Singh (1984), found that high achieving adolescents had significantly better study habits than middle and low achievers. Patel (1986), found that the better the study habits, the higher the achievement. Kapoor (1987) found that high achievers had better study habits compared to the average and the low achievers. (Lidhoo and Khan 1990), found that poor study habits and low need-achievement were associated with underachievement among bright subjects. Ansari (1980) found that study habits and study attitudes were both significant variables which determine the academic performance of the students. (Russell and Petrie 1992) cited a research study aimed at finding out the relationship between study habits and student attitude and academic performance (cumulative GPA) of college students. The findings of this study indicated a positive correlation between study attitude, study habit and academic achievement. A research was conducted to assess the impact of study habits on achievement in reading English. The research revealed that study habits had an influence on achievement in reading English for high school students and that it may be possible to predict achievement in reading English analyzing study habits (Reddy, 2008).

National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in
1994 conducted research to find out the relationship between study habits and academic achievement. The findings of this research revealed a positive correlation between study habits and academic achievement of elementary and secondary school students. Onwuegbuzie (2001) conducted a series of studies to find out the relationship between study habits and academic success, and reported a positive relationship between them.

Nandita & S. Tania (2004) conducted a study to find a relationship between study habits and attitude towards studies with academic achievement in Geography. This study was conducted using secondary school students in the 9th class in schools in Bhadrak, a district of Orissa in India. The coefficients of correlation were calculated between the variables: study habits, attitude towards study and academic achievement in Geography. It was found that there existed a positive significant relationship between attitude towards studies and academic achievement and between study habits and attitude towards studies. Study habits are actually improving because of the advent and wide use of the Internet, hypertext, and multimedia resources (Liu, 2005). Karim and Hassan (2006) noted that the exponential growth of digital information changes the way students perceive study material, affects reading and how printed materials are used to facilitate study.

Simmons (2002) noted that "good writing spawns from a close understanding of text and great writing results from an
interactive analysis and fluency with our reading." He adds that inadequate writing is a direct result of inadequate reading and studying. Fielden (2004) stated that good study habits help the student in critical reflection in skills outcomes such as selecting, analyzing, critiquing, and synthesizing. Nneji (2002) stated that study habits are learning tendencies that enable students work privately. Azikiwe (1998) described study habits as the way and manner a student plans his or her private reading outside lecture hours in order to master a particular subject or topic, and study habits help students master their areas of specialization. Riaz Aisha et al (2002), conducted a study, aimed at determining the effect of study habits on the achievements of students. It was undertaken in the University of Agriculture, Faisalabad. All 150 students of B.Sc. Home Economics and M.Sc. Home Economics (Food and Nutrition) during the year 2000-2001 were involved in the study. The data was collected with the help of an interview schedule. It was found that there existed a significant and positive relationship between achievement and a proper study schedule. Niradhar Dey (2008) undertook a study comparing the study habits of high achieving CBSE and ICSE students in school hours, and non-school hours, and comparing the study habits of high achieving boys and girls. The results indicated that high achieving CBSE and ICSE students had a similar positive nature in their study habits.
Nuthana & Yenagi (2009), studied the influence of study habits and self-concept on the academic achievements of boys and girls. It was revealed that the habits of reading, note taking, concentration and preparation for examinations had a significant correlation with academic achievement. The study orientations of low and high academic achievers were compared. These were measured through a self developed orientation scale (SOS) primarily based on 47 items comparing study habits and attitudes. Students marks, obtained in their 10th grade examinations, determined the measures of their academic performance. The analysis revealed that the high achievers had better study orientation, study habits and attitude towards study than the low achievers (Satwar et al, 2009). Bhaduri (1971), found that overachievers showed higher scores on study habits, attitude towards school, religion and cultural background compared to underachievers. Kapoor (1987), found that high achievers had better study habits compared to the average than low achievers. Rajyaguru (1991), found that overachievers had better study habits.

From the above-cited studies it appears that need-achievement and study habits are important factors which contribute to the academic achievement of a person. High achievers are characterized by better study habits and higher levels of need-achievement. In contrast underachievers possess lower level of need-achievement and poorer study habits.
However there have not been enough experimental studies to test whether we can help underachievers to realize their potential through the use of counselling intervention. Therefore, the investigator has explored whether counselling intervention can improve the need-achievement, study habits and academic achievements of underachievers.

**NEED AND IMPORTANCE**

India is facing a high illiteracy rate, wastage and stagnation of human potential and a brain drain to developed countries. It cannot afford to leave underachievers to their own fate or allow them to become social misfits. Children are not born underachievers; their school behavior is acquired (Davis and Rim, 1985). All nations should become concerned about all of its potential human resources, especially the waste and loss of such resources. Some form of remedial help, possibly in the form of intensive counselling is needed to deal with underachievement. The Education Commission of India (1964-66), supports the view that “Guidance and Counselling services” should be made available at all school levels, particularly remedial help to backward children and underachievers. Based on its research, the institute of medicine has concluded that mental health and psychological services were essential for many students to achieve well academically, and recommended that such services be considered mainstream and not optional (Institute of Medicine, 1997).
With regard to the necessity of guidance services, they prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices (Gibson, 2008; Kauchak, 2011). Sinha, (1970) observed, “measures like counselling and a program of student personnel service are urgently required if the rate of failure and consequent wastage of manpower is to be reduced”. Bhatnagar, (1992) in a survey of educational research, points out under research gaps and priorities, that the effect of guidance and counselling should be studied on special groups of children such as slow learners, underachievers, the mentally challenged, and the mentally gifted. Mullis & Otwell (1997), ascertained that counselling decreases classroom disturbances. Counselling services support teachers in the classroom and enable teachers to provide quality instructions designed to assist students in achieving high standards. School counselors through collaborative efforts can implement both systematic and programmatic changes in schools and communities to prevent students from dropping out of school (Standard, 2003). Heyden (2011), while discussing the aim of guidance and counselling services, opines that their purposes are similar to the purposes of education in general—to assist students in fulfilling their basic psychological needs, understanding themselves and accepting others, developing associations with peers. Realizing
successful achievement, and providing opportunities to gain independence.

The Comprehensive Developmental Guidance (CDG) Program model (Gysbers & Henderson, 2000) emerged during the 1970’s and emphasized school counselling as a core educational program rather than a set of ancillary support services. The current model of Counselling in Hong Kong schools evolved from what began as essentially a remedial approach targeting individual students, to become a whole school approach through the implementation of a comprehensive developmental guidance and Counselling program for all (Gysbers, 2000; Hui, 2000). School Counselling in the Chinese mainland has been led by central government policy and has developed rapidly since the 1990s (Jiang, 2005). The level of implementation of Counselling activities in schools is higher in big cities than in small towns and rural areas. Counselling in mainland schools is termed “mental health education” in the official documents of the Chinese government (Ministry of Education of the People’s Republic of China, 2002). School Counselling in United Kingdom focuses on students’ social-emotional needs and thus helps to personalize schooling (Watkins, 1999, 2008). Schools are to provide students with opportunities to listen more to others, evaluate information, and decide things for themselves (Lang, 2003). Bhatnagar and Gupta (1999) were of the opinion that for better student achievement,
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it is necessary to help pupils make progress in their education by removing their difficulties and developing good study skills. Hence guidance programs must include this aspect of student counselling.

Guidance plays a vital role in removing the educational, personal, social, mental, and emotional problems of the students. Kochhar (2000) considers guidance necessary to help students with specific problems like lack of relationship between ability and achievement, deficiency in school subjects, faulty study habits, defective methods of learning and poor motivation. In a study, Braddock (2001), stated that the purpose of guidance and counselling services for school children are to improve academic achievement, increase conflict resolution skills, decrease dropouts and foster positive attitudes toward school, learning, and study. Brigman and Campbell (2003) found that implementation of Student Success Skills Curriculum as a school counselor-led intervention program resulted in sizable gains in student achievement on the FCAT. Hussain (2006) found that guidance services are effective for the improvement of teaching instruction. It is therefore recommended that a center for guidance services or a guidance clinic should be established in each school. “The guidance and Counselling program is an integral part of a schools’ total educational program; it is developmental by design, focusing on
A review of the research on school Counselling shows that the services of school counselors have a positive effect on children. (Borders & Drury, 1992; Gerler, 1985; St. Clair, 1989; Whitson & Sexton, 1998). Quantitative analyses of research (meta-analyses) substantiate the beneficial effects of school Counselling programs. (Baker, et al 1984; Prout & Demartino 1986; Sprinthall 1981). School Counselling programs have significant influence on discipline problems. Baker and Gerler (2001); Omizo, et al (1988) reported that students who participated in a school Counselling program showed significantly less inappropriate behaviors and more positive attitudes toward school than those students who did not participate in the program.

Several studies found that elementary guidance activities have a positive influence on elementary students’ academic achievement (Sink & Stroh, 2003). School counselor interventions have reported success in helping students reduce test anxiety (Cheek et al, 2002). School counselors are effective in teaching social skills (Verduyn, Lord & Forrest 1990). School counselors are effective in assisting middle school children in the area of career development (Whiston, et al 1998). It has been reported that children who are experiencing family problems
have been helped by school counselors (Omizo & Omizo, S.A. 1988; Rose & Rose, 1992). In studies on the effects of using a small group Counselling approach to assist elementary school students who are failing their test, 83% of participating students showed improvement in their grades (Boutwell & Myrick, 1992). School Counselling interventions have a substantial impact on students' educational and personal development. School counselors should spend the majority of their time performing these interventions. Coordination activities should be confined to those that improve the efficiency and accountability of these counselling interventions (Borders & Drury 1992). Studies on high school attrition indicated that preventive Counselling, which occurs before students are in crisis, reduces the risk of these students dropping out later (Hayes, Nelson et al, 2002). Student counselling improves school attendance, school behaviour, student achievement and students’ self-esteem and attitude toward school (Beale, 2004; Schmidt, 2003).

The School Dropout Assistance Program (1991-1996) funded a number of projects to test and evaluate the effect of strategies for dropout prevention and assisting dropout students to re-enter school. The results found that Counselling services were one of the key elements of promising dropout prevention initiatives (Kaufman, Klein & Frase 1999). A study done in Gwinnett County, Georgia shows that school counselors impact
students’ academic performance by increasing student focus on their set tasks, increasing productive behavior of students and reducing disruptive behavior. The Behavior Rating Checklist indicated statistically significant decreases in disruptive behaviors and significant increases in productive, on-task behaviors for the third grade and fifth grade students tested. For these students their progress in language and arts progress was statistically significant for both grade levels as well (Mullis & Otwell 1997; Watts & Thomas 1997).

In the light of these above cited studies, there may be a need in the school system to identify underachievers and their specific problems. It may be necessary to support underachievers through counselling. This requires determining the effect of counselling on their need-achievement, study habits and academic achievement, as these appear to be significant correlates of underachievement. Many of the students of government schools belong to poor and less educated or illiterate families. They are therefore more deprived of proper educational guidance at home. This study is an effort to help underachieving students in government schools, including the students of these less educated or illiterate families. The study aims to determine if counselling can improve the level of achievement of these students. The investigator made counselling interventions with underachievers to improve their need-achievement, study habits and academic achievement.
These counselling interventions allowed the parents, teachers, counselors and administrators understand that counselling helps underachievers to boost their need-achievement, improve study habits and increase their academic results. This study may encourage administrators to consider having school counselor for the assistance of students, especially underachieving students.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

There are some experimental studies conducted by Gaur (1970) who studied the effect of counselling on potential school failures. Patel (1973) studied how self esteem changes as a function of counselling. Sunanda (1982) studies the effect of counselling on the study habits and achievement of teacher trainees. Rather (1985) studied the influence of counselling on isolates and rejectees. Khan (1987) studied the effect of counselling on bright underachievers. Dua (1990) studied changes in academic self-concept through group counselling and its effect on school related behaviour. Kanth (1994) studied the impact of directive counselling upon writing skills. Illangovan & Rangaraj (2001) studied the effect of counselling on test anxiety and scholastic achievement in DTE students. In the light of the studies the investigator has reviewed, the investigator chose to identify underachievers and apply a counselling process to their scholastic situations. This was intended to determine if counselling could improve need-
achievement, better their study habits and bring their academic achievement on par with their intellectual capability. Few studies have been conducted in India on the issue in general. No study has been conducted specifically on the variables need-achievement, study habits and academic achievement with respect to the effect of counselling intervention in the valley of Kashmir.

The purpose of this study is to determine:

The Effect of counselling on the need-achievement, study habits and academic achievement of underachievers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to achieve the following objectives:

i) Identify the underachievers.

ii) Help underachievers raise their need-achievement through counselling.

iii) Help underachievers improve their study habits through counselling.

iv) Help underachievers raise their academic achievement through counselling.

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test factor-wise need-achievement scores of the experimental group.
2. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test composite need-achievement scores of the experimental group.

3. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test factor-wise study habit scores of the experimental group.

4. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test composite study habit scores of the experimental group.

5. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test subject-wise academic achievement scores of the experimental group.

6. There will be a significant improvement in the post-test composite academic achievement scores of the experimental group.

**Delimitations**

1. 9th grade students were selected on the basis that students of this age group are most likely mature enough to take decisions for themselves.

2. The government high and higher secondary schools of educational zones Rainawari and Gulab Bagh of district Srinagar in Kashmir were selected. This selection was made on the basis that in the Srinagar the affluent and educated class send their children to private schools, while the poor send
their children to government schools. Therefore these students do not currently get counselling for their problems either inside or outside school.

3. The study was confined to the educational zones of Rainawari and Gulab Bagh of district Srinagar due to time available to the investigator for this study.

4. The age and gender of the students studied was controlled.

**OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF VARIABLES**

1. **Counselling:**

   A process in which individuals learn about themselves, their interpersonal relationships and behaviours that advance their personnel development.

   *(Shertzer and Stone, 1976, P., 162)*

   A process by which a troubled person (the client) is helped to feel and behave in a more personally satisfying manner through interacting with an uninvolved person (the counsellor) who provides information and reactions which stimulate the client to develop behaviours which enable him to deal effectively with himself and his environment.

   *(Lewis, 1970 P., 10)*

   A process in which the pupil is approached on an individual basis and is helped to form a decision, make a choice, find a direction at some important fork in the road such as that
of planning life career, a programme in college, a campaign to obtain employment.

(Mehdi, 1959, P., 329)

A process of perceiving and integrating into one’s self any previously denied experiences in the safety of a warm and relaxed relationship with the therapist.

(Rogers, 1951)

**Counselling** in this study means,

To help students understand their potential and overcome their problems which distract them from academic achievement. Their problem may be in school, in their approach to study (such as poor study habits) or due to low level of need-achievement.

2. **UNDERACHIEVER**

Underachievers are those whose educational age is one year or more below their mental ages.

(Lewis, 1941)

Represents a slower rate of learning than would be otherwise predicted by the level of intellectual functioning.

(L’abate and Curtis, 1975)

The underachiever is a young person who performs more poorly in school than one would expect on the basis of their mental abilities.

(McCall, Evahn & Kratzer, 1992)
**Underachiever** in this study means:

A student whose mean achievement scores from their previous two annual examinations are at the 10th percentile or more below their equivalent intelligence percentile scores.

The criterion model for the selection of underachievers is in line with Gowan (1960) which has successfully been used by Mohan & Nehru (1972), Mohan & Khera (1978), Khan (1996), Amina (2003), and Khan, M.A. & Parveen, A. (2005).

3. **Need-Achievement**

Need-achievement refers to an individual’s desire for significant accomplishment, mastering of skills, control, or high standards.

*(Henry Murray, 1938)*

Need for achievement refers to an individual’s preference for success under conditions of competition.

*(David McClelland, 1965)*

**Need-achievement** in this study means:

The scores gained by sample subjects on an Urdu adaptation of B.N. Mukherjee's Incomplete Sentence Blank (Khan, 1992) in pre and post counselling tests.

4. **Study Habits**

Study habits are study routines, including but not restricted to, frequency of studying sessions, review of material,
self-testing, rehearsal of learned material, and studying in a conducive environment. Students’ attitudes toward the act of studying are referred to as ‘study attitudes’.

(Crede & Kuncel, 2008)

Study habits are “the adopted way and manner a student plans his private readings, after classroom learning so as to attain mastery of the subject”.

(Azikiwe, 1998)

**Study Habits** in this study means:

The scores gained by sample subjects on a Study Habit Inventory (Khan 1999) in the pre and post counselling tests.

5. **Academic Achievement**

“Academic achievement is the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him”.

(Crow and Crow, 1969)

**Academic Achievement** in this study means:

The aggregate marks gained by sample students in different subjects in the pre and post counselling tests.