CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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The main purpose of the investigation was the psychological study of some factors associated with truancy among children attending primary schools run by the Municipal Corporation of Ahmedabad. In order to understand the manifold aspects of truancy the comparison method was used. In this study, two groups: truants and non-truants, being the experimental and control groups respectively and numbering two hundred each, were selected from mixed sex Gujarati medium noon-schools located in various parts of the city of Ahmedabad. The truants and non-truants were selected on the basis of teachers' opinions, monitors' ratings and school records. Both the groups were matched on the variables of age, sex, level of intelligence and economic conditions.

For the purpose of collecting necessary information concerning both the groups, a data booklet was developed on the basis of the opinions of the school teachers, headmasters and other specialists in the field. It consisted of two types of items: one requiring qualitative and the other requiring quantitative information. Other tools used were Misbehaviour Manifestation Check-list, Champa Bhatt Group
Test of Intelligence, Personality Inventory and Social and Family Adjustment Inventories developed by Badami. The data was collected by interviewing the children under study, class teachers and monitors, and by consulting school records. Wherever possible, parents were contacted during home visits. The data was tabulated appropriately.

For testing Ho in the case of quantitative data 't' test was used and for Ho in the case of qualitative data $X^2$ chi-square test was used. Ho in both the cases was tested at .05 level of significance. The following observations and conclusions appeared to be warranted on the basis of the sample selected, method of data collection adopted and statistical techniques employed.

A Concerning the child:

1) There were significant differences in the general physical health of truants and non-truants. A comparatively larger number of non-truants was healthy and normally healthy as compared with truants.
a) A relatively larger number of non-truants was free from any disease. A significantly larger number of truants had diseases of the eye and ear and had bad teeth in comparison with non-truants.

b) Both the groups did not differ significantly in terms of physical defects prevalent among the children. The observation suggested that more truants had physical defects than non-truants.

2) As regards frequency of dreams, a significantly larger number of non-truants had them frequently and sometimes, while more truants were found to be in the category of 'rarely'.

3) In respect of dreams associated with objects and persons significant differences were observed between the groups.

4) Significant differences were observed in ambitions expressed for service, business and engineering in both groups. With respect
Both groups differed significantly in narrating their wishes concerning economic matters, for better living and pertaining to education. No such differences were observed with respect to service and any other miscellaneous wishes mentioned therein.

A significantly larger number of truants than non-truants had neurotic symptoms like nail-biting, thumb-sucking and itching. No such differences were observed in the case of lip-biting, moving legs, and any other symptoms found in both groups.

There were significant differences regarding two types of hobbies pursued by both groups; viz., study and gambling. With regards to the rest of the hobbies like playing, general reading, walking and cinema no such differences were found.
With regard to leisure time, it was found that a comparatively larger number of non-truants than truants prefer to spend their leisure time in the home.

a) Both groups differed significantly in their ways of spending leisure time out of home. A consistently larger number of truants than non-truants preferred to spend their leisure time out of home in parks or gardens, cinema theatres and playgrounds.

Both groups differed significantly with regard to type of employment. A larger number of children among the truants' group were found to be employed as casual labour, in domestic services, hotel and miscellaneous jobs, compared to children of the non-truants' group.

The statistical analysis revealed significant differences among the children of both groups, regarding several aspects
such as amount, sources and disposition of pocket money. Most of the children of both groups were getting pocket money.

a) With regard to the nature of disposition of pocket money, the majority of children of both groups spent their money on simple needs like eating, whereas, very few of them were spending money on necessities. It was also found that very few children of both groups saved money.

b) When the sources of getting pocket money were studied, it was found that both groups differed significantly. The children of both groups had father and mother as the main sources; but truants had a few other sources, while non-truants had no such extra source.

11) Data pertaining to the child's attitude towards father and mother showed significant
differences between both groups. A larger number of non-truants had warm and indifferent attitudes, while a larger number of truants had warm and rejecting attitudes towards their fathers and mothers.

12) There were significant differences amongst children of both the groups in relation to their rank in the family. The chances of becoming a truant are more with the first born than the other.

13) On the question of status of the child in the family, it was found that a majority of children amongst the truants group were eldest whereas slightly more of the non-truants were intermediate children in the family. As far as the youngest child in the family was concerned, the difference between the groups was marginal.

14) With reference to personality adjustment, it was found that personality adjustment of the truants' group was inferior to that
of the non-truants' group.

It seems clear from this that more truants than non-truants were physically weak, in diseased conditions, preferred to spend their leisure time out of home in parks and cinema theatres, were employed as casual labour, domestic servants or hotel boys, were receiving more pocket money from more than one source, were having indifferent and rejective attitudes towards their parents, were first born and eldest children in the family and their personality adjustment was inferior.

B - Concerning parents and siblings:

1) Incidence of truancy was found to be related, significantly, to parental education.

a) More fathers of the truants' group were either illiterate or having education up to the primary level, whereas fathers of the non-truants group had education up to the secondary level.
b) A comparatively larger number of mothers among the truants' group were illiterate, whereas mothers of the non-truants group had education up to the secondary level.

2) The nature of mutual relationship of parents was highly associated with incidence of truancy. A larger number of parents of the non-truants' group had good and fair mutual relationship, whereas a larger number of parents of the truants' group had poor and fair mutual relationship.

3) Parental attitudes towards the child and other children in the family were highly associated with truancy.

a) A larger number of fathers of the non-truants had warm attitudes towards their children than in the truants' group.
b) Comparatively more mothers of the non-truants had warm attitudes towards their children than mothers of the truants' group.

c) Relatively more parents of the non-truants' group had discriminating attitudes towards the child under study and other children in the family than parents of the truants' group.

4) The nature of occupation was highly associated with truancy in the children.

a) The rate of truancy was lower in families where the fathers were serving or engaged in professional occupations.

b) The rate of truancy was higher in families where mothers were working as domestic servants.

c) A larger number of truants were coming from families where either parent was
irregular in job attendance.

5. A larger number of truants had indifferent and hostile relationship with their siblings, whereas more non-truants had warm sibling relationships.

6. The incidence of truancy was not found significantly associated with sibling relationship.

A comparatively larger number of parents of the truants had insufficient educational level, unsatisfactory mutual relationship discriminating attitudes towards the child under study and other children in the family, were employed as casual labour and were working irregularly. Relatively more truants than non-truants had indifferent and hostile sibling relationship.

C Concerning the school:

1) There were significant differences in relation to academic progress of the children and incidence of truancy. A comparatively larger number of non-truants had
records of very good and good academic progress, whereas a larger number of truants had records of fair, poor, and very poor academic progress.

a) Similarly, children of both groups differed significantly in relation to subjects liked and disliked. With regard to the subjects liked by children, it was observed that more non-truants liked mathematics, science and sewing, whereas majority of the truants liked social sciences, Gujarati and Hindi.

b) With reference to the subjects disliked, it was observed that children of both groups differed significantly in expressing their dislike for mathematics, whereas with regard to other subjects like English, Social Sciences, Gujarati, Hindi, Science, Music and Drawing, no such differences were revealed.
c) In respect of standards repeated, it was found that not a single child from both the groups failed in the first standard. Similarly, not a single child from the non-truants' group failed in the second and third standards. Even in the case of the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh standards, the number of truants repeating standards exceeded that of non-truants. Comparatively, truants started repeating standards much earlier than non-truants.

2) The statistical analysis revealed significant differences amongst children of both the groups regarding certain categories of reading, such as detective stories, children's stories, weekly periodicals and other types of reading material, while no such differences were observed for the remaining types of reading material such as autobiographies, short stories, and religious or historical literature.
3) The statistical analysis also revealed significant relationship between participation in school activities and incidence of truancy. As the level of participation in various activities of the school increases the chances of truancy decrease.

a) With regard to the types of activities in which children were participating in school, it was observed that a larger number of non-truants participated in group discussion as compared with truants. A majority of children in both the groups participated in games.

4) Further, the statistical analysis of the data revealed significant relationship between the nature of the child's attitude towards the teacher and incidence of truancy.

a) A majority of non-truants had warm attitude towards the teacher and, comparatively, quite a good number of
truants had indifferent and hostile attitude towards the teacher.

5) Similarly, teachers' attitudes towards children of both the groups is also statistically significant. It was observed that a larger number of non-truants were having warm attitudes from their teachers and a relatively larger number of truants were having indifferent and hostile attitudes from their teachers.

6) The child's attitude towards school was found significantly associated with truancy. A larger number of non-truants were having good attitude towards school and a relatively larger number of truants were having fair and poor attitude towards school.

7) With regard to social adjustment, it was found that truants had inferior social adjustment compared to non-truants. As the degree of social adjustment increases, the incidence of truancy decreases. The
degree of social adjustment was expressed largely by truancy among the experimental group.

8) Truants and non-truants differed significantly with regard to misbehaviour noticed by the teacher in school. The truants’ group was found to misbehave frequently and in a variety of ways as compared with non-truants. Both groups were cunning and quarrelsome in school.

In brief, the truants were educationally retarded, showed poor academic progress, participated less in various activities organized by the school, had either indifferent or hostile attitude towards teachers and vice versa, had either poor or fair attitude towards school and were misbehaving more frequently in various ways than non-truants. More truants have shown no interest in school and its activities, have been mostly inattentive in class, careless in work, always whispering in class, lazy and telling lies.
Concerning the home and the family:

1. More non-truants than the truants were coming from joint families. There was practically no difference between the truants and non-truants staying in separate families.

   a) With regard to size of family, it was found that a relatively larger number of children from the truants' group had four to five and ten or more members in the family.

2. There was no statistically significant difference with respect to the number of children living with their own father and mother in both the groups.

   a) The incidence of truancy was not found to have any relation to the existence of either parents.

3. Statistical analysis of the data revealed significant differences regarding social and group living in the family amongst
the children of both groups.

a) It was observed that a larger number of members of the families of the truants group than those of the non-truants often had social and group living in the family. More non-truants' family members had occasional and nil social and group living in the family.

b) A larger number of families of the truants' group had social and group living mostly out of the home, while a larger number of families of the non-truants' group had such living in the family.

c) The rate of truancy was high in families having meagre and nil provision for recreation in the family.
4) Attitudes taken by the family on entertaining the child's friends at home were largely associated with incidence of truancy.

5) Statistically significant differences in cohesiveness in the family were found between both groups. A comparatively larger number of non-truants than truants had good cohesiveness in the family. Truants were having fair and poor cohesiveness in their family.

6) It was significant that in a majority of cases of the non-truants' group the father was the dominating figure.

7) The rate of truancy was significantly high in families having two, four and five earning members in the family. Majority of the non-truants had only one earning member.

8) Overcrowdedness and incidence of truancy
were found independent of each other. The observed trend suggested that truants were more likely to come from overcrowded families.

a) The rate of truancy was found very high in families accommodating themselves in only one room.

b) A larger number of truants were coming from habitations where nine or more families were dwelling in the same building.

9) Statistically, family pride was found to be significantly associated with truancy. Marked family pride was observed in a larger number of non-truants' families, while none was found in the families of truants.

10) Nature of the neighbourhood area was found independent of the incidence of truancy.
11) A high rate of truancy was found in families having either strict or nil discipline.

a) With regard to methods adopted by the father for controlling the child, it was observed that a majority of the fathers of truants frequently used physical punishment, compared to non-truants' fathers, whereas a relatively larger number of fathers of the non-truants' group used reasoning as a method of controlling the child compared to fathers of the truants.

b) With reference to methods adopted by the mother for controlling the child, it was seen that a relatively larger number of the truants' mothers used physical punishment compared to mothers of non-truants.

a) Majority of the mothers of non-truants used reasoning as a
method of controlling the child as compared with mothers of truants.

12) The level of family adjustment was found significantly associated with incidence of truancy.

It is clearly found from the foregoing that majority of the truants were coming from joint and larger families. They had either frequent and nil social and group living in their families, poor family cohesiveness, slight or no family pride, more than one earning member in the family; either strict or nil discipline; and physical punishment was the main method adopted by either parent in controlling the child's behaviour. They had poor family adjustment. In brief, the home conditions of truants were largely unhealthy in comparison with non-truants.

Suggestions:

India is one of the largest democratic countries in the world to-day. Like other developing countries, it has to solve many problems to promote the welfare
of millions. Success of democracy rests upon the education of the masses. India is trying hard to eradicate illiteracy from every corner of society. Decades ago, compulsory and free education upto fourteen years was introduced. Recently, free secondary education has been introduced in some of the states. Truancy from school is one of the important problems that has emerged from compulsory education. This humble effort has been made to study some personality factors and factors found in home conditions as well as in the school environment. It has its own several limitations. So, in view of this, some of the following suggestions have been offered for further research:

a) In the present study several factors have been found significantly associated with truancy. So an extensive attempt could be made to study the effects of each factor on truancy. e.g. the relationship between different patterns of family living and truancy among children.

b) Similar types of research can be planned by controlling other variables besides those controlled in this study associated
with truancy.

c) A slightly different approach to the same problem can be attempted.

d) Along with truancy other types of delinquency found in school children can be studied intensively using different approaches.

e) The above mentioned suggestions are more concerned with the dynamic aspects of the problem of truancy and delinquency. A research project concerning the techniques of effective prevention and control of truancy and delinquency rates can be undertaken.

f) Lastly, when we face a number of problems and feel that they are important, we can boldly borrow from others the techniques and tools suitable for our needs and find out a solution. Even on the line followed by Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, Cyril Burt, William Healy and others, with necessary
modifications to suit our conditions,
researches can be planned and carried out
on the subject of truancy and delinquency
in India.