Chapter - VII

Major Findings, Discussion, Recommendations and Suggestions
## CHAPTER - VII

### MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

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CHAPTER VII
MAJOR FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS
AND SUGGESTIONS

7.1. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM PRIMARY HYPOTHESES

Part – A

Findings related to Reading comprehension; its dimensions; and their sub-skills

1. The level of attainment of standard IX students in the schools in Tuticorin District in
   Reading comprehension in English is moderate. That is 61% of the sample falls
   under this category.

2. Standard IX students' Reading comprehension in English with regard to Reading the
   lines is moderate. That is 70% of the sample comes under this category.

3. The level of attainment of standard IX students in the sub-skills of Reading the lines -
   R.L1 - Recognizing the meaning of words and phrases.
   R.L2 - Locating needed information.
   R.L3 - Sequencing contents.
   R.L4 - Understanding the context.
   is only moderate (72%, 63%, 57% and 61% respectively).

4. The level of Reading comprehension in English with regard to Reading between the lines
   is moderate (61%).

5. The level of attainment of standard IX students in the sub-skills of Reading between the
   lines –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L2 - Arriving at unsaid facts
   R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning.
   is only moderate (69%, 56% and 64% respectively).

6. The level of Reading comprehension in English with regard to Reading beyond the lines
   is moderate (62%).
Reading Comprehension

- Low: 19%
- Moderate: 62%
- High: 19%
Level of attainment in Reading the lines and its sub-skills

Sub-skills

- Reading the lines
- Guessing the meaning of words and phrases
- Locating needed information
- Sequencing contents
- Understanding the context

NO. of sample

Low
Moderate
High
Level of attainment in Reading between the lines and its Sub-skills

No. of sample

Sub-skills

Reading between the lines
Skill of interpreting contents
Arriving at unsaid facts
Deriving implied meaning

Low
Moderate
High
Level of attainment in Reading beyond the lines and its sub-skills

- Reading beyond the lines
- Establishing the cause of events
- Estimating the worth of the details given
- Decoding structural peculiarities
- Judging characters and ideas

No. of sample

Sub-skills

Low
Moderate
High
7. The level of attainment of standard IX students in the sub-skills of Reading beyond the lines –

R.Bey.L1 - Establishing the cause of events
R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas

is only moderate (65%, 62% and 63% respectively). However in the case of
R.Bey.L3 - Decoding structural peculiarities the attainment ranges from low to moderate. That is 38% and 45% of the samples fall under low and moderate categories respectively.

Part – B
Findings related to Reading comprehension and its dimensions with regard to background variables

1. The Boys of standard IX in the schools in Tuticorin district are moderate in Reading comprehension in English. That is 62% of the sample falls under the category.

2. The level of attainment of Boys in Reading comprehension in English with regard to-
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)

   is only moderate (70%, 65% and 62%).

3. Girls are moderate in Reading comprehension in English (61%).

4. The level of attainment of Girls in Reading comprehension in English with regard to-
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)

   is only moderate (69%, 58% and 62%).

5. The level of attainment of SC/ST students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English is moderate (62%).

6. The level of attainment of SC/ST students in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is only moderate (69%, 63% and 58%).

7. The level of attainment of Backward community students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English is moderate (61%).

8. The Backward community students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is only moderate (70%, 62% and 63%).

9. The Forward community students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English is moderate (60%).

10. The Forward community students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
    1) Reading the lines (R.L)
    2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
    3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is only moderate (67%, 48% and 56%).

11. The level of attainment of Hindu students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English is moderate (61%).

12. The Hindu students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
    1) Reading the lines (R.L)
    2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
    3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is only moderate (70%, 62% and 63%).

13. The level of attainment of Christian students of standard IX are moderate in Reading comprehension in English (61%).

14. The level of attainment of Christian students in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
    1) Reading the lines (R.L)
2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
is only moderate (73%, 70% and 52%).

15. The level of attainment of Muslim students of standard IX in Reading comprehension in English ranges from moderate to high (40% moderate and 44% high).

16. The level of attainment of Muslim students in Reading comprehension in English with regard to Reading the lines is moderate (55%). However in the case of Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines the attainment ranges from moderate to high. That is 48% and 42% of the sample falls under moderate and high categories respectively in R.Bet.L and 48% and 40% of the sample in R.Bey.L.

17. The pupils of Boys' schools in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English is moderate (67%).

18. The level of attainment of students in Boys' schools in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
is only moderate (72%, 70% and 67%).

19. The pupils of Girls' schools are moderate in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English (56%).

20. The level of attainment of students in Girls' schools in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
is moderate (64%, 56% and 58%).

21. The pupils of Co-educational schools are moderate in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English (61%).
22. The level of attainment of students in Co-educational schools in Reading comprehension in English with regard to -
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is moderate (72%, 60% and 61%).

23. The level of attainment of students in Rural schools in Reading comprehension in English is only moderate (64%).

24. The level of attainment of Rural schools in Reading comprehension in English with regard to -
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is only moderate (73%, 62% and 61%).

25. The standard IX students in Urban schools are moderate in Reading comprehension in English (61%).

26. The level of attainment of Urban school students in Reading comprehension in English with regard to -
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is only moderate (61%, 66% and 67%).

27. The level of attainment of students in Semi-urban schools in Reading comprehension in English ranges from high to moderate (49% moderate and 36% high).

28. The level of attainment of students in Semi-urban schools in Reading comprehension in English with regard to Reading the lines (R.L) is only moderate (71%). However in the case of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) the attainment ranges from moderate to high. That is 46% and 34% of the sample falls under moderate and high categories in Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and 53% and 35% of the sample falls under moderate and high categories in Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L).
29. Students with low Parental education are only moderate in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English (60%).

30. The level of attainment of students with low Parental education in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is only moderate (70%, 62% and 61%).

31. The level of attainment of students with moderate Parental education in Reading comprehension in English is only moderate (61%).

32. The level of attainment of students with moderate Parental education in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is only moderate (68%, 60% and 63%).

33. The level of attainment of pupils with high Parental education in Reading comprehension in English is only moderate (72%).

34. The level of attainment of pupils with high Parental education in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
   is moderate (75%, 70% and 56%).

35. The pupils with low Parental annual income are only moderate in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension (61%).

36. The level of attainment of students with low Parental annual income in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R.L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
3) Reading beyond the lines (R. Bey. L)
is moderate (69%, 63% and 62%).

37. The pupils with *moderate* Parental annual income are only moderate in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension (62%).

38. The level of attainment of students with *moderate* Parental annual income in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R. L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R. Bet. L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R. Bey. L)
is moderate (70%, 58% and 62%).

39. The level of attainment of students with *high* Parental annual income in Reading comprehension is moderate (66%).

40. The level of attainment of students with *high* Parental annual income in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R. L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R. Bet. L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R. Bey. L)
is only moderate (79%, 64% and 60%).

41. The level of attainment of students with *Kindergarten* education in Reading comprehension is moderate (59%).

42. Students with *Kindergarten* education in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R. L)
   2) Reading between the lines (R. Bet. L) and
   3) Reading beyond the lines (R. Bey. L)
is only moderate (63%, 57% and 63%).

43. The level of attainment of students *without* Kindergarten education in Reading comprehension is moderate (68%).

44. Students *without* Kindergarten education in their level of attainment in Reading comprehension in English with regard to –
   1) Reading the lines (R. L)
Difference in Gender vs. RL and its sub-skills

Difference in Gender vs. R.bed.L and its sub-skills

Difference in Gender vs. R.bey.L and its sub-skills
2) Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and
3) Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L)
is moderate (72%, 64% and 61%).

7.2. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM SECONDARY HYPOTHESES

1. Standard IX students’ skill of Reading comprehension in English is found to be influenced by their Gender. Girls have scored better than boys.

2. Standard IX students’ skills of Reading comprehension in English in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its sub-skills –
   R.L1 - Guessing the meaning of words and phrases.
   R.L2 - Locating needed information
   R.L3 - Sequencing contents
   R.L4 - Understanding the context.
   are influenced by their Gender. Girls have scored better than boys in all the above categories.

3. Standard IX students’ skills of Reading comprehension in English in terms of the following sub-skills of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning.
   are influenced by their Gender. That is in the case of the above categories girls have scored better than boys.

4. Standard IX students’ skills of Reading comprehension in English in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its sub-skills –
   R.Bey.L1 - Establishing the cause of events
   R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
   R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas
   are influenced by their Gender. In the above categories girls have scored better than boys.

5. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by their Social status. That is Forward community students score better than others.
6. Skills of Reading comprehension of standard IX students in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.L2 - Locating needed information
   R.L4 - Sequencing contents
are influenced by the student’s Social status. In the above categories Forward community students have scored better than others.

7. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L2 - Arriving at unsaid facts
are influenced by the student’s Social status. Forward community students have scored better than others in all the above categories.

8. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bey.L1 - Establishing the cause of events
   R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
   R.Bey.L3 - Decoding structural peculiarities
   R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas
are influenced by the student’s Social status. Students belonging to Forward community have scored better than others in R.Bet.L1, R.Bet.L2 and R.Bet.L4. However in R.Bey.L3 Backward community students have scored better than all others.

9. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by their Religion. Muslim students have scored better than the students of other Religions.

10. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.L2 - Locating needed information
   R.L3 - Sequencing contents
   R.L4 - Understanding the context
are influenced by the students’ Religion. In all above categories Muslim students have scored better than others.
Difference in Type of school vs. RL and its sub-skills

Difference in Type of school vs. R.bet.L and its sub-skill

Difference in Type of school vs. R.bey.L and its sub-skills
11. Skill of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its sub-skill - Skill of interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) are influenced by the Religion of the students. In the above categories Muslim students have scored better than others.

12. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L2 - Arriving at unsaid facts
   R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning.
are influenced by the students' Religion. That is in all the above categories Muslim students have scored better than others.

13. Skills of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by the Type of school. Students from Girls' school have scored better than others.

14. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.L1 - Guessing the meaning of words and phrases.
   R.L2 - Locating needed information.
   R.L3 - Sequencing contents.
   R.L4 - Understanding the context.
are influenced by the Type of school. In all the above categories students from Girls' schools have scored better than others.

15. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning.
are influenced by the Type of school. In all the above categories students from Girls' schools have scored better than others.

16. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
   R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas
are influenced by the Type of school. In all the above categories students from Girls’
schools have scored better than others.

17. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by the Locality of
school. Students from Semi-urban schools score better than others.

18. Skill of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its sub-skill –
R.L4 – Understanding the context are influenced by the Locality of schools. In the above
categories students from Semi-urban schools score better than others.

19. Skill of Reading comprehension in terms of R.Bet.L2 – Arriving at unsaid facts of
Reading between the lines is influenced by the Locality of school. That is the students in
Semi-urban schools are more competent in the above sub-skill.

20. Skill of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its
following sub-skills –
R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas

are influenced by the Locality of school. That is in the above categories students from
Semi-urban schools score better than others.

21. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by Parental
education. Students with high Parental education have scored better than others.

22. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its sub-skill –
R.L2 – Locating needed information are found to be influenced by the students’
Parental education. In the above categories students with high Parental education have
scored better that others.

23. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its
sub-skills –
R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning

are influenced by the students’ Parental education. In the above categories students with
high Parental education have scored better than others.

24. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its
sub-skill – R.Bey.L1 – Establishing the cause of events are influenced by the students’
Parental education. In the above categories students with high Parental education are found to be more competent.

25. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by their Parental annual income. That is students with high Parental annual income have scored better than others.

26. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its following sub-skills –

R.L2  - Locating needed information.
R.L4  - Understanding the context
are influenced by the students’ Parental annual income. That is in the above categories students with high Parental annual income have scored better than others.

27. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its following sub-skill – R.Bet.L1 – Skill of interpreting contents are influenced by Parental annual income. In the above categories students with high Parental annual income are more competent.

28. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its following sub-skills –

R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas
are influenced by the students’ Parental annual income. That is in the above categories students with high Parental annual income are found to be better.

29. Skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is influenced by the Kindergarten education. That is students with Kindergarten education have scored better than students without Kindergarten education.

30. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading the lines (R.L) and its following sub-skills –

R.L2  - Locating needed information.
R.L3  - Sequencing contents.
R.L4  - Understanding the context
are influenced by the students’ Kindergarten education. Students with Kindergarten education are more competent than students without Kindergarten education.
31. Skills of Reading comprehension in terms of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its following sub-skill –
   R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents
   R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning.
are influenced by the students’ Kindergarten education. That is students with Kindergarten education have scored better than students without Kindergarten education.

32. Skills of Reading comprehension of standard IX students in terms of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) and its following sub-skills –
   R.Bey.L1 - Establishing the cause of events
   R.Bey.L2 - Estimating the worth of the details given
   R.Bey.L3 - Decoding structural peculiarities
   R.Bey.L4 - Judging characters and ideas
are influenced by the students’ Kindergarten education. In all the above categories students with Kindergarten education are more competent.

7.3. MAJOR FINDINGS FROM TERTIARY HYPOTHESES

Findings related to Reading comprehension and its psychological variables

1. The level of attainment of standard IX students is moderate with regard to Reading readiness and its components.

2. The skill of Reading comprehension of standard IX students is positively related to their Reading readiness.

3. The skill of Reading the lines (R.L) and its sub-skill R.L1 - Recognizing the meaning of words and phrases are positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its component R.R1 - Perceiving information. RL2 - Locating needed information is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following components –
   R.R1 - Perceiving information
   R.R3 - Perceiving the root
   R.R5 - Readiness to guess the meaning
   R.L5 - Sequencing contents is not related to R.R and all its sub-skills.
R.L4 - Understanding the context is positively related to Reading readiness and its component Perceiving information (R.R1).

4. The skill of Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and two of its components – Perceiving information (R.R1) and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6).

R.Bet.L1 - Skill of interpreting contents is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following three components

R.R1 - Perceiving information

R.R3 - Perceiving the root

R.R6 - Reading graphs and tables.

R.Bet.L2 - Arriving at unsaid facts is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following three components –

R.R1 - Perceiving information

R.R5 - Readiness to guess the meaning

R.R6 - Reading graphs and tables.

Regarding R.Bet.L3 - Deriving implied meaning is positively related to the components of Reading readiness (R.R) – Perceiving information (R.R1).

5. The skill of Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following two components –

R.R1 - Perceiving information

R.R3 - Perceiving the root

R.Bey.L1 – Establishing the cause of events is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its component Perceiving information (R.R1).

R.Bey.L2 – Estimating the worth of the details given is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following three components –

R.R1 - Perceiving information

R.R3 - Perceiving the root

R.R6 - Reading graphs and tables.

R.Bey.L3 – Decoding structural peculiarities is not related to Reading readiness (R.R) and all its components.
However R.Bey.L4 – Judging characters and ideas is positively related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its following two components –

R.R1 - Perceiving information
R.R5 - Readiness to guess the meaning

6. Reading readiness and its following components –

R.R1 - Perceiving information
R.R4 - Perceiving similar expressions
R.R5 - Readiness to guess the meaning

are influenced by Gender.

With regard to Reading readiness (R.R) and all its above components except R.R5 – Readiness to guess the meaning, girls have scored better than boys.

7. Reading readiness (R.R) and its component – Perceiving information (R.R1) are influenced by the Social status of standard IX students. Forward community students have scored better than others.

8. Reading readiness and its components are not influenced by standard IX students’ Religion.

9. Reading readiness and its following components are influenced by Type of school –

R.R1 - Perceiving information
R.R4 - Perceiving similar expressions

In R.R1 Girls’ institutions have scored better than others. In R.R4 Boys’ institutions have scored better than others.

10. Reading readiness (R.R) and its following components are influenced by the Locality of school –

R.R1 - Perceiving information
R.R2 - Perceiving the concept
R.R5 - Readiness to guess the meaning
R.R6 - Reading graphs and tables.

In Reading readiness (R.R) and all its above components students from Semi-urban schools have scored better than others.

11. Parental education has significant influence over R.R1 – Perceiving information. In this component students with moderate Parental education have scored better than others.
Impact of Background variables over the Psychological characteristics

- Gender
- Social Status
- Religion
- Type of School
- Locality of School
- Parental Education
- Annual Income
- Kindergarten Education

Reading Readiness

- RR1
- RR2
- RR3
- RR4
- RR5
- RR6

Reading Attitude

Cognitive Style

Legend:
- Significant
- Not Significant
- Field Dependent
- Field Independent not available
12. **Reading readiness** (R.R) and all its components are not influenced by Parental annual income and students’ studies in Kindergarten schools prior to primary education.

13. **Reading attitude** of standard IX students is negative (56%).

14. **Reading attitude** of standard IX students is not influenced by their skill of Reading comprehension in English.

15. **Reading comprehension** of standard IX students with regard to Reading the lines, Reading between the lines, Reading beyond the lines and their sub-skills are not influenced by their **Reading attitude**.

16. Gender, Social status and Religion do not have significant influence over the **Reading attitude** of standard IX students.

17. Type of schools has significant influence over the **Reading attitude** of standard IX students. *Co-educational* school students have scored better than others.

18. Locality of school has significant influence over the **Reading attitude** of standard IX students. Students from *rural* schools have scored better than others.

19. Parental education and Parental annual income do not have significant influence over the **Reading attitude** of standard IX students.

20. Kindergarten education influence over the **Reading attitude** of standard IX students. Students without Kindergarten education have scored better.

21. **Cognitive style** of standard IX students is predominantly field dependent (71%).

22. **Cognitive style** of standard IX students belonging to the following categories –
   a. Boys and Girls
   b. SC/ST, BC and FC Communities
   c. Hindu, Christian and Islam Religions
   d. Boys’, Girls’ and Co-educational Schools
   e. Rural, Urban and Semi-urban Schools
   f. Low, moderate and high Parental education
   g. Low, moderate and high Parental annual income
   h. With and without Kindergarten education.

   is predominantly field-dependent.

23. **Cognitive style** (field dependent and field independent) of standard IX students does not significantly influence their skill of **Reading comprehension** in English.
24. The sub-skill of Reading the lines R.L4 – Understanding the context is associated with the Cognitive style (field dependent / independent) of standard IX students.

25. Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L), Reading beyond the lines and their sub-skills are not associated with standard IX students’ Cognitive style (field dependent / independent).

7.4. DISCUSSION

7.4.1. Reading comprehension

A large per cent (more than 60%) of the subjects (standard IX students) falls under ‘moderate’ category in the skill of Reading comprehension in English. It suggests that students of standard IX are not weak in the skill of Reading comprehension. In all the three levels of comprehension - Reading the lines (70%), Reading between the lines (70%), and Reading beyond the lines (62%), majority of students fall under the ‘moderate’ category. This may be due to the nature of classroom teaching. Most of the teachers read and explain the textbook. Not only in English but in other subjects also teachers read the text first and then they give detailed explanation. Moreover teachers make the students read the text for one reason or other in the class. Loud reading (oral reading) is the only form of activity found in most of the language classrooms. In the classroom while speaking English is totally absent; writing from memory occurs now and then in the English class. Because of these, students may have a passive understanding of reading and writing aspects of the English language i.e., the only prevalent language activity found in an English class is reading. Hence it may be concluded that because of the predominant reading activity in the class, the subjects studied are not very low in the skill of Reading comprehension.

Moreover the common practice in the schools is to make the students memorize answers given by the teachers. Monotonous reading is the only method possible for the students to memorize paragraphs after paragraphs in English. Therefore, in spite of poor exposure to English, the students read and read and memorize for the purpose of examination. Apart from the subject matter, the present day examinations in English, test the knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. Therefore the students read and memorize new vocabulary and grammatical constructions. This knowledge of grammar and vocabulary along with reading activity may be preventing the subjects from getting more weakened in their skills of Reading comprehension. It has been supported by
numerous studies, which have shown a strong correlation between the knowledge of vocabulary, grammar and Reading comprehension (Baker, 1995; Nagy, 1988; Nelson-Herber, 1986).

If at all English language is used outside the classroom, it is only for the purpose of reading. Students do not have the habit of listening to English news or English talks or conversing in English with any one outside the classroom. When they walk on the road they are likely to read advertisements in English. In bus stations and railway stations they are exposed to instructions, directions and schedules written in English. Even in hotels they may come across menu cards written in English. Some students may have genuine interest to read storybooks and newspapers in English. But it is rare to come across students engaged in creative writing and oral communication in English. Thus we can conclude that outside the classroom also reading is the only skill that is used often and more than that of the other three language skills - listening, speaking and writing. It may also be taken as a the reason why the subjects studied are not found to be very weak in Reading comprehension in English.

Though it has been inferred from the present study that the students of standard IX are not poor in Reading comprehension, it suggests the fact at the same time, that they are not strong in the skill of Reading comprehension (19%) and its dimensions Reading the lines (16%), Reading between the lines (23%) and Reading beyond the lines (17%). It may be attributed to the wrong methods of teaching adopted by the teachers and the wrong use of the text. Students read their text not out of interest, but out of force. They do not read books by themselves. Only for the purpose of examination they read the text. In the examination also most of the questions are factual ones and hence they do only surface level reading. Because of this practice it may be said that the students are prevented from developing the essential skills of comprehension and as such they are found to be moderate in Reading comprehension and its dimensions.

Moreover, there is no systematic teaching of the skills of comprehension. In classroom, students are trained to answer questions in such a way to get more marks in the examination but not to comprehend the given message in the text rightly. The purpose of non-detailed reader is to inculcate the habit of reading among students. Though non-detailed readers are prescribed for every standard, students never use them for pleasure reading. Instead of practicing individual and independent reading, students study non-detailed readers to answer questions in the examination. Therefore they are
not able to develop the habit of reading books written in English which is supposed to be a prerequisite for good comprehension.

In the component Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) the students of standard IX are very poor because of lack of variety in reading materials available for them. Now a days students are only text book oriented. English books other than the prescribed ones are unknown to the student community at the Secondary level. Schools also fail in providing the students with necessary accessibility to reading sources. Libraries are there only for namesake in schools. Variety in language use is quite unknown to the students of Secondary schools. It is often said that a well-stocked reading corner in the classroom gives children the opportunity to read. Newcastle and Ward (1985) state that teachers who read more books and are familiar with the reading materials in the classroom make the children observe and imitate their behaviour. Hence, absence of exposure to language varieties may be considered as a reason for the students being poor in Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3).

7.4.2. Reading readiness

Reading readiness is one’s mental disposition to read. Children need proper environmental stimulation if maturational development is to progress. Therefore the pupil’s readiness to read and their mental maturity may depend on the reading materials given to them. In a way all the three may be interrelated ones. Lakshmi Menon (1975) says that any programme of reading in the second language should start with the creation of desire in the mind of the child to read in that language so that he can find new and interesting things for himself. Koppar (1970) states that Reading readiness is related to Reading comprehension. The present study also reveals that the skill of Reading comprehension is positively related to Reading readiness.

Reading readiness and all its components are only moderate in the case of standard IX students. This may be due to lack of general reading habit. Children are not familiar with reading and reading related tasks. As their exposure to English language is limited they need a greater degree of mental and emotional preparation before they plunge into reading. Reading readiness depends upon the kindling of curiosity among children. But in our Indian setting children rarely get guidance in reading. Children are not exposed to books other than their texts. Schools fail to maintain classroom libraries.
where children get chance to read, and in home also generally they are not exposed to variety in reading. Due to this, pupils are not mentally prepared to decode the printed material. Through a well-maintained school library the child's interest in reading can be boosted. Attractive book display, book talk and story telling hours would make reading exciting to children. Gaver (1961) found that higher educational gains were made when there was a school library and students read more and better books in a school library.

The first dimension of Reading comprehension that is Reading the lines (R.L) and its sub-skill Guessing the meaning of words and phrases (R.L1) are related to Reading readiness (R.R) and its component Perceiving information (R.R1). Reading the lines (R.L) is getting the literal meaning and Guessing the meaning of words and phrases (R.L1) is fixing the meaning of words and phrases. This may be the reason why R.L1 and R.R1 are related to each other.

The present study shows that Locating needed information (R.L2) is related to Reading readiness and its components Perceiving information (R.R1), Perceiving the root (R.R3) and Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5). When the fact has been rightly understood, the information can reach the mind easily. For arriving at this end the root is to be identified and the right meaning is to be guessed from the content. This shows the presence of a cognitive link in Locating needed information (R.L2) in a passage i.e., the act of locating facts in a printed page suggests the progress in getting information, identifying the root and guessing the meaning.

Ability in Sequencing contents (R.L3) which is a skill of organization is not related to Reading readiness and all its components. It shows the nature of Reading readiness, the concept being treated as a jumping pad to plunge a beginner in second language learning into the act of reading. As it is understood it is a disposition comprising basic skills of reading for a smooth going in basic reading materials. Therefore higher level skills such as organizing or sequencing information gathered for further analysis may not be present. It may be the reason why R.L3 is not found to be related to Reading readiness.

Perception is a basic disposition to identify the newness of the words, structures and sentence construction. The ability to perceive the nature of words and sentences will certainly lead to getting at the message conveyed through them by the writer. In fact, perception is a process to take the reader right through the reading material with clarity.
and proper understanding. Naturally, therefore, the skill of Perceiving information (R.R1) will influence the skill of Understanding the context (R.L4) as reported in the present study.

It may also be inferred from the findings reported that of the six components of Reading readiness, the component Perceiving information (R.R1) is of paramount importance to facilitate comprehension at the level of Reading the lines:

The second dimension of Reading comprehension - Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) is a higher level cognition. This is done at interpretative level. Reading readiness is an essential factor for better reading. Hence the present study shows that there is positive correlation between them. Moreover it suggests that it is due to the presence of higher order capacity in Reading readiness as Reading graphs and tables (R.R6).

As discussed earlier the skill of Perceiving information (R.R1) sets the base for deeper thinking. With the help of this, when the cognition is raised to the level of Perceiving the root (R.R3) and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6), the individual may manifest the skill of Interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) a major sub-skill of Reading between the lines. As if to substantiate this theoretical interpretation, the present study has brought forth the finding revealing the correlation of R.Bet.L1 with R.R1, R.R3 and R.R6.

Arriving at unsaid facts (R.Bet.L2) is positively related to Reading readiness and its components Perceiving information (R.R1), Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5), and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6). In deducing information one pays maximum attention to get the definite idea. Precision in meaning is developed here. A person perceives the information, guesses the meaning, reads for a definite sequence of data and thus deduces information. Hence Arriving at unsaid facts (R.Bet.L2) is positively related to R.R, R.R1, R.R5 and R.R6.

An artist is capable of giving life to his experiences and imaginations on the canvas by a careful touch of his brush. Likewise a writer too pictures his experiences by a careful selection of words and forms of expressions. Therefore to understand and appreciate a creative work one should have a global understanding of the work as well as the ability to read what and how of the information provided by the author. In fact such painted pictures mean different things to different people. This is the skill generally termed as Deriving implied meaning (R.Bet.L3) in Reading comprehension. The present
study shows that the skill of Perceiving information (R.R1) is instrumental for such an in-depth reading. Therefore it may be inferred that the mental disposition to perceive information is a prerequisite for an in-depth analysis of hidden information in the reading material.

Of the six components of Reading readiness, Perceiving information (R.R1) and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6) are found to be highly influencing the various sub-skills of Reading between the lines. Hence it can be stated that Reading between the lines is very much decided by R.R1 and R.R6.

The third dimension of Reading comprehension is Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L). This is the evaluative or judgement aspect of reading. When the reader gains a higher level of understanding, the net outcome is inferential in nature. So Reading beyond the lines is an advanced form of reading. Hence Reading readiness an in-built capacity on the part of the reader to read is capable of influencing the reader to reach the level of Reading beyond the lines as shown in the present study.

To have an estimate of what is given for reading, first one should perceive what it is, i.e., the reader should have a good understanding of stated and unstated facts in the material. Naturally therefore, it is possible only with the help of the component of Reading readiness - Perceiving information (R.R1). However to arrive at this end, the reader is required to have the ability to identify the grammaticality of the word as verb, adverb, noun etc., the form of the words as single, compound, phrasal, hyphenated etc., the nature of the word as formal, informal, figurative etc., and then the shades of meaning of the word. Such an ability is found to be an important constituent of the mental disposition Reading readiness, named as Perceiving the root (R.R3). The finding deduced from the present study, the significant correlation of Reading beyond the lines with R.R1 and R.R3, seems to uphold this theoretical understanding of Reading comprehension.

Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1) refers to the ideas formed on parts of the whole. For example in testing a salt, one sees its colour, its taste, its texture and its smell. Thus, a person infers the various qualities of the salt first which in turn leads him to a conclusion about the salt. As one tests a salt, one can study about a person, place or thing with the help of the characteristic features. To study the character of a person one sees his physical appearance, observes his temperament, his likes and dislikes and the
manner in which he talks or reacts. Analysing various qualities lead to establish cause of events i.e., series of inferences lead to estimate the worth. The present study states that Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) is influenced by Reading readiness and its components Perceiving information (R.R1), Perceiving the root (R.R3), and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6). That is, for drawing valid conclusions one must possess the basic components of Reading readiness. It may be the reason why they are found to be related to each other. Moreover, it is very much confirmed by the finding that brings out the presence of a significant correlation between Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1) and Reading readiness, and its component Perceiving information (R.R1).

The concept of Readiness to read being investigated in the present study is meaningful only for those at the beginning (or) middle (or) secondary levels of learning English as a second language. What is generally provided to these categories of students for reading is formal, prosaic write-ups in the form of stories, narration etc. Materials borrowed from literary works are given only in simplified form so as to reduce the complexity of the language. Reading readiness goes well along with the reading of this sort. Once a familiarity is established with such reading and reading materials it is hoped that a reader can tackle texts of different language styles.

It may be noted that of the six components of Reading readiness, none of them is pertaining to language form or language style. This may be the reason why the sub-skill Decoding Structural Peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) an important one of Reading beyond the lines is not related to Reading readiness or any of its components.

Judging character and ideas (R.Bey.L4) is positively related to Reading readiness and its components Perceiving information (R.R1) and Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5). From this it may be understood that these two components which are helpful to gather the relevant information and understand the meaning of words and expressions from the context are capable of taking the reader to the level of comprehension Reading beyond the lines in the form of Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4).

Moreover of all six components of Reading readiness - Perceiving information (R.R1) and Perceiving the root (R.R3) are found to be the most influential; and Perceiving the concept (R.R2) and Perceiving similar expressions (R.R4) are of the least to enable the reader to comprehend at the level of Reading beyond the lines.
7.4.3. Reading attitude

Children should develop a favourable attitude towards reading. If they find reading a pleasant and effortless process they will be carried away by it. The present study reveals that Reading attitude of standard IX students is only negative. That is 56% of the sample falls under negative category of Reading attitude. Absence of reading habit among students may be a major cause for it. Schools also fail to provide systematic teaching of reading to students. Success in developing reading skills in students depends on the teacher. Curriculum requirements may take so much of the teaching hours that the teacher may not find enough time to teach reading. The selected materials should enable the reader to read comfortably with enjoyment. But in practice the materials in use are not properly graded ones and the methods being adopted for reading in our schools are dull and monotonous. There are no proper models also for students inside and outside the home to follow. Because of these reasons Reading attitude of the subjects studied may be negative.

Reading readiness is positively related to Reading comprehension and its dimensions. But Reading comprehension and its dimensions are not found to be influenced by Reading attitude. While positive attitudes foster progress in learning to read, negative attitudes will result in reading difficulties. Personal and social adjustment, home conditions, peer relations, teacher - pupil relations, and the instructional programme all influence attitudes towards reading (Guy L. Bond et al., 1989). Proper encouragement in reading develops proper attitude towards it. If the early attempts in reading are discouraging they consider reading English as a punishment. Proper attitude towards reading develops the skill of Reading comprehension. But the present study shows that there is no correlation between them. Contrary to this, Koppar (1970); Rosalie Whileway (1996); and Janet Lee (1994) state that Reading comprehension is related positively to Reading attitude.

There may be different reasons for the lack of significant correlation between Reading comprehension and Reading attitude of the students of standard IX. While their Reading attitude is negative in nature, their skill of Reading comprehension is moderate. If their state of Reading comprehension is decided by their attitude towards reading, certainly it would be low or very low. The very fact that their Reading
comprehension is moderate makes one think that there are certain factors personal or environmental influential enough to nullify the negative effect of Reading attitude. As observed in the present study over and above the influence of Reading readiness, Parental education, Parental annual income, Kindergarten education etc., there may be factors responsible for raising the level of Reading comprehension against the pull of the negative attitude of the subjects towards reading. These may be intelligence, verbal reasoning, oral fluency in English, learning style, achievement in the target etc.

7.4.4. Cognitive style

Cognition, the mental process, needed for the accomplishment of any task may be related to reading, an intellectual task. Specific cognitive abilities may be essential for the acquisition of specific skills such as reading which is often considered as a powerful means for knowledge acquisition, structuring and application of the acquired knowledge.

Many researches concerning the relationship of several aspects of Cognitive style and reading have been conducted. As a result Cognitive style is stated to be related to reading ability and achievement, (Witkin, H.A. and Goodenough, D.R., 1981). Field dependent children seem to get information in a global fashion and are easily influenced by their environment. On the other hand field independent children get information in an analytical manner and tend to be individualistic (Norman, 1980; Goswal, 1983; Randolph, 1983).

The present study shows that the Cognitive style of standard IX students is predominantly field dependent. By virtue of being field dependent one may perceive the field of focus as a whole or as an entity and because of such cognition one may fail to identify the parts or units of the field. Therefore one may lose sight of minor differences or peculiarities found in parts or units. Therefore the subjects studied in the present investigation may not be analytical while reading, due to their field dependency.

The present study aimed at assessing the levels of Reading comprehension in English of standard IX students. For answering questions asked at different levels of comprehension - Reading the lines (R.L), Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) one has to be a good analyser, synthesizer and evaluator. The higher level cognition tasks call for a higher level analysing, synthesizing and evaluating skills. But, the subjects being field dependent may not be highly analytical or evaluative to
cope with the demand of higher level tasks of cognition. This may be the reason why they are only moderate in their skills of comprehension.

**Cognitive style** is a form of mental picture formed on visual or audio or other memory perceptions. One’s mental picture may be analytical or global in nature at the moment of a perception giving way to field independent / dependent Cognitive style. Several studies have shown that Cognitive style is capable of influencing learning (Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough, and Karp, 1962 / 1974; Witkin Leuis, Hetzman, Machover, Meissner and Wapner, 1954 / 1972; Witkin 1976). Field independence was found to be related to reading achievement by Blaha (1982).

Therefore it was assumed in the beginning of the study that Cognitive style could influence the skill of Reading comprehension. However the present study shows that only Understanding the context (R.L4) is influenced by Cognitive style. All the other sub-skills of the three dimensions are not found to be influenced as they are of higher level cognitive acts. Moreover it may be attributed to the Cognitive style field dependency of the subjects. Blake (1985) failed to find a relationship between field independence - dependence and passage comprehension.

### 7.5. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO GENDER

_Boys_ and _Girls_ of standard IX are very much identical in their skill of Reading comprehension in English, that is they fall under the ‘moderate’ category in the skill of Reading comprehension (62% and 61%) and its dimensions Reading the lines (70% and 69%) Reading between the lines (65% and 58%) and Reading beyond the lines (62% and 62%). Shivapuri (1982), Bhishikar (1980) and Srinivasa Rao (1986) investigated and found that sex differences were not significant with regard to reading ability.

The present study was made with an assumption that Gender would influence the skill of Reading comprehension. In Tamilnadu there are cultural differences in the bringing of girls and boys in all aspects. Compared to boys, girls are soon withdrawn from schools and this reflect the society’s attitudes towards girls. _Boys_ are free to have friends and to spend their time in friends’ company. They are free to receive and visit friends. Not only they are permitted to visit friends but also to go to various places where they could get variety of exposure. They are independent inside and outside home
and they are not much restricted like girls. Relatively they think on their own and act according to their likes and dislikes. Thus they are more domineering at home and school compared to girls.

Moreover Boys have freedom in decision making even in their education, i.e., in selecting courses of study, they act more independently. They are allowed to leave their home and home town for the sake of getting higher education. On the contrary, girls are allowed to select their course of study with much restrictions. They are not easily allowed to go to distant places for their education. Parents feel that it is better to educate their female wards in the nearby educational institutions. Though the course they are interested in is not available in the nearby institutions, they are forced to join there only.

Boys have more time to study and they can maximum utilise the study time available. But, at the same time due to their physical condition and the duties at home girls are not able to utilise their free time available for their studies. They are supposed to help their mother and other family members. At times they are supposed to take care of the younger ones also.

Boys are encouraged to participate in Co-curricular and Extra-curricular activities, which are denied to girls though they are interested in them. Girls are unable to make use of their latent talents and they are in a shell.

Due to all the above reasons a difference was expected in Reading comprehension and its skills. But the result of the present study shows that both boys and girls are of the same category that is 'moderate'. It shows Reading comprehension a cognitive characteristic is not affected by the cultural elements found in the life style of both the sexes. It also upholds the fact that cognitive development is of the same level for both boys and girls.

It may be attributed to the similarity of the educational environment available for them. First of all both of them have the same school setting. There is no separate library and classroom for boys and girls. The learning materials provided to them are the same and both undergo the same mode of teaching. The type of examination is the same for both boys and girls. Due to these, the cultural variations in the bringing up of boys and girls are found to be nullified so as to wield any influence over their skills of Reading comprehension.
Though boys and girls fall under the moderate category in the skills of Reading comprehension, subtle differences are seen on deeper analysis on the basis of their mean scores. Girls seem to score better than boys in all the dimensions of the skill of Reading comprehension. Most of the studies reveal that girls have better achievement compared to boys. The studies of Rao (1975), Agrawal (1981) and Dave (1973) are on this line. In the skill of Reading comprehension in English also many studies, for example Dass (1984), Bharat Joshi (1996) and others state that girls score higher in Reading comprehension than boys. This supremacy of girls may be attributed to their general higher achievement in all the subjects of study.

It is a fact that both boys and girls are handicapped towards the learning of English. However girls by virtue of their characteristic-patience, may concentrate more on their learning tasks in spite of the negative attitude of parents towards female education. They listen to all instructions carefully and do work in a more involved way. They are regular in their work and have the will to follow instructions without fail, and fulfill teachers’ expectations. In fact one can see willful involvement is all the tasks they undertake.

Moreover girls’ superior social relation with elders may also be a reason for their achievement. As they are generally cordial to all, there is a congenial teacher student relationship and this may facilitate their achievement. Shivapuri (1982) states that the relationship between personality factors and educational achievement is significant only for girls. As girls are less critical about their teachers and elders, they get good encouragement from them for a better attainment. Direct intervention of parent or teacher or tutor in the comprehension process increases reading comprehension (Bos, 1982). Thus elders can prompt thinking, and can provide an insight into the language ability of girls. It may be confirmed therefore, that these characteristics of girls may help them overcome the hurdles in language learning and cause them score higher than boys in Reading comprehension.

Cognitively too girls are more inclined to gain proficiency in language. Agrawal (1981) found that personal and cognitive factors were meaningful in the context of reading ability. Pamela Cynthia (1991) in her study stated that cognitive abilities were strongly related to second language reading performance and progress.
**Reading readiness** and its components Perceiving information (R.R1), Perceiving similar expressions (R.R4) and Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5) are found to be influenced by Gender. In **Reading readiness** girls seem to score better than boys. This may be attributed to the linguistic aptitude of the girls. Girls seem to lead boys in Perceiving information (R.R1) and Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5). Such a superiority in **Reading readiness** seems to account for their better achievement in **Reading comprehension** and its dimensions. The finding of Vimala Devi (1986) supports it. Her study shows that girls experience less difficulty than boys in reading. In Perceiving similar expressions (R.R4) boys are on the lead.

In the present study, it is found that though the boys’ mean achievement score in **Reading comprehension** is less than that of girls, their level of attainment in this regard is found to be moderate as that of girls. In the context of **Reading readiness** the moderate level of attainment in **Reading comprehension** may be attributed to their better gains in R.R4. Gender does not have any significant impact over **Reading attitude**. That is, as in the case of the total sample, boys and girls of standard IX manifest only a negative attitude towards reading. This may be another reason for the subjects being rated only moderate in their skill of **Reading comprehension**. In **Cognitive style** too boys and girls are predominantly field-dependent. Studies by Berry (1966), Arthur (1967), Copeland (1983), Helen (1983) and Ulay (1983) indicate that male pupils are more field independent than female pupils. Studies by Coats (1974) and Parikh (1983) reveal female children to be more field-independent. But, the present study contradicts the above findings and states that both male and female pupils are predominantly field-dependent.

**7.6. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLE RELATED TO SOCIAL STATUS**

Majority of the subjects randomly selected from schools be they SC/ST or backward or forward communities fall under ‘moderate’ category in the skill of **Reading comprehension** (62%, 61% and 60%) and its dimensions Reading the lines (69%, 70% and 67%) Reading between the lines (63%, 62% and 48%) and Reading beyond the lines (58%, 63% and 56%).
Many studies (Aikara, J., 1990; Mistry, D.S., 1988; Wadhawan, B.G., 1988) have shown that the students' level of achievement in school subjects is bound to differ according to their communities. Generally students belonging to forward communities hail from families which are socially, economically and educationally well off. As these families have good reputation in society, their children may get good recognition in the schools. Obviously they won't be first generation learners as their elders are highly educated. They may get timely help and proper academic guidance from their elders. Besides a decent living, they are blessed with the sources needed for a good academic pursuit. Since all these essential resources are just open to them, they are expected to be better than students of other communities.

*Backward community* students, mostly belong to middle class families which predominantly rely on educational endeavors. Education being their only asset they embark on salaried jobs. Higher the education, the higher will be their occupational status. Therefore parents in backward communities are keen on educating their wards to the level possible to provide a better future for them.

For long, *SC/ST* families were economically and educationally deprived. Fundamental rights were denied to them and they were kept as a separate entity in all social activities. Now by the measures taken by the government, they are being brought into the main stream of life. Therefore majority of the learners of these communities are first generation learners and as such they are unable to get educational guidance from their elders. They seldom get opportunities to study in schools with good infrastructure. Still they are not exposed to good educational environment inside and outside their home. The surrounding in which they are reared does not enable them to listen to instructions of competent teachers. By the governmental assistance in the form of free education, scholarship, mid-day meal, free books, uniform etc. they get some education instead of nothing. Due to this lower Social status and economic and educational backwardness, *SC/ST* students may not stand on par with students of other communities.

Many research studies (Singh, 1975; Singh, 1979; Das, 1969) state that students of *SC/ST* are of less calibre and intelligence than students of other communities. Contrary to this some studies (Prince, 1981; Sharma, 1982 and Singh, 1982) found that the educational aspirations of the SC students were high and these students did not take the occupations of their father. Their educational aspirations are as high as that of the
students of the privileged classes. Financial assistance and reservations may have facilitated their educational advancement.

Because of all the above reasons difference in scholastic achievement between the three different communities are anticipated. But, the present study shows that all the three come under the 'moderate' category in the skill of Reading comprehension in English. The following may be the reasons why all are of the same level in Reading comprehension.

The school, which is the only source for learning English, offers the students of different categories the same exposure to the second language. The investigator has undertaken this study only in regional medium schools and hence all the students are exposed to English language only for a short duration. They are expected to learn English during the English period lasting for only 45 minutes a day. Students as such, irrespective of their community make only a poor use of English inside and outside the school, i.e., students of different communities are on the same plane as far as English is concerned.

This may also be attributed to their long years of education, i.e., from standard I to standard IX. Marked difference expected or found in the students of these categories at the entry point may have been erased off by these nine long years of exposure to education of same kind and same status. It explains, therefore, the phenomenon of students of different communities pooling at the moderate level in their skill Reading comprehension.

Private coaching is given in majority of the schools to weaker students. It also helps in language improvement. Moreover there are certain social organizations which offer free board and lodge to certain categories of students who can't afford to pay for these facilities. The state as well as the central governments on their part offer free coaching campaigns at different levels for deserving students in the underprivileged classes. Moreover, reservation of seats in higher and professional studies, relaxation in marks and age at the entry points, concession in payment of fees, monetary assistance to buy books and meet travel expenses, reservation of vacancies in the job market and so on and so forth for students of SC/ST communities have gone a long way in reducing the gap between them and the privileged ones in the field of education. Therefore this may also be considered as a reason for the 'moderate' level of achievement shown by students of different communities in Reading comprehension.
However the differential analysis of the individual attainments of these three groups reveal significant differences between the students of SC/ST, backward and forward communities. Many studies (Patel, 1984; Singh 1979 etc.) show that caste plays a major role in predicting school achievements. Forward community students are superior in school performance to SC/ST or backward community students. Students of forward communities are often exposed to good interpersonal interaction at home. Since all the members of the families are educated, there is a possibility of sharing their experiences in a variety of ways, i.e., the language, be it Tamil or English, may be used in different forms to suit different situation. Standard form of the language may be used even in ordinary communications. All these lead to a favourable home condition for forward community students to make use of the language for different communicative purposes. They get plenty of chances to visit libraries and to have libraries at home where they can collect and read books of their own choice. As they have televisions at home and avail many English satellite channels like BBC, Discovery etc. they are exposed to variety in the use of the language. Hence it may be interpreted that these factors may have caused positive effect over the attainment of the forward community students in Reading comprehension.

In all the three dimensions of Reading comprehension - Reading the lines (R.L), Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) forward community students are superior to others. In the comprehension skill Locating needed information (R.L1) and Understanding the context (R.L4) forward community students score better than others. Information can be grasped correctly only with the help of proper reading habit and thus forward community students fair higher than others in these sub-skills.

In the Skill of interpreting contents (R.Bet.L2), and Arriving at unsaid facts (R.Bet.L3), forward community students are better than others. They are able to get the exact meaning and interpret the message according to the context. In Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1), Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) and Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) also forward community students are on the lead. Critical reading goes beyond the level of comprehension and it requires the reader to evaluate material and ascertain its worth and usefulness. As forward community students are strong in these sub-skills they are found to be better than others in all the three dimensions.
But in Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) *backward community* students score higher. It may be attributed to the reading habit found among this community people. Reading newspapers and storybooks are common among the children of this community. They are anxious to develop their general knowledge and they try to get recognition in the society. Their parents like their wards to be well informed and so they read books other than texts. As their elders are literate or highly educated they have the feasibility to clarify their doubts and get language correction. Therefore the variety in language style made available for the students of *backward community* through varied reading materials may be the reason for their better achievement in the sub-skill Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) of the dimension Reading beyond the lines.

*Reading readiness* and its component Perceiving information (R.R1) are influenced by the Social status of standard IX students. *Forward community* students score better than others as in the case of the finding reported by Dileep Kumar (1983). This may be because of the educational environment available at home. In *forward community* families one can see intense use of language and because of this there may be an early setting of reading habit which in turn influences them to score higher in *Reading readiness* and its components.

Social status does not have any significant impact over *Reading attitude*. The present finding shows the absence of subtle differences among the subjects in *Reading attitude* due to variations in their community. That is as in the case of the total sample the students belonging to different communities also possess only a negative attitude towards reading. Difference in community has not made any remarkable difference in the cognitive realm of the subjects' personality. Therefore it may be concluded that of the three psychological facts studied, only *Reading readiness* is influential enough to alter the skills of *Reading comprehension* of the subjects belonging to different communities.

**7.8. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO RELIGION**

*Hindus* form the majority of the population of India. But they are afflicted with large percentage of illiteracy. Most of them belong to *SC/ST* and backward communities and they are socially and economically backward. They are from the *Rural* areas and
their main occupation is agriculture. Now in search of education and better occupation they are migrating to Urban areas. Only the socially upper caste Hindus enjoy Social status by virtue of their wealth and education.

Christians form the minority but predominantly they are educated. Christian missionaries during the British rule founded many educational institutions and because of this most of the Christians turned out to be literates. Moreover it may be presumed that the forefathers being educated by the native speakers of English language, might have influenced the successive generations and as a result the present set of students may have an edge over others. Many schools and higher educational institutions are there throughout the state run by Christian charitable trusts and Christian diocesans. Due to these reasons Christian students are likely to score higher in the skill of Reading comprehension than the students from other Religions.

Like Christians, Muslims are also a minority in Tamilnadu, but they are mainly business oriented. They do business inland and overseas and most of them undertake jobs abroad. For emancipation of their people, they also run educational institutions at all levels. Even then, still they are considered backward in education. In certain places still Islamic women folk are not allowed to go out for education or for job. Therefore one may not expect higher level academic achievement in pupils of this Religion.

But contrary to the prevailing notions the present study reveals that Christians are just moderate in Reading comprehension and its dimensions (70%, 73%, 70% and 66%) as Hindus (61%, 70%, 60% and 62%), and students of Islam Religion (40%, 55%, 48% and 48%) are far better than the other two categories.

Several factors may be responsible for this outcome. The Christian institutions, once the pioneers in education, seem to have lost their value orientations. One can see student unrest prevailing in most of the Christian institutions. Deterioration of discipline and character is noted among students and teachers. The present day teachers do not seem to give importance to the inculcation of good habits among their students. Devoted and dedicated teachers are becoming rare even in institutions of repute. Group conflicts based on caste and community mar the tone of Christian spirit in Christian institutions. Politics too seems to have entered the portals of renowned Christian institutions. Mismanagement and mal-administration seem to have eroded the past glory of Christian institutions. Christian charity and sacrifice have become acts of yesteryears. Many
examples can be seen in dailies, which show the unrest prevailing in many Christian educational institutions. Because of these reasons there may be a fall in the attainment of the Christian students in their skill of Reading comprehension.

Most of the Hindu students are very much bound by family tradition and customs. Therefore they do not seem to be properly motivated for academic studies. The Hindu students belonging to upper caste families are tossed between their family occupation and the not so easily available job of their dream. The Hindu students of the lower caste groups suffer from inadequacy of learning resources and learning environment. Moreover, majorities of them do not seem to have the awareness to choose the right occupation. They are carried away by family oriented works. This may be the reason for them for not being superior in the skill of Reading comprehension in English.

The higher level achievement of Muslim students in Reading comprehension over and above the Christian and Hindu students may be an eye opener to those who criticise the enforcement of strict discipline in the schools at secondary and higher secondary levels. After the introduction of plus two classes in the schools, the school atmosphere has undergone a drastic change. In the name of freedom, the plus two students are let free in most of the schools. But in reality many of the school administrators admit the fact that they are incapable of controlling the plus two students as in the case of the students of secondary classes. However empirically it has been shown that better the discipline, the higher is the percentage of passes. As if to iterate this fact, Muslim schools, noted for their strict discipline, have recorded a better scoring in Reading comprehension. Because of the discipline maintained at home and at school they are prevented from distractions common to this age group and made attentive to studies. Moreover such a discipline encourages the teachers to work with more enthusiasm and dedication.

In the skill of Reading comprehension and its dimensions Reading the lines (R.L), Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L), and Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) Muslim students are on the lead. This shows that not only in surface level reading but also in higher level reading these students are better.

In locating needed information (R.L2), sequencing contents (R.L3) and Understanding the context (R.L4) Muslim students fair better than others. It shows that they are competent enough to derive information from the printed material and also have
the ability to arrange them in logical sequence. These students are also superior in the sub-skill of Reading between the lines - Skill of interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1). It seems that the competence to grasp information enables them to score higher in the skill of interpreting information.

In the higher level skills Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1), Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) and Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) also Muslim students are superior to others. It may be attributed to their attainsments at the basic level, Reading the lines and the middle level, Reading between the lines. Such a competence seems to provide them with a strong base to raise their level of comprehension to Reading beyond the lines. All these have become possible for the category of students because of their involvement in academic and language oriented activities. In short, the strict discipline governing their learning activities acts as a lever in Muslim schools to lift the academic performance of the Muslim students to the heights well above the Christian and Hindu students.

Cultural difference due to Religion was anticipated in the development of Reading readiness. But the study shows that the religious culture could not prevail over the basic Tamil culture in secondary schools as far as Reading readiness is concerned. That is as in the case of the total sample, students of different religions seem to possess only moderate level of Reading readiness.

Religion is not found to have any significant impact over Reading attitude. Family tradition, family ideology and family status may be the outcome of one’s Religion or community or Gender, which in turn may colour one’s attitude. The present finding proves the prevalence of the common culture of these subjects over the factors - Gender, Social status and Religion. Difference due to Religion does not have significant impact on the Cognitive style of standard IX students. Irrespective of Religion they are predominantly field dependent in their Cognitive style. From this one could infer the fact that the level of reading comprehension recorded by students of Christian, Hindu and Muslim is not in any way influenced by the psychological factors - Reading readiness, Reading attitude and Cognitive style.
7.9. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO TYPE OF SCHOOL

The present study shows that the skill of Reading comprehension and its dimensions Reading the lines, Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines of standard IX students in different types of schools Boys' (61%, 72%, 70% and 67%), Girls' (56%, 64%, 56% and 58%) and Co-educational (61%, 72%, 60% and 61%) are of only moderate level.

The total sample also reveals the same, that is, the skill of Reading comprehension and its dimensions are of only moderate level. Though this artificial bifurcation (Boys', Girls', and Co-educational) is a prolonged one, no visible change is seen in the educational environment of the different type of schools. Thus no difference is also noted in the Reading comprehension of standard IX students belonging to different types of schools, that is all are of the moderate level.

The samples selected from Boys' or Girls' or Co-educational schools, it seems, may not be unique. The subjects chosen may be of the same calibre and seem to come from the same type of families. No fundamental difference is worth mentioning in the cultural aspects of the subjects too. Because of all these, no distinct difference is observed in the skill of Reading comprehension and its dimensions of these subjects.

Though the subjects are categorized as belonging to Boys', Girls' and Co-educational schools, their exposure to English language is the same. That is, only for a limited duration they are exposed to English language in their classrooms, and the curriculum and examination systems are the same in all the schools. Hence no difference is likely to arise in the attainment of the students in Reading comprehension and its dimensions.

However, in spite of large percentage of subjects from each type of schools falling under moderate category, the mean achievement score of the students in all the three types of institutions is found to differ. Students of Girls' schools are on the lead in Reading comprehension and its dimensions - Reading the lines, Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines.

Students from Girls' schools seem to score higher in Guessing the meaning of words and phrases (R.L1), which is the ability, needed to identify the correct information. This skill helps them to score higher in Locating needed information (R.L2) which helps
them to get the contents of the message. This skill further helps the students in Sequencing contents (R.L3) that is to put ideas and events in a sequential order. Understanding the context (R.L4) is to understand the necessary information for one’s purpose and in this skill also students from Girls’ schools are better. The better achievement in the above sub-skills of Reading the lines help the students in Girls’ institutions to do well in literal comprehension.

Skill of interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) is the ability to see the underlying information. Deriving implied meaning (R.Bet.L3) is delving deep into the material for getting fresh clues on hidden information. These two sub-skills of Reading between the lines help the subjects score better in inferential comprehension.

Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) is to bring the logic out of a given message. Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) is to recognize the author’s view by analysis and synthesis. As students of Girls’ schools seem to be better in the above sub-skills of Reading beyond the lines they seem to score higher in critical reading.

It has already been reported that in the total sample, Girls score better than Boys in Reading comprehension. Since only Girls are there in Girls’ schools, naturally, the sub-sample formed on Girls’ schools is on the lead. There are only boys in Boys’ schools and in Co-educational schools also boys are predominant. Therefore as per the general sample students of Boys’ and Co-educational schools are less competent in the skill of Reading comprehension, its dimensions and its sub-skills.

In Girls’ schools one can witness more discipline, and the school authorities also pay more attention to academic works. Teachers are said to take strenuous effort in such schools to impart effective learning. No wonder, there could be more teacher-student interaction too. Over and above girls are known for their hard work and they take learning as a serious task. Therefore they tend to pay more attention to their studies. Moreover, Girls are endowed with higher linguistic aptitude and thus naturally students from Girls’ schools are bound to score better in Reading comprehension than the students of Boys’ schools.

Type of school influences the components of Reading readiness Perceiving information (R.R1) and Perceiving similar expressions (R.R4). Students from girls’ institution seem to be more competent in grasping information while reading. It is found
to be so because of their better reading readiness in the aspect of Perceiving information (R.R1). However Boys seem to be more analytical and more inclined to perceive word peculiarities because of their better preparedness in Perceiving similar expressions (R.R4).

Type of school has significant influence over reading attitude. Students of Co-educational institutions seem to be better than others in reading attitude. At the school level, Co-educational schools are considered to be problematic. Normally parents do not prefer these schools. In such schools most of the students show average or below average level of achievement in studies. But, in such an atmosphere, these institutions have recorded a better reading attitude. In these schools poor achievers may have a notion that their high achieving peers are so because of their profound reading. The high achieving students may also think that they can achieve still better grades if they are in constant touch with the learning materials as in the case of high achievers in other renowned institutions. This sort of tendency towards reading in the students of Co-educational institutions may have caused this significant difference in the nature of their reading attitude from that of their counterparts. But, on the other hand Type of school does not have any significant impact over the cognitive style of standard IX students. Therefore it may be understood that the students of Boys' schools are moderate in their reading comprehension because of their better reading readiness in the form of Perceiving similar expressions (R.R5). However, the supremacy of students in Girls' school is found to be due to their superiority in reading readiness in the form of Perceiving information (R.R1). Only cognitive style is of less significance in influencing the reading comprehension of students in Boys', Girls' and Co-educational schools. Likewise the psychological aspect - reading attitude seems to enable the students of Co-educational schools to reach the level of moderate in reading comprehension.

7.10. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO LOCALITY OF SCHOOL

Statistical analysis shows that locality of school influences the attainment in reading comprehension. Comprehension is the end of all reading activity. Students from Semi-urban schools score better than their counterparts in the skill of reading comprehension in English.
The sub-skill of Reading the lines - Understanding the context (R.L4) is influenced by the Locality of school. This skill helps in identifying the information and getting the literal meaning of the text. Reading between the lines an interpretative level of comprehension and its sub-skill Arriving at unsaid facts (R.Bey.L2) are influenced by the Locality of school, Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) is the reader's judgement, based on his own experiences. Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) is the skill where the reader infers the traits of the character from contextual clues. Students of Semi-urban schools are better than the students of other categories in the above sub-skills of Reading beyond the lines, and this ability in turn helps the students in Semi-urban schools to score better in the dimension Reading beyond the lines, a critical level reading.

The percentage analysis shows that in the basic level of comprehension that is in Reading the lines students of all the three localities are the same. However in the higher level comprehension skills - Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines, large percentage of students of Semi-urban schools are found to fall under the moderate and high categories of attainment. This may be the reason why a marked difference is noted in favour of Semi-urban students in the skills of Reading comprehension in English.

Contrary to the findings of Dhanger (1985); Srinivasa Rao (1986) and Vora (1982) upholding the superiority of Urban schools over Rural schools in reading, the present study states that students of Semi-urban schools score better than the Urban students. Some sociological reasons may be given for this difference. Semi-urban locality may have large percentage of middle class population trying to come up in life through education. Therefore they may consider education much important. As a result teachers in Semi-urban schools may be forced to work harder to make the students learn better. Moreover, reading activity may be predominant in the middle class families due to the availability of newspapers, magazines and periodicals. Thus Semi-urban students may be better equipped than Rural and Urban students in the basic skills of reading so as to manifest a higher level of Reading comprehension in English.

Locality of school influences Reading readiness and its components Perceiving information (R.R1), Perceiving the concept (R.R2), Readiness to guess the meaning (R.R5) and Reading graphs and tables (R.R6). Many of the studies on Reading readiness have investigated it in relation to locality as Rural and Urban. Several studies as in the case
of Patel (1983) have brought forth the finding that Urban groups are better than the Rural ones. Unlike these studies in the present investigation the investigator has studied the locality in terms of Rural, Urban and Semi-urban. Because of this a detailed understanding of the sub groups which stand distinct due to economic, educational and social conditions is made possible.

The present study states that Semi-urban students are superior in Reading readiness and its components R.R1, R.R2, R.R5 and R.R6. In Semi-urban locality majority of the population may be of middle class status. A large percentage of them may be in white collar or blue collar jobs with higher academic or technical qualifications. Therefore for their children there may be a better exposure to reading and reading related activities. It is confirmed by the higher level achievement of Semi-urban students in the skills of Reading comprehension. Moreover it also reveals the fact that the higher economic and higher Social status of the Urban placed pupils and the lower economic and lower Social status of the Rural oriented pupils are of no use for the respective pupils with regard to their development of Reading readiness.

Likewise Locality of school seems to influence the Reading attitude of standard IX students. The general criticism is that students from Rural schools are poor in English. Dhanger (1985) states that pupils from Urban areas are better in reading compared to Rural students. Patil (1985) states the Urban groups are superior to the Rural groups on English language achievement. Srinivasa Rao (1986) states that students in Rural are significantly backward when compared to the students in Urban areas in reading skills. All this shows the higher level achievement of Urban students over Rural students in the skill of reading. Naturally, therefore one may presuppose the presence of positive attitude towards English in these students. But, the present study shows that students in Rural areas are better in Reading attitude. For the general population studied, Reading attitude is negative whereas their achievement in Reading comprehension is moderate. In the case of Rural students their attitude towards reading is positive unlike the students of other categories. But in spite of this they are of the moderate level as others in Reading comprehension. It may be because of the pull of certain other intellectual, social, emotional and linguistic factors found in them. However, the presence of positive
Reading attitude in them shows there tendency to go up higher and higher in the ladder of education.

Subjects classified on the basis of locality are found to be one and the same as far as their Cognitive style is concerned. That is, unlike Reading readiness and Reading attitude, Cognitive style does not influence the Reading comprehension of the students of these categories.

7.11. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO PARENTAL EDUCATION

A high percentage of students of different Parental education Low (60%, 70%, 62% and 86%), Moderate (61%, 68%, 60% and 63%) and High ((72%, 75%, 70% and 56%) falls under the moderate level in Reading comprehension and its dimensions. Therefore the conclusion drawn is that irrespective of Parental education the attainment of standard IX students in Reading comprehension is only moderate.

However the differential analysis shows that Parental education influences attainment in Reading comprehension. When the students of the three categories are compared on the basis of their mean scores with regard to Reading comprehension, its dimensions and their sub-skills it is found that the mean scores of the students with high Parental education is significantly higher than the other two categories i.e., low and moderate.

Students with high Parental education score higher in Locating needed information (R.L2) which form the basis for literal comprehension that is Reading the lines. In the skill of Interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) and Deriving implied meaning (R.Bet.L3) students with high Parental education are superior. As students score higher in interpreting the information and in getting the hidden facts they seem to be superior in Reading between the lines which is done at the interpretative level. In Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1) students with high Parental education score better. Due to this they score higher at the evaluative level of reading, termed as Reading beyond the lines.

Moreover, higher Parental education is likely to lead to higher Parental involvement in education. Subramanyam (1984) states parental support is an important determinant in deciding the child’s success in reading. Many researches (Rao, 1965; Mathur, 1963; Gray, 1960; Anand, 1973; Eric, 1960) are of the same opinion that education of parents play a major role in reading achievement. Higher educational aspiration on the part of
the parents fosters higher educational values and make them serve as a model for the younger generation (Albert, 1990).

When parents are highly educated, it provides their wards a good facility for clarification of doubts, consolidation of knowledge, strengthening of basic reading skills etc. Involved parents could make a difference in their child's reading achievement scores (Healy, 1991; Resh and Wilson, 1990; Topping, 1989; Taylor and Dorsey Gains, 1988; Kemp, 1987 and Neale, 1984). Thus Parental education influences the skill of Reading comprehension, its dimensions and their sub-skills of standard IX students. The present finding strongly supports Ronald Taylor's (1992) statement that language development and leisure-time reading are closely linked with the literate behaviour in the family.

Parental education seems to influence only one component of Reading readiness that is Perceiving information (R.R1). Jean Grant (1993) found that there was a significant relationship between Reading readiness and Parental education. The present study finds students of moderate Parental education seem to score better than others. This may be because of the fact that children of low Parental education may not have the basic facility to read. Highly educated category may have the needed resources but may not be much involved in reading because of many distractions like chit chat, T.V., video, indoor and outdoor games etc. Hence, children with moderate Parental education may pay more attention to reading because of not so much indoor activities.

Unlike Reading readiness, Reading attitude is not influenced by Parental education. It shows that Parental education may foster Reading readiness, but not necessarily positive Reading attitude. Moreover, it gives rise to the fact that possession of a particular type of skill need not necessarily give rise to a positive attitude towards the performance of that task. In the same way Parental education is not found to influence the Cognitive style of standard IX students. Venugopal (1994) also found that pupils do not differ in their Cognitive style based on their Parental education. But studies by Perney (1975), MacEachson (1975) and Miller (1970) demonstrated field dependence / independence to be associated with the educational status of parents. Thus it may be concluded that of the three Psychological characteristics studied, only one component Perceiving information (R.R1) of the characteristic - Reading readiness is found to be influential in forming the skills of comprehension of the students of different Parental
education. To put it precisely in the case of the students of moderate Parental education, the component of Reading readiness - Perceiving information (R.R1) - plays an important role in developing their skills of comprehension.

7.12. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO PARENTAL ANNUAL INCOME

As in Parental education a large percentage of standard IX students with different Parental annual income falls under the moderate level. It is inferred that in general irrespective of varied Parental annual income, Reading comprehension and its dimensions are only moderate [low (61%, 69%, 63% and 62%), moderate (62%, 70%, 58% and 62%), high (66%, 79%, 64% and 60%)]. From this it may be presumed that Parental education and Parental annual income are interrelated. Higher Parental education, may lead to higher Parental annual income.

However the differential analysis shows that the Parental annual income influences the attainment of Reading comprehension, its dimensions and some of its sub-skills. The students of the three different categories with low, moderate and high Parental annual income are compared on the basis of their mean scores. The students with high Parental annual income seem to score higher in Reading comprehension and its dimensions - Reading the lines, Reading between the lines and Reading beyond the lines. Regarding the sub-skills of Reading the lines, Locating needed information (R.L2) and Understanding the context (R.L4) students with high Parental annual income are better than the other two categories. Only on the basis of the capacity to locate the required information, one's progress in comprehension is achieved. In Understanding the context (R.L4) students get a clear picture of the facts found in the reading passage. These two sub-skills (R.L2 and R.L4) help the students of high Parental annual income to gain better in the dimension Reading the lines.

Regarding Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) and its sub-skill, Skill of Interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) students with high Parental annual income seem to score better than others. Reading between the lines is done at the inferential level. R.Bet.L1 is interpreting what the information really means. It forms the basis for students with high Parental annual income to score higher in Reading between the lines.
Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is critical and evaluative reading. In this dimension of Reading comprehension and its sub-skills Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) and Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) students with high Parental annual income seem to score higher than others. Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) is to evaluate the printed material and to find the logic in it. Judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) is to infer the nature of the characters on the basis of the given clues. These two sub-skills seem to take the reader to the level of critical reading. Hence students with high Parental annual income seem to be better in the above categories.

Higher Parental annual income leads to greater availability of reading sources. Srinivasa Rao (1982) and Dass (1984) stated that the reading skills of children depended mostly on socio-economic status. When the annual income is high the SES will also be high. When there is high SES, there may be a chance of getting more educational oriented appliances such as computer, videocassettes etc. In such families one can expect very good encouragement and motivation for higher studies. Thus it may be concluded that because of these reasons, students from high Parental annual income families are found to do better in Reading comprehension.

The present study shows that the Parental annual income does not influence Reading readiness and all its components. It seems to contradict the previous finding related to Parental income (Patel, 1983) which states children of higher income group parents were superior in Reading readiness. It may be inferred therefore that income of the parents is not in correspondence with their education and there may not be characteristics common to education and income, for the sample taken for the study.

As Reading readiness, Reading attitude also is not influenced by Parental annual income. The population of the study comprises pupils of standard IX studying in government and government-aided institutions. All such institutions have similar structure, similar mode of teaching, similar mode of examinations etc. Therefore the expected linguistic differences in the students of different Parental annual income may get nullified because of the climate of the school from where they get education. That is why Reading attitude may be the same for all. In the same way Cognitive style is also not influenced by Parental annual income. Thus it may be concluded, that in the case of students of different Parental annual income, the psychological characteristics - Reading
readiness, Reading attitude and Cognitive style are of no use in developing their skills of comprehension. Moreover, it suggests the fact that the psychological characteristics are almost the same for high, moderate and low Parental education and Parental annual income groups.

7.13. READING COMPREHENSION AND ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL VARIABLES RELATED TO KINDERGARTEN EDUCATION

A large percentage of students with (59%, 63%, 57% and 63%) and without (62%, 72%, 64% and 61%) Kindergarten education fall under moderate category in the skill of Reading comprehension and its dimensions. However when these two categories of students are studied in terms of their mean scores obtained on the test of Reading comprehension, its dimensions and the sub-skills of each dimension, significant differences are noted. Kindergarten education is found to influence Reading comprehension, its dimensions and many of its sub-skills. That is students with Kindergarten education are significantly high in all the above categories.

Why students with Kindergarten education do better in Reading comprehension can be reasoned out thus: It may be mainly because of their high score in all the dimensions of Reading comprehension. Reading the lines (R.L) is getting the surface meaning. Locating needed information (R.L2) is to locate the specific information. In sequencing contents (R.L3) the reader sees the relationship between the primary and secondary ideas and arranges them in logical sequence. Understanding the context (R.L4) is the basis for comprehending the material. Here the student learns to identify the information. As the students with Kindergarten education score higher in all the above sub-skills, their attainment in Reading the lines is also higher.

Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) is analytical and synthetical in nature. Skill of interpreting contents (R.Bet.L1) is sensing the true meaning. Deriving implied meaning (R.Bet.L3) is forming new ideas through the verbal context. As students with Kindergarten education seem to score higher in the above sub-skills, naturally their performance in Reading between the lines (R.Bet.L) is high.

Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L) is to evaluate the quality of the text. This dimension and all its sub-skills are influenced by Kindergarten education. The students with Kindergarten education lead in all of them. Establishing the cause of events (R.Bey.L1) is to go
creatively beyond the author’s view. Estimating the worth of the details given (R.Bey.L2) is to establish the nature and quality of the information found in the written material. Decoding structural peculiarities (R.Bey.L3) is interpreting on the basis of cultural, syntactic and structural aspects. In judging characters and ideas (R.Bey.L4) the reader interprets authors purpose. Higher level achievements in the above sub-skills pave way for better attainment in the dimension Reading beyond the lines (R.Bey.L).

Kindergarten education gives early exposure to English language. The sound system of the foreign language is well caught in the early years itself and starts developing in due course. Natural way of learning English becomes possible as the students listen and then speak in the target language before reading and writing. Hence it may be stated that a good exposure to English provides a good basis for developing the skills of reading.

In the present study Kindergarten education has also been treated as a variable of Reading readiness. However it is revealed in the study that Kindergarten education has no impact over the Reading readiness of the pupils of secondary classes. Of late Kindergarten education has taken the people of Tamilnadu by storm. One can witness mushroom growth of Kindergarten schools throughout Tamilnadu. As it is said Kindergarten education is meant for fostering basic learning skills and for providing good exposure to the sound system of the English language. Therefore children who may have such an exposure for two years prior to primary education are likely to have better preparedness for learning English than their unfortunate counterparts. However, the present study shows that Kindergarten education does not have any impact over the Reading readiness of the sample studied. It shows the malfunctioning of the Kindergarten schools. That is it fails to develop in them a psychological base in the form of Reading readiness. On the basis of this one is supposed to suggest changes in Kindergarten education in the state of Tamilnadu.

Kindergarten education is intended for developing basic language skills and fostering interest in learning English. Therefore it was assumed in the beginning that students with and without exposure to Kindergarten schooling might differ in their skills of Reading comprehension and also in those factors which could influence Reading comprehension. Therefore Reading readiness, Cognitive style and Reading attitude were expected to be different for those students who had Kindergarten schooling. The present study shows that in the case of the first two, no difference is seen in the two categories of the subjects studied. In the case of the last one that is in Reading attitude
difference is seen but not on the expected direction. The subjects without Kindergarten exposure are found to have positive Reading attitude. It reveals the malfunctioning of Kindergarten schools. That is, they fail to inculcate some of the necessary skills and attitudes in the young ones. Related to Reading attitude it may be said that reading and reading related activities are not strong enough to form in them a positive attitude towards reading.

In the same way subjects with and without Kindergarten exposure are same as far as their Cognitive style is concerned. All are predominantly field dependent. From this it may be concluded that higher level achievement scores in Reading comprehension recorded by students who had Kindergarten education is not due to their psychological characteristics - Reading readiness, Reading attitude and Cognitive style. Hence it may be stated that higher level cognitive achievement – Reading comprehension, in the students with Kindergarten education is an outcome of the impact of social (Locality), familial (Parental education and income) and physical (Kindergarten exposure) factors studied in the case of the students of standard IX.

7.14. RECOMMENDATIONS

To improve the skills of Reading comprehension in English in standard IX students, the investigator would like to recommend the following based on the various findings reported in the present study.

1. As it has been given in the interpretation, the moderate level of attainment in the skill of Reading comprehension, may be attributed to the nature of population studied. The students of standard IX studying in Government and Government aided institutions in Tuticorin district form the population of the study. As everyone knows the standard of English is very low in these schools. One reason may be the government policy that is in vogue in the state of Tamil Nadu pertaining to secondary education. According to the government policy an institution can have English as the medium of instruction only for a very limited number of students, that is only one section for a particular standard in a school. For all other students education is given only through mother tongue. Of late government has started insisting on learning at least one subject in mother tongue, in the case of these students who opt for English medium. Moreover as per the government policy, for teaching English, specially trained teachers to teach English, are not appointed; but for teaching the mother
tongue only specially trained teachers are allowed. Further the students in secondary classes are not in any way encouraged to master English, though it is offered as a second language, due to the government policy which favours a very high level attainment in subjects like science and mathematics for getting into professional courses of study. All these do create a negative attitude towards the teaching and learning of English in the schools aided and run by the government. The findings on Reading attitude reported in the present study itself have supported this. Therefore the investigator recommends that there should be a visible change in the policy of the government in the near future so as to provide a new look and status to the teaching and learning of English in the schools aided and run by the government. That is

(i) The government should permit all those students who would like to study in English medium in these institutions;

(ii) As in the case of teaching Tamil, English pandits may be appointed to teach English;

(iii) For admission to professional courses attainment in English may also be considered.

2. For improving the skills of Reading comprehension the teachers may be encouraged to make use of the latest methods of teaching especially teaching English through English. Since most of the teachers teaching English do not possess a degree in English or English literature the government may encourage them to get themselves oriented with latest methods of teaching English by doing courses in CIEFL, Hyderabad such as PGCTE, PGDTE etc., and those offered in Regional Institutes of English by providing monetary assistance to such teachers.

3. In the present study it has been noted that the Reading attitude of the subjects is negative, Reading readiness is only moderate and Cognitive style is predominantly field dependent. The reason for this phenomenon may be attributed to lack of reading in students of secondary classes. To overcome this problem the investigator makes the following recommendations.

a) The government may form a research wing in SCERT exclusively for investigating into the problems associated with reading and introducing innovations in this area at the secondary and higher secondary stages. This research wing may be entrusted with the task of studying the problems of reading
as such from primary school onwards and rectifying those identified problems by taking series of steps towards promoting reading ability in students of primary, secondary and higher secondary classes. In connection with this, series of workshops and remedial works may also be undertaken with the help of experts in the field of teaching English.

b) As in the case of Tamil Nadu Textbook Committee, the government may form a separate board exclusively for preparing suitable reading materials in English for students of different classes.

c) A separate teacher may be appointed in schools, supported by the Parent-Teacher Association to be in charge of procuring and utilizing the reading materials prepared by the Board for the benefit of the students. The subject teachers as well as the headmaster may provide the necessary assistance for the fuller utilization of the reading materials obtained from the Board. That is certain periods may be allotted for reading and the much interested ones may also act as leaders for the reading work and collaborate with the teacher concerned.

d) In every class, with the help of the class teacher and the special teacher a small classroom library may be maintained. The interest of the students, as well as the utility of the books may be promoted by forming reading circles, awarding credits for books read, holding quiz on the basis of the reading materials provided etc.

The investigator hopes when these recommendations are carried out the reading readiness of the students of secondary classes may be much improved so as to bring about a marked improvement in their skill of Reading comprehension.

Likewise, there may be a drastic change in the reading attitude of the students too. Because of good exposure to books of their needs and their involvement in reading they may soon develop a positive attitude towards reading. Moreover it may bridge the gap between boys and girls in their attainment in Reading comprehension. Since the boys as well as the girls are inducted in varied reading programmes, they may develop more or less a similar form of linguistic aptitude which in turn may help both the categories of students to show a similar level of attainment in Reading comprehension.
That is boys' comparatively lower level of performance may be enhanced because of their involvement in reading oriented activities.

7.15. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following studies may be undertaken to answer many of the questions raised on the basis of the findings of the present study:

1. A critical study on teaching Reading in English to the beginners and the students in secondary classes.
2. Skills of Reading comprehension developed by students of primary and secondary classes in the state of Tamil Nadu.
3. An investigation into the skills of Reading comprehension in English developed by students of higher secondary classes belonging to different (SC/ST, BC/MBC, FC) communities.
4. A study of personal and environmental factors influencing the skills of Reading comprehension in English of boys and girls at junior, secondary and higher secondary classes.
5. Preparation and validation of Reading materials for developing the skills of Reading comprehension in English for students of different reading competence.
6. Evolving strategies for developing interest in reading English and fostering positive attitude towards reading in English in students of different classes.
7. Developing strategies for effective teaching of skills of Reading comprehension in English to the students of Tamil medium classes.

7.16. CONCLUSION

By and large the present study may create an awareness among the ELT experts to make use of the clues available in the form of findings / discussion / recommendations for designing programmes towards developing techniques suitable for the target population to make ‘reading’ a pleasurable and purposeful act at all levels of schooling.