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CHAPTER II
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2.0. Introduction

It is sometimes held that the personality and the intelligence both together influence the academic success or failure of the pupils. This may be right to some extent. Sometimes it so happens that academic success of no mean order influences the personality of the individual to a higher level. Such is the test of a success. Nothing succeeds like success.

There are many correlates of academic achievement. Out of them some relate to psychological domain while others belong to sociology. Some also belong to the domain of demography.

Their conceptual understanding is summarized in the following paragraphs.

2.1 Concept of Reading and Its Ability

Reading is a complex process and has many mysterious facets. It involves a number of composite skills and abilities. It is not a general ability. The term reading
embraces a wide variety of tasks, activities and mental processes. And hence, it would not be an easy affair to form an adequate definition of reading. There are just about as many definitions of reading as there are "reading experts". Most authorities' definitions of reading affect their attitude towards reading, the way they read, what they would read, and for what purposes they would read. Hence, divergent views about reading and its concept.

Reading is a decoding and meaning-bearing skill. The decoding process serves the purpose of a tool for the mental processes when the reader tries to get the meaning out of the printed material. Reading is more than decoding and literal level interpretations of the printed symbols as it involves the tasks of comprehension which are quite different on different occasions. According to G.C. Ahuja, "... there is no meaning on the page, only ink. The meaning is in the reader's mind. Each mark is a signal that arouses some image or concept that is already in the mind of the reader. The order in which these images and concepts are evoked, the context in which they are called forth, and the relations between these images and concepts as revealed by the arrangement of these marks, make it possible for the reader to gain new meanings, ... The reader must go to the printed page with anticipation, with questions and with specific intent."
In the words of Emerald V. Dechant\textsuperscript{2}, "... reading is a complex perceptual task which involves the ability to make fine visual discriminations; to focus clearly on relatively small stimuli; to progress in a rigidly patterned sequence from left to right and from one line to the next; to take in large 'eyefulls' at a glance; and, perhaps most difficult of all, to pick out certain words for emphasis, to know which ones to skip, which to note carefully."

As reading is a complex perceptual task, it certainly requires the ability to think abstractly; it must be learned. Reading is an interpersonal experience which involves a relationship between the reader and the author. It is essentially a form of communication. It is evidently the successful response to the visual forms of language. The goal of reading is also to understand the graphically fixed language units.

Reading is an abstract process which involves the capacity to make generalizations, to apply knowledge learned in one situation to another, to see relationships not only between word-parts but also between ideas.

The nature of reading can best be appreciated and understood if it is conceived as a form of communication. Reading is an act of communication.
writer to reader occurs when the latter takes meaning to the printed page. Without the reader, the communication via the printed page is not at all possible.

"Kenneth S. Goodman (1967) referred to reading as 'an introduction between thought and language'. Proficient reading, he said, does not depend on or result from precise identification of each word in print. Reading ability is based on skill in the fewest and most effective clues from the printed page and using them to make correct guesses on the first try."\(^3\)

"Reading involves interpreting printed symbols and making discriminative reactions to the ideas expressed by them."\(^4\)

"In its largest sense reading is a thought-gathering process, learning to recognize and remember the written word in only the first, albeit critical step. Once the words are identified there remains the large and often difficult task of understanding what they say."\(^5\)

Various views on meaning and concept of reading described earlier in this chapter show that definitions of reading have one element in common: they all note that reading is an interpretation of graphic symbols.
Reading is, thus, envisaged as a two-fold process which requires identification of symbols as well as the association of appropriate meanings with them. In short, reading is the second name of identification and comprehension. DeBoer and Dallmann regard 'reading as an activity which involves the comprehension and interpretation of ideas symbolized by written or printed language'. Reading, indeed, is more than simple recognition and interpretation of the graphic symbols or the printed page. The word-recognition alone does not mean reading.

According to Albert J. Harris, "... reading involves sensing, perceiving, achieving meaning, and reacting in a variety of ways; and through reading much important learning takes place."

Reading, in fact, is something more than that hitherto described. The traditional concept of reading now has drastically been changed. The illusive notions pertaining to reading and reading ability have also changed yielding place to modern and more acceptable ones. Reading is not now viewed as a mere general and mechanical ability. Reading is a composite of complex skills and abilities. It is as varied as life.

"A broader view of the nature of reading is that it involves the recognition of the important elements of
meaning in their essential relations, including accuracy and thoroughness in comprehension. Reading is accurate when the reader perceives the words as the author wrote them and the meaning he achieves corresponds closely to what the author intended, to these are added the reader's motor responses, his feelings, and his evaluative reactions. Thus, reading is an act of communication in which information is transferred from a transmitter to a receiver — deciphering a medieval text or a child identifying a single letter on a black-board. As reading is not a passive activity, the reader must make active contribution if he is to acquire the available information.

"There seem to be two general categories of answers to the question what reading is. One centres around such phases as translating symbols into sound, saying words, getting meaning from the printed page. The other may be stated as bringing personal meaning to the printed page, reacting to the ideas, evaluating the author's recorded thoughts, gaining increased understanding through experiencing the recorded understanding of another."

It is, thus, crystal clear that the first group obviously involves the mechanics, the superficial (not by any means unnecessary) phases of reading, while the latter involves the deeper, more personal, more truly significant
aspects of reading. In fact, since the only purpose of the first or mechanical aspect is to accelerate the second or true reading. And hence, it should be brought into learning process if and when felt necessary on the part of both learners and teachers.

On the other hand, the reading ability of school pupils is frequently criticised, but rarely studied. But now it is with no fashion, but with purposeful motive that the reading comprehension/ability of school-pupils is tested. As regards reading ability, a wrong concept earlier prevailed that maximum reading ability is achieved during the later grades and that it remains fixed from then on. But this notion has been proved quite wrong. It is through some standardized and authentic reading ability tests that school-pupils' reading ability is explored. Now it has been an approved fact that average reading ability, with a rare exception, increases with each advancement to a higher grade.

Reading scores through teacher-made tests on reading undertaken by schools or educational institutions may reveal the pupil's reading comprehension. Such type of reading testing programme may indicate the pupil's level of reading comprehension, but it may not render the pupil's true reading ability. Reading ability is the reading quotient
of the pupil on a certain standardized reading ability test. Hence, reading ability is a more real, authentic, valid and reliable level of reading comprehensive power. Thus, reading ability is more than what reading comprehension alone means.

The informal reading inventory (generally referred to as an IRI) which is individually administered, provides a 'general' estimate of reading ability. The diagnostic reading test is also an individually administered test which provides a reading specialist with a complete profile of an individual's reading habits, abilities and disabilities. Reading comprehension test is a test administered to an entire group at one time to explore the reader's vocabulary, comprehension and grade-level scores. In this test, comprehension is often tested with sentences and short paragraphs of increasing difficulty that are followed by questions of fact, inference, or cause and effect. The reading ability test is a reliable, valid, standardized and most authentic tool for diagnosing and evaluating major reading skills and abilities. It places the pupils in certain range-groups assumed in reading ability. That is why, the average classroom includes pupils with a wide range of reading abilities. Reading ability and readability are all together different things. They should not be misunderstood. 'Readability' means 'level
with reference to content materials in the subject-area of a particular text-book. 'Readability' is the term used to cover the various aspects of written materials which together determine the reading difficulty of a printed page. This readability of text-books may prove to be an important factor in many pupils' success or failure in comprehending the materials in a particular subject area. The pupil's reading ability can be affected by the readability of the text-books.

"Chandler observes that poor reading ability encouraged by higher level of difficulty is the first sign of delinquency among pupils." Such confusion and pupils' problems can be avoided if the text-book is of a proper readability level.

There may be individual differences in reading abilities, but it is quite obvious that it is the pupil's reading ability which ultimately may be the key to his success or failure in school.

2.2 Process of Reading

Reading is a much more complex process. The true concept, nature and characteristics of reading can be
well-understood through its various processes. Some of the major reading processes are as under:

2.2.1 Reading is a Sensory Process

Reading begins as a sensory process. Sensation is the first occurrence in all perception. Reading requires the use of the senses, especially vision. The reader is expected to react visually to the graphic symbols. Word perception depends both on the patterns of symbols on the page which are sensed by the eyes and on the memory traces stored in the reader's brain. This is the sensory aspect of reading. At this level, it is required that symbols themselves be legible, the light be adequate and the eyes able to focus clear patterns on the retina.

2.2.2 Reading is a Perceptual Process

Reading however is more than a sensory process. Perception of a printed word refers to the interpretation of everything that we sense. Perceiving the graphic symbols means seeing them with an awareness of their sounds and meanings. It is the consciousness or awareness of the experiences evoked by a symbol. Hence, perception must include the arousal of meaning.
2.2.3 Reading is a decoding process

According to G.C. Ahuja, "The decoding process serves as a tool for the natural processes when the reader tries to get the meaning out of the printed material. Reading involves comprehension beyond decoding and literal level interpretations of printed symbols."

The meaning is not what is on the page, but, rather, what the graphic symbol signifies to the reader. Each mark is a signal that arouses some image or concept that is already in the mind of the reader. To gain new meanings the reader does require to go to the printed page with anticipation, with questions or queries and with specific intent.

2.2.4 Reading is a Process of Communication

Communication from the writer to reader occurs only when the reader takes meaning to the printed page. Without the reader, communication via the printed page is impossible.

2.2.5 Reading is a Developmental Process

The developmental process of reading suggests that the child's reading readiness depends on his general growth and development. As reading is a difficult task,
it has certain gradual stages to begin with and achieve specific skills. The child has to go through stages as he learns to read or enhances in the reading act. The child's level of attainment in reading depends on his over-all growth and development. The reading process is developmental, gradual and progressive by nature.

2.2.6 Reading is a Process of Thinking

Reading does not mean mere decoding of the literal meaning of graphic symbols. It means more than responding or reacting to the coding of the words. It includes thinking together with experiencing and learning. Reading involves thinking. Effective reading requires judicious, rational and critical thinking. Good reading makes the pupil think between the lines and beyond the lines of the printed page. Thus, reading is a meditating process which makes the reader talk to himself.

In the words of Crow and Crow, "Reading often is described to get thought from the printed page. A better description of reading power might be that of putting thought into what is read - the symbols to which one responds visually."
2.2.7 Reading is a Process of Higher Mental Abilities

Reading being a much more complex activity involves all of the higher mental abilities. According to DeBoer and Dallmann\textsuperscript{13}, "It (Reading) involves recall, reasoning, evaluation, imagining, organizing, applying, and problem-solving."

2.2.8 Reading is a Learning Process

Reading, initially and finally, paves way from learning. The pupil may pass from learning to read, to reading for learning. Efficient reading acts as a tool of learning and inquiry. In the words of Richard Bamberger,\textsuperscript{14} "... reading is an exemplary form of learning. Psychological studies have shown that improvement in the ability to read also leads to improvement in learning ability as a whole, going far beyond mere reception."

Through reading the reader can view ever-widening horizons and explore ever-new areas in the world of things, people and events.

The reader is required to learn and acquire the simple and complex mechanisms which embrace a wide variety of tasks, activities, skills and mental abilities. Well-functioning and mastery of these mechanisms of reading
provide new ideas and images for the reader's thirsty mind. Reinforcement, interest and love for reading create, foster and develop the reader's learning experiences and academic attainment.

2.2.9 Reading is a Humanizing Process

In the present age of increasing complexities reading plays an increasingly greater role in satisfying the personal needs of the reader. It helps him acquire many of his standards of behaviour and morality. Reading fulfils the reader's immediate or future personal as well as social responsibilities, requirements, expectations so as to make him human. It enriches and ennobles the individual's complete living. Reading, thus, is a process of humanization.

On the whole, reading, in this way, is a multi-dimensional process.

2.3 Skills of Reading

Reading is a composite of various specific abilities. It is, therefore, very necessary to break down reading comprehension or reading ability into specific skills which together constitute it.
The skills involved in reading ability are numerous and interrelated. The clear understanding of inter-relationship among these reading skills through the successive stages of reading growth is needed while introducing a single reading skill which introduces the complexity of reading.

Following are some of the major skills that contribute to the growth and development of reading ability.

2.3.1 Finding and Understanding the Main Idea

The ability to find out the main idea or central thought an author is trying to say is perhaps the most important of all specific comprehension skills. Selecting the main idea from the many other ideas requires comparison, judgement and discrimination. "The ability to identify the main idea is necessary for interpretation and understanding of what is written. It is based on an accurate comprehension of the word, the phrase and the sentence." ¹⁵

2.3.2 Recognizing and Locating Significant Details

After the pupil has developed some success or significant skill in determining the main ideas, he must get ready to read for significant details.
Learning to follow directions through reading essentially is reading for details. This process is particularly important so as to make the pupil know how to read to locate answers to specific questions. The pupil can be tested on a paragraph to see whether he remembers significant details.

2.3.3 Organizing Material and Making Summaries

The skill of comprehending the organization of what is being read is very necessary on the part of the reader to think with the reading material, outlining it as he goes along. The reader, thereby, sees the relationship between the main and subordinate ideas and arranges them in some logical order. Organizing of what is read is also inducive to effective learning or integrative reading. Summarizing, outlining, note-making and combinations of these are some of the activities that help the pupil learn how to organize the reading material. The skill of summarizing enables the pupil to preserve the essential facts and the main ideas in capsule form. "A cluster of sub-skills are necessary for the efficient use of the skill of organization: abstracting relationships, weighing ideas, making generalizations, and associating ideas. Outlining and summarizing utilizes the totality of organizing skills."\(^{16}\)
2.3.4 Predicting Outcomes

The skill of reading to predict outcomes manifests itself in a variety of ways. This skill is, in fact, an aspect of what is called 'active' reading, in which the reader assumes an attitude of anticipation. "The intelligent reader is usually thinking ahead, forming tentative guesses as to what is coming and testing and revising as he goes along."\(^\text{17}\)

"Skill in predicting outcomes is useful in helping the reader to note when he has misread a work or a sentence. It is also of value because the person who is adept at predicting outcomes as he reads can usually get the thought more quickly than others."\(^\text{18}\) This skill of predicting outcomes is also useful in recalling what is read.

2.3.5 Arriving at Generalizations

The ultimate goal of reading in schools is to help pupils arrive at generalizations. This skill is in a sense a specialized form of summarizing. To arrive at generalizations the reader is required to note specific instances and then to determine whether the data presented are sufficient to warrant a significant conclusion. If the reader has mastered this skill, he will be able to draw his own conclusions.
The process of reasoning is going on in the reader's mind while he is arriving at generalizations. That is why, reading is defined as the process of reasoning. A good reader never generalizes without sufficient evidence and he avoids to make too broad a generalization.

2.3.6 Evaluating Critically What is Read

The skill of evaluating expects from the reader that he must make critical evaluations of what is read. The good comprehender is a critical reader. The power of critical evaluation involves numerous abilities. Such a reader checks the truth, logic and accuracy of the reading material. He avoids jumping to quick conclusions. He relates the material to his experience. He distinguishes fact from fiction and tries to understand the author's genuine intent. He would not have blind faith in what the author asserts or opines. According to E.W. Menzel, \(^{19}\), "Too many students accept blindly as truth whatever they see on a printed page." A critical reader will suspend his judgement until the writer has finished his argument. He is ever logical and rational in evaluating what he has read.
2.3.7 **Reading Graphs, Tables, Charts and Maps**

In this skill of reading are involved the abilities to read, understand and interpret graphs, tables, charts, maps, symbols etc. In the teaching of subjects like History, Geography, Mathematics and Science this skill proves to be of prime importance. The reader who is versed in this skill can comprehend well, and recall the facts easily and quickly.

With the increasing visual literature or material of this kind in the present age, this skill has become important as never before.

2.3.8 **Applying Insights Gained through Reading**

Reading is a cluster of skills and abilities. After having a thorough and intensive comprehension of the material the reader must have the ability to apply understanding and insight that he has gained through reading into his further reading and learning situations. A good and prudent reader effectively applies his own common sense and power of discrimination to solve problems of reading and life that pose before him. This skill involves higher mental processes. It involves the capacity to comprehend
something that has meaning away from the written symbols. It is concerned with the production of new ideas, the development of new insights, fresh approaches and original contributions.

2.4 Determinants of Reading Ability

Ability to read acts as an agent that promotes the pupil's achievement in reading and enhances progress in learning. The reading ability which influences positively and contributes so much to the harmonious development of the pupil's or reader's personality is also affected by certain factors. For promoting the pupil's growth in reading and helping him acquire reading ability it is very essential to know and understand elements essential to growth in reading. According to Fred J. Schonell, it is possible to enumerate the factors involved in reading ability. They may be listed as follows:

(i) General maturity
(ii) Level of general intelligence
(iii) Abilities of visual and auditory recognition and discrimination of word patterns
(iv) Environmental factors in reading ability
(v) Emotional attitudes of interest, individual application and confidence.
These five sets of factors, mental and environmental, act independently to produce the composite power of reading ability."

There are some conditions the child or pupil needs to make maximum progress in learning to read. According to DeBoer and Dallmann, "These conditions include:

1. Physical health
2. Mental health
3. Sight and hearing
4. Intelligence
5. Background of experience
6. Knowledge of experience
7. Desire to read
8. Purposes for reading
9. Interest in reading
10. Reading skills"

Most of the conditions governing the growth of reading stated above, generally, do contribute to children to acquire reading readiness. Fortunately, nearly all children come to school already possessing most of these elements in some degree. But to the extent that children are lacking in the elements named, they will be handicapped in the process of learning to read. The overall importance
of these elements lies in the fact that they become prime bases to complete ability of being able to read, success in reading and improvement and increase in reading ability.

The determinants of reading ability can be classified into the following categories:

(a) General physical and physiological determinants of reading
(b) Psychological determinants of reading
(c) Social determinants of reading
(d) Environmental determinants of reading
(e) Emotional determinants of reading

2.4.1 The General Physical and Physiological Determinants of Reading

These determinants include the pupil's physical comfort, health, general maturity, vision and hearing.

A reasonable measure of physical health is quite essential to all school learning. According to DeBoer and Dallmann, "Physical discomfort, languor, a low energy level, and similar symptoms of health problems may often interfere with normal progress in reading."
A case of extreme reading retardation may be attributed to physical factors. Positive physical factors may prove to be conducive to reading ability.

2.4.2 The Psychological Determinants of Reading

These determinants involve a number of abilities related to mind, heart and various facets of human personality.

These determinants are intelligence (general ability), thinking (thought-process), reasoning, belief, opinion, value, determination (decision-making), sensation, feeling, faith, hope, success, fear, failure, anxiety, frustration, stress, conflict, drive, n-Ach (need for achievement or achievement motivation), interest, urge, creativity, behaviour, adjustment etc.

2.4.3 The Social Determinants of Reading

The social determinants of reading are home-background including income of family; size of family; sufficiency and regularity of meals, sleep; parents' education, interpersonal relationship etc. Size of family and parent's
education can, from another point of view, be termed as the demographic variables of reading.

2.4.4 Environmental Determinants of Reading

The essential environmental determinants of reading ability are namely language background and extent of experiences.

2.4.5 Emotional Determinants of Reading

These are linked with the kind of emotional relationships between parents and children or wards that exist within the family unit. Sheldon and Carrillow\textsuperscript{23} showed that superior reading ability was associated with (a) the number of books in the home; (b) educational level of parents; (c) favourable attitudes of the child to school. Conversely there is ample evidence to show that disability in reading is very frequently associated with adverse emotional conditions within the family, such as those of overt parental hostility, parental rejection, neurotic conditions, separation of parents.

In sum, all the above determinants of reading reveal the complexity of reading process, with the main determinants therein, each of an interacting kind. If these
determinants influence positively or favourably, the pupil's reading ability is significantly improved and increased to its fullest extent.

2.5 Study Habits

The success or failure of the pupils in examination depends largely on their study habits. An intelligent pupil not pursuing a systematic study habits may sometimes obtain poor result while a below-average pupil having good study habits and perseverance may excel in the examination. Hence it is often observed in old adage that genius is one per cent inspiration while 99 per cent perspiration.

Intelligence is a static energy which must be transmitted into a kinetic energy. The means whereby intelligence becomes operative is through study habits. So study habits must be regarded a fulcrum round which revolves the courses of study.

2.5.1 The Components of Study Habits

There are many components of the study habits which must be taken into consideration while assessing the
study habits of the individual pupil. The following components have been isolated by many who have constructed tools for measuring it.

(1) **Home environment and planning of work**:

Congenial home environment induces pupils to work because of the motivating factors inherent in the parents and other members of the family.

In such homes pupils must be only motivated by the parents to have good planning of the academic work to be done in a week or a month.

(2) **Reading and note taking**:

"Reading makes man perfect but writing makes exact" so observed Francis Bacon in 19th century. Whatever a pupil reads must be retained in a permanent memory store. This can only be possible when he/she has a practice to take down essential points of the reading material and they should be arranged in a logical order.

(3) **Grading of Subjects**:

The different subjects of the syllabus have different difficulty values. Each pupil has his/her
own difficulty value for a particular subject. Each pupil must grade the subjects in descending order. The first placement given would demand more attention and requires more time to study. This must be reflected in the planning of work mentioned earlier.

(4) **Habits of Concentration**: 

A person attends a thing in which he takes most interest. Hence attention is interest in action. Concentration of mind requires volition on the part of the person. The self-concept and the personality of the pupils play a very large part in deciding the concentration of the pupils.

(5) **Preparation for examination**: 

Prior work before examination is most essential in scoring good marks. Hence a systematic working plan must be done right from the beginning.

(6) **General habits and attitudes**: 

Attitude of a person has a bearing on the will to work. Hence right type of attitude must be present in every pupil while he/she prepares his planning for the work. In formation of right
attitudes, the general habits of the person play an important role.

(7) **Social environment:**

The social climate of the school, the organizational set-up and the general supervisory works of the teaching to a long way in forming and inculcating good study habits among the pupils.

The above components have been incorporated in the construction and standardization of study habits by B.V. Patel. Hence it was decided to use in the present work.

2.5.2 **Impact of Study Habits on Academic Achievement**

As described earlier, a person having good study habits is prone to excel in his academic achievement. Even if he is below-average but having good habits may score good marks. Thus, study habits may be deciding factor in estimating the ability of the pupils in assessing his academic achievement.

The interaction of study habits with other variables of importance play a deciding role in estimating the academic success or failure of the pupils.
2.6 Family Size

Since reading problems are often related to home-background or family-conditions, it is highly desirable for schools and teachers to eliminate handicaps, to carry forward a positive remedial programme and to develop pupils' reading ability.

The family size has also been felt as one of the factors that determine school pupils' progress and reading ability.

Meaning and concept of family size, impact of family size on reading ability and correlation, if there is any, between family size and reading ability are discussed in the paragraphs that follow.

2.6.1 Meaning and Concept of Family Size

Family size can, operationally, be termed as the structure of family in relation to its principal members that constitute the family. Family size is determined by the number of parents and their children. Thus, father and/or mother and their children/wards constitute the structure of any family.
In this research the investigator considers the family as an average family which consists of father and/or mother together with their only two children. If the number of family-members is above the average number of four, it is a large family. If it is four or below four, it is a small family. This criterion has been borne in mind by this investigator while classifying any family into a large family or a small family.

2.7 Socio-economic Status

Different patterns of life are found which are shaped by socio-economic group to which the family belongs. There are marked differences to behaviour patterns in families of different socio-economic patterns in use of money, in child training and attitude towards discipline and parents. Middle class parents regard their children with pride and hope. They supervise their children closely and expect them to avoid any behaviour which might bring criticism on the family. The child is encouraged to be independent. Education is emphasized because it is a way of bettering themselves. This is specially true in the case of boys. The middle class child is expected to inhibit emotional expressions and aggressions at an early age. He is given little information about sex and is generally criticised by his parents for his
behaviour related to sex. The middle class child is wanted by his parents, is usually brought up in a domestic home atmosphere and is given as many advantages as his parents can afford.

The attitude of lower class parents towards the child is different. Children from lower class families are given greater physical and social freedom than are those from the middle classes, and there is little concern on the part of their parents about their education. The lower class child often feels unloved, unwanted and rejected at home and thus seeks companionship outside the home.

According to Hurlock,

"Social development means the attaining of maturity in social relationship. It means the process of learning to conform to group standards, morals, and traditions and becoming imbued with a sense of oneness, intercommunication and cooperation. This involves the development of new types of behaviour, a change in interests and the choice of new types of friends. The social individual is one who not only wants to be with others but who wants to do things with them."\(^2^4\)
Indian society is one of the most inegalitarian society where the disparities of caste, sex, ethnicity and place of residence are most rampant. Similarly there is disparity between the regions which are economically more advanced and the others which are less advanced.

2.7.1 Impact of Socio-economic Status on Academic Achievement

Hence a directional relationship between an inegalitarian society and its educational system exists as a new kind of modicum. Education, being a sub-system of the social structure tends to imbibe and perpetuate the characteristics of society that it represents.

It would probably be reasonable to state that a society which is ridden with disparities affects every family, its education and even its economic status.

Naturally, parents' education which is governed by their own economic conditions also influences their children. The more educated and more economically balanced the parents are, the greater the possibility they create for their children. Socio-economic status of the parents has numerous consequences which benefit their children in more than one ways.
Thus, the socio-economic status of the family influences the type of home and location of the home in the community. This determines to a large extent what kind of associates the child will have. Favourable or unfavourable attitudes will be developed, depending upon the kind of children. The child is associated within school and in his recreational activities.

The socio-economic status of the family determines what the family's social status will be. Economic insecurity increases emotional insecurity. Poverty in many cases causes psychic wounds. Aggressive personality problems, such as stealing, truancy and running away are more common in poor homes. School maladjustments are more often found in economically superior homes. Jealousy has been found to increase as family income decreases.

The father's occupation has a profound influence on child's outlook. In the early years of childhood, it is important as it has a direct bearing on the child's welfare, such as, his food, clothing and play equipment. However, as he becomes older and he begins to play with other children the father's occupation has a cultural significance in that it gives the child social prestige. When a child is ashamed of his father's occupation, either because of the type of clothes demanded by the work,
it will affect the child's attitude towards his father, his home and himself as an individual.

2.7.2 Interaction between Socio-economic Status and Academic Achievement

Bruce Peck and Thomas Stackhouse\textsuperscript{25} studied families of problem readers and of those who had no problems. They found that the families of problem readers had an atmosphere of closed communication and had taught the children how not to learn. Students who come from homes where parents provide good nutrition, opportunities for adequate rest and stable environment will have advantages in a learning situation. Students from homes where reading materials are available and reading skills are valued by the parents also have an advantage in school. Students who do not get proper background find difficulty in reading. They have fewer magazines and newspapers in home. They have poor nutrition.

2.8 Caste

In a country like India where much more stress is being laid on democracy, socialistic pattern of society, secularism and national integrity, caste has been viewed
as one of the social hazards. In spite of the nation's struggle to make the Indian society casteless, a number of castes exist. The caste and its levels play their part in making or ill-making of the individual. As far as the school pupils are concerned, their language experiences, reading facilities and home background by large are positively or negatively affected by their caste levels.

2.8.1 Meaning and Concept of Caste

Caste is a label which is inherited by the individual by his birth. Castes are, traditionally, classified into main sub-castes like Bania, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Patel, Suthar, Luhar, Rabari, Vanakar, Bhil, etc. Broadly speaking all these castes, from the educational and/or social progress point of view, are categorized into two major classes, namely, backward class or non-backward class. The Indian nationals who belong to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, denotified tribes, migratory tribes and certain castes approved and declared by the Baxi Commission are termed as backward class (shortly known as B.C.) while all the remaining castes are considered as advanced class or generally known as non-backward class (shortly known as Non-B.C.)
As per delimitation of the research problem, only Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe pupils under the study, are treated as B.C. pupils, while all other pupils belonging to other than S.C. and S.T. pupils are treated as Non-B.C. pupils. Only these two major caste levels (i.e. B.C. and Non-B.C.) have been treated as caste levels in this study.

2.9 Area

The declaration of results of various public examinations published in newspapers reveal the fact that top-most successful pupils are from big towns or cities, while a very few ones are from villages. This tends to imply that the area of pupils' school or residence plays an important role in affecting pupils' performance in special and academic achievement in general.

A number of researches done on reading and learning including the levels of area - rural and urban - tend to prove that area level is one of the determinants of pupils' reading progress, reading attainment and scholastic achievement.
### 2.9.1 Meaning and Concept of Area

Area in its broader sense is any specified part of the earth or any particular extent of surface, but the meaning of area in this research is very specific. Area, operationally, is any particular region which can, from research point of view, be classified into two broad categories (i.e., rural area and urban area). It is likely that increase in population of people can make any rural area an urban one. In this study area applies to the far and wide territory of the pupil's school. The Gujarat Government's criteria for the classification of area levels have been taken into consideration while labelling any particular place of school-pupils as a rural area or an urban area.

### 2.10 Resume

The understanding of the variables with regard to reading ability, study habits, family size, socio-economic status, caste and area have been described with a view to introducing the variables which form the crucial bearing on the academic achievement of the pupils.

Out of them, reading ability has been discussed at greater length because the investigator believes that
it is the KINGPIN round which the subjects of syllabus revolve. Hence any discussion or academic achievement must discuss the reading ability of the pupil because of the highest correlation between them.

The measuring tools employed for these variables would be discussed in the fourth chapter on "Planning and Procedure".
References:


22. Ibid., p. 27.

