CHAPTER I

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Education has become indispensable for every one. It plays a vital role in building a society. A modern society cannot achieve its aims of economic growth, technical development and cultural advancement without fully harnessing the talents of its citizens. Educationists, Psychologists, Social Scientists, thus, strive to develop fully the intellectual potential of the students and make efforts to see that their potentialities are fully realized and channelized for the benefit of the individuals and that of the society.

Education has always been concerned with the prediction of Academic Achievement. In academic achievement we try to know the knowledge and understanding of a learner. A test of educational or academic achievement is one designed to measure knowledge, understanding or skills in a specified subject or group of subjects. Thus, whatever the knowledge and skills a student gets during a period of instruction and training is called his/her academic achievement.

Some Psychologists have termed it as ‘Educational Forwardness’, ‘Scholastic Achievement’; and so on, which refers to the scores obtained in the annual examination by a student i.e. the end product of students whole year labour. This end product of students labour throughout the year has been a matter of great concern for the
educationists and psychologists since the olden times, but the critical approach to this aspect emerged only recently around twentieth century with the advancement of the notion of wastage and stagnation and drew the attention of the psychologists. As a result the term received numerous definitions.

In Wolman's Dictionary of Behavioral Sciences, Academic Achievement has been defined as "the level of proficiency attained in scholastic or academic work". Generally the term Academic Achievement refers to the extent of degree of mastery in certain areas of studies merely measured by the examination system in the school or college. Inspite of the fact that schools and colleges impart uniform classroom instructions to all students, wide range of differences are observed in their academic achievement. It is a phenomenon of multiple determination. For a long time, intelligence was considered to play a dominant role in the prediction of academic achievement. Some theorists even went to the length of assuming a perfect correspondence between intelligence and academic achievement of students. Cronbach (1949), Gough (1953), Carter (1959), Astington(1960), Keller and Rowley (1962), Pemberton (1963), Agrawal (1964), Bhatnagar (1968) etc. reported a correlation of 0.30 to 0.80 between these two variables. Intelligence test scores have been found to be fairly good predictors of success at high school and other levels. (Sinha,1966; Sundame, 1973). Researches carried out during the last few decades have shown that student's academic deficiency is not due to a single factor like intelligence but a host of other relevant factors play an important role.
Stagner (1961) observed that the relationship between academic achievement and intelligence was dependent upon certain personality factors. Investigations by Torrance (1965) have shown that superior or even gifted children, as identified by various tests, may be underachievers.

Thus, with the rejection of intelligence as the sole dominant factor in accounting for uneven or unequal academic achievement of students, other important factors which have been recognized are, interest (Mitra, 1961; Singh, 1974); study habits (Saxena, 1971; Lalithamma 1975); Elliot et. al. 1990), expectancy (Malloch and Michael, 1981; Vollmer 1986), Cognitive style (Swanson,1980, Chatterjee and Paul, 1984); creativity (Guilford, 1977; Mehdi, 1977); motivation (Atkinson and Rayner, 1978. Fyans 1980); level of aspiration (Kaplan and Naidu, 1981).

Personality factors like adjustment (Rai, 1974; Patel and Joshi, 1977); anxiety (Kanekar, 1977; Singh et. al. 1984); self concept (Rohini, 1981; Rogers, 1982); locus of control (Agrawal and Berry, 1974; Fry and Coe, 1980) and host of other variables i.e. Family relationships (McCandles and Evans, 1973); socio-economic status (Parikh, 1978); cultural setting as rural-urban differences (Pandey, 1979) contribute to the prediction of academic achievement.

Current research on college academic achievement considers that high school academic performance and scores obtained on college admissions tests, such as the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) are the best predictors of academic competence (Mathiasen, 1984).
Family plays an important role in providing the most congenial atmosphere within which the child forms his style of life and basic patterns of behavior. The environment created at home accelerates or retards the development of any child. Douglas (1964) reported that an impoverished home environment has cumulative effect on child’s academic performance. He reported that children who are encouraged in their homework by their parents have relatively higher scores. On the other hand, lack of motivation on the part of parents played an important role in deteriorating the achievement of the child. Studies of McCandless and Evans (1973) showed that children who were underachievers had poor relationships with their parents. Singh et. al. (1984) have also reported that parent-child relationships are strained due to low academic achievement of the child.

Prasad (1979) also reported that authoritarianism, dominance and parental rejection usually lead to lowering of academic achievement. Sibia et. al. (1996) reported that high achievers had better relationships with their parents than the low achievers. Parents of high achievers are more trusting, rewarding, loving and show more tolerance towards their children than parents of low achievers.

Academic achievement is often adversely affected by lack of social acceptance. Those who are well accepted perform better than those who are neglected, and much better than those who are actually rejected. Hurlock (1967) has stated that underachievement may come from laziness, lack of motivation, unfavourable attitude towards the activity in which the underachievement occurs. Once a student starts to work below
capacity, it often becomes habitual and the underachievement becomes chronic.

On the contrary, overachiever student does more than is excepted from him on the basis of his abilities. He gives the impression of being extremely conscientious: and teachers usually think that he is a more able student than he actually is.

It is evident from the above cited studies that personality and non-cognitive factors are highly relevant to the study of academic achievement of students. It seems that favorable contributory personality factors play a major role in accounting for high academic achievement of the students.

In recent years, there has been a growing realization among the researchers that cognitive and personality factors must be assessed to diminish the margin of error in the prediction of academic achievement. Singhal (1973), Koul(1976) have maintained that ability, temperament and motivation contribute something like 25 percentage of achievement variance.

Investigations related to family and social environment on the performance and mental development reveal that a stimulating and enriched background is conducive and motivating to the child. (Mishra and Tripathi, 1980; Rathaiah and Bashkar Rao, 1997). On the other hand, an improvised atmosphere, dull and discouraging family and social conditions curb the curiosity and ability to learn, resulting in maladjustment of students in the educational setup. It can, thus, be said that socio-economic status of the students is a crucial factor in his
education and personality development. To achieve every child needs an audience to encourage and appreciate his efforts. Parents are the most influential members of this audience.

Besides there are school variables too, which affect academic achievement of the students. Therefore, it can be said that academic achievement is not the product of any single factor, rather, it is the interplay of large number of factors.

Gupta M. (1993) summed up these factors broadly under the following heads:-

i) Institutional factors comprising of factors related to the school, such as the climate of the school and the classrooms, teachers characteristics, methods of teaching, interpersonal relationships, service conditions and facilities etc.

ii) Personality factors constituted by intelligence, creativity, thinking, perception, cognitive style, attitudes, motivation and many more concerned with the learner.

iii) Background factors consisting of characteristics such as child-rearing practices, home environment, parent-child relationship, family size, type of family, economic conditions of the family. Rural-urban residence etc. of the learner.
This is shown in the following figure:

![Diagram](image)

It is clear from the above figure that academic achievement is affected by institutional and personality factors besides the background factors which in turn affect both. In this figure, academic achievement is shown to have an impact on all the above three variables also. Thus there is a mutual interdependence of these variables on each other.

The effect of all the variables on academic achievement could not be studied together for want of time and resource constraints. The researcher has, thus, left out the institutional and background variables altogether and taken up only three variables i.e. locus of control, anxiety and need for achievement from the personality factors. Thus the present investigation was planned to study the role of three personality variables i.e. Internal-External locus of control, anxiety and need for achievement in academic achievement of the students. A study of the present kind is likely to bring to light factors besides cognitive abilities that determine academic performance.
Intelligence as a predictor of the Academic Achievement

An outstanding manifestation of academic achievement is intellectual ability, which is composed of several parts, sometimes called, "Primary mental abilities". The relationship between intelligence and achievement has been reported significant and positive in almost all the studies. But it has been shown by the researchers that intellectual ability is not the sole predictor of academic performance. Academic achievement is not perfectly correlated with mental capacity. The correlations usually range from 0.40 to about 0.75, depending on the groups tested and on whether correlations are for single subject or for total achievement (Ellis, 1969). It indicates that the brightest students do not work equally as high as their capacity, and that the dullest students do better than one would normally expect from them. Thus, apart from intelligence several personality, motivational and background factors, as mentioned earlier, play a crucial role in academic achievement in both direct and indirect manner.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

To identify the role of n-Achievement, locus of control and anxiety in deciding the level of academic achievement, the present study is entitled

"A study of some personality correlates of academic achievement".
1.2 Objectives of the Study

Specific objectives of the study are as follows:-

1. To find out the relationship between need for achievement (n-Ach) and academic achievement.

2. To search the association between Internal-External locus of control and academic achievement.

3. To assess the magnitude and direction of relationship between anxiety and academic achievement.

4. To study the relationship of n-Ach, LOC and anxiety with the academic achievement for groups formed on the basis of:-
   i) Curriculum (Arts and Science).
   ii) Gender (Male and Female).

5. To explore the interrelationships among n-Ach, LOC and anxiety.

6. To find out whether significant mean differences exist between the groups formed on the basis of:-
   i) Curriculum (Arts and Science).
   ii) Gender (Male and Female).

1.3 Need and Significance of the Study.

Educational opportunities though open to all, do not seem to engage to any reasonable extent the capacities of those who seek to utilize
them- An eternal question baffling parents, educators and national planners is: “Why do students of demonstrated ability flop in their academic efforts at school or college examinations?”. Academic underachievement more than academic failure, constitutes a grave problem as it amounts to wastage of human resources which is construed as an irreparable loss to the society, which a developing country like ours can ill afford. Therefore, an effort to undertake the factors that underlie the success and failure of students in education does not simply account to an academic exercise but has practical bearing in the sense that it makes possible, the proper and full utilization of our meager resources.

Out of the bucket of researches on various variables—personality cognitive, non-cognitive, motivational and environmental—the researcher chose to investigate the relationship of locus of control, anxiety and need for achievement to academic achievement with the hope that knowledge of such relationship and the relative contribution of each to academic achievement would open new vistas for considering strategies for remedial and reconstructive teaching. The importance of these factors as motivating and activating forces in forging direction for activity, academic or otherwise, is theoretically established. Still some contradictory findings are reported. Attempt to arrive at unequivocal finding is another reason for pursuing this study.

Lastly from a perusal of previous studies, the researcher found that no such study had been undertaken which tried to investigate into the relationship of all the above mentioned variables. These variables have been studied in isolation and no such study could be traced which
might have attempted to probe into the relationship among these variables.

1.4 Hypotheses tested in the Study

To attain the objectives of this study, following hypotheses have been put forth for testing:-

1) Subjects of science faculty would have higher level of n-Ach than the subjects of arts faculty.

2) The boys would have higher n-Ach than the girls.

3) The subjects of science faculty would have more internal LOC than the subjects of arts faculty.

4) The girls would be more externally controlled than the boys.

5) Subjects of arts faculty would be more anxious than the subjects of science faculty.

6) Males and females would differ on anxiety.

7) The students having higher scores at the SSC examination tend to opt for science curriculum as compared to the arts curriculum.

8) Academic achievement of males and females differs significantly.

9) The science faculty subjects would score more marks at HSC level than the arts faculty subjects.

10) Higher n-Ach is associated with internal LOC.
11) n-Ach and anxiety would be negatively correlated.
12) External LOC and anxiety are positively correlated.
13) n-Ach and academic achievement would be positively correlated
14) High academic achievement would be associated with internal LOC.
15) Anxiety would be negatively correlated with academic achievement.
16) The prior academic achievement is a good predictor of the subsequent academic achievement.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

This study has been delimited to :-

i) The Boys and Girls of First Year Degree course of Arts and Science faculties only.

ii) Area of study has been restricted to Aurangabad city only.

iii) Varied socio-economic status background of the subjects were not taken into consideration. Socio-economic status of the subjects was more or less similar.

iv) The sample consisted of those boys and girls who obtained Grade III (Intellectually Average) on Raven’s Standard Progressive Matrices.
1.6 Operational Definitions of the terms used.

The determinants of academic achievement taken up for investigation in this study are need for achievement (n-Ach), locus of control and anxiety. For the sake of clear conceptualization of the problem, their operational definitions have been given as follows:

1) **Need for achievement (n-Ach)**

Murray (1938) defined the need for achievement as under:-

"To accomplish something difficult, to master, manipulate, or organize physical objects, human beings or ideas, to do this as rapidly and as independently as possible. To overcome obstacles and attain a high standard. To excel one’s self. To rival and surpass others. To increase self-regard by the successful exercise of talent"

McClelland et.al.(1953) defines n-Ach “as behavior towards competition with a standard of excellence”.

Need for achievement is defined operationally as a behaviour which shows efforts to do one’s best, to do better than others or in general, to accomplish something to one’s satisfaction. (Mukherjee, 1964). It is concerned with one’s zeal for doing a constructive work of any nature. It reflects a desire to move ahead to the ultimate goal. In this study, n-Ach is inferred on Mukherjee’s Sentence Completion Test and is expressed as scores on it.

2) **Locus of Control (LOC)**

Rotter (1966) maintains that people can be classified along a continuum; at the internal end are the people who view their behaviour
and what happens to them as directly under their personal control. At the other end are externals who view their behaviour as influenced by events that are completely out of their control and to such factors as luck, chance, power, figures in authority and fate. It deals with an important belief system inherent in individual’s mode of thinking, i.e. the extent to which the individual believes that he is self-motivated, directed or controlled (internal LOC) or that the environment (luck, fate, chance) plays a dominant role in influencing his behaviour and in determining the rewards and punishments that he obtains. (external LOC). In this study locus of control is inferred on Rotter’s I-E Scale and is expressed as scores on it.

3) Anxiety

On the basis of the definitions of May(1950) and Drever (1958), anxiety can be defined as a persistent, distressing psychological state, arising from an inner-fear. It is a complex of many conditions as distinguished from passing experiences of anger, fear or grief, uneasiness, irritability or depression or other vaguely defined feelings which the individual cannot account for. Spielberger (1972) and his associates have differentiated between State-anxiety (A-state) and Trait-anxiety (A-trait). State anxiety has been conceptualized as a transitory emotional state of the organism that is evoked when the individual perceives a stimulus as potentially harmful to him; where as trait-anxiety refers to stable personality differences in anxiety proneness which is manifested directly in the behaviour of the individual.
Here, the researcher is concerned with trait anxiety which is generic and is represented by the obtained score on Sinha’s W-A Self-Analysis Form.

4) Academic Achievement (AA)

Good (1973), in the dictionary of Education, referred to academic achievement as the knowledge attained or skill developed in the school subjects, usually designated by test scores or marks assigned by the teacher. Academic achievement is the degree or level of proficiency attained in scholastic or academic work. In the present study academic achievement refers to the total marks secured by the students in all subjects of study at SSC and HSC Examinations, conducted by Maharashtra Board.