CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Education is inevitable in life. Every human being has to pass through its dynamic process. Its lifelong journey proceeds from womb to tomb. There are various mode for transaction of education to individuals like: informal, Non-formal and Formal way. The society emphasized more on the formal way of education. The formal way of education includes systemic process of getting education. A uniform structure of school education, the 10+2 system has been adopted by all the States and Union Territories of India. However, within the States and the UTs, there remain variations in the number of classes constituting the Primary, Upper Primary, High and Higher Secondary school stages, age for admission to class I, medium of instruction, public examinations, teaching of Hindi and English, number of working days in a year, academic session, vacation periods, fee structure, compulsory education etc. The education system, in Gujarat, with respect to schooling is divided into four distinct stages viz. Primary (Class I to IV), Upper Primary (Class V to VII), Secondary (Class VIII to X) and Higher Secondary (Class XI and XII).

When students are being educated using the formal way of education they experience numerous transition as they move through the education system. In India, there are typically four major educational transitions including home to pre-primary school, pre-primary to secondary school, a secondary school to high school, and high school to college. In every summer thousands of children leave their primary schools to the next stage of their secondary schools. Most of these children approach transition with excitement and look forward to new challenges and experiences. However, some are more nervous about the move and may find it daunting both academically and personally, experiencing feeling of inadequacy, insecurity and alienation.

In majority of primary schools throughout India, children are taught in self-contained classrooms with a familiar set of peers and one or two teachers. The traditional secondary school environment, however, differs significantly from that of the primary
school environment, as secondary schools are relatively larger, less personal, and more formal than elementary schools. Students experience differences in grading practices, multiple sets of behavioural and classroom rules and expectations, and are surrounded by unfamiliar students and school staff. Once children reach secondary school they must interact with more peers and more teachers. Primary education is characterised by group centric activities while secondary school requires individual learning skills, with more testing and examination, and there are greater demands in terms of academic performance and individual responsibility. Hence some students face difficulties in adapting to the new environment. In addition to organisational differences and structural differences in education, students also experiences a change in their academic position in the school. In the last year of primary school or in the 8th standard students considered as most senior, most responsible, most well-known pupils in their school. Then they transfer to secondary school they become most junior and the least known members of the new school.

The increased academic demands and social challenges that come along with this new school environment can lead to stress and adjustment problems for some early adolescents (Eccles et al, 1993; Elias et al., 1992). In India when students transit from primary to secondary school they are between the age group of 12 to 14 years. It is not only the period of educational transition for these students but also the period of transition from childhood to adolescences simultaneously. Not all students will react unfavourably to these changes, but for some there may be negative effect relation to behaviour, confidence, academic performance and attitudes towards school and new environment.

The transition from elementary school to middle school is often a period of turbulence for students. Transition may be defined as leaving one educational setting and entering a new one. (FitzSimmons, V.C, 2006). The transition to middle school is frequently associated with declines in students' engagement and academic achievement. While some researchers attribute these problems to adolescence, others attribute them to the nature of the middle school. (FitzSimmons, V.C, 2006).

The period of transition from primary to secondary school is very important. Many researches have already been under taken internationally to measure the impact of transition from elementary to middle school. Students report that this transition is difficult for them, although they generally feel positively about their new school environment after the transition (Schulenberg, Asp, & Petersen, 1984). The results from a survey of students
who were undergoing the transition to middle level schools indicate that students experience high levels of stress at the start of their transition year (Arowosafe & Irvin, 1992). The stress is a result of the need to grow accustomed to the changes evident between elementary and middle level schools (Blyth, Simmons, & Carlton-Ford, 1983; Perkins & Gelfer, 1995). It also is a result of the cognitive, physical, and social developmental changes that simultaneously occur to young adolescents (Simmons, & Blyth, 1987). Early adolescence and the transition to middle level schools often marks the beginning in a decrease in students’ academic motivation and achievement which often predicts later school dropout (Eccles, Wigfield, et al., 1993; Schulenberg, et al., 1984; Rumberger, 1995). The transition is also associated with a decrease in self-esteem, especially in female students (Blyth et al., 1983; Simmons & Blyth, 1987). There is evidence that students who experience difficulty with the transition to middle level schools perceive themselves as less able to complete academic tasks and form friendships. Research has also indicated that these students tend to perceive themselves more negatively and experience a decline in their academic performance (Eccles, Wigfield, et al., 1993; Simmons & Blyth, 1987). These negative changes can increase the likelihood that students become disinterested and disengaged in school (Rumberger, 1995).

This indicates that young students who do not experience school support during the transition from primary to secondary school are at greater risk of disengaging from learning. The most vulnerable of these students are those who do not have a history of successful primary education, students with learning difficulties, and those from low income families. There are likely to be serious implications for their achievement, employment prospects, and wellbeing if they are not well supported through their transition to secondary education. Student self-concept of ability and motivation also experiences decline during this transition (Wingfield, Eccles, MacIver, Reuman, & Midgley, 1991). Researchers have discovered evidence of decline in student’s self-perception and self-esteem related with the transition from elementary school to middle school (Seidman, Allen, Aber, Mitchell, & Feinman, 1994).

Students’ wellbeing and learning must be maintained as they transit from primary to secondary schools. Ryff (1989) suggested that wellbeing comprises six dimensions – self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth. An important aspect in the adjustment to a new
school is the students’ sense of belonging and their socio-emotional functioning; in other words: their level of well-being. A high sense of belonging, the feeling of social connection and being socially connected may lead to higher motivation and grades. Students with a low sense of belonging may feel alienated at school, which in turn may cause poor achievement and their eventually dropping out of school (Cueto, Guerrero, Sugimaru & Zevallos, 2010).

A student’s transition can be complicated by the social, emotional and physiological changes that can negatively impact on their learning. Teachers that understand how these changes have an impact on their students are better placed to help students make positive adjustments to their new school. The main purpose of the present research is to study the school engagement, self-esteem and well-being during the transition from primary to secondary school in Anand district of Gujarat, India, so that appropriate educational implication will be suggested according to obtained result to school administrator, teachers, parents and students.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present research studied under the problem:

“School Engagement, Self-esteem and Wellbeing during transition from Primary to Secondary School”

1.3 DEFINITION OF THE IMPORTANT TERMS

In order to avoid misunderstanding regarding the key words, it is obligatory on the part of the researcher to define the terms which are as follows:

1.3.1 School Transition

School transition may be defined as Transition- A point at which students move from one segment of the education process to another (Rice, 2001). Transition may be defined as leaving one educational setting and entering a new one. (FitzSimmons, V.C, 2006).

In the present study, the transition period under consideration is the orientation and remediation period which begins in the spring of the final primary school year and
extends approximately through the end of the first semester of the student’s first secondary school academic year.

1.3.2 School Engagement

Student engagement is frequently used to, "depict students' willingness to participate in routine school activities, such as attending class, submitting required work, and following teachers' directions in class." However, the term is also increasingly used to describe meaningful student involvement throughout the learning environment, including students participating curriculum design, classroom management and school building climate. Engagement has also been defined as school connectedness, affiliation, membership, bonding and belonging (Jimerson, Campos, & Greif, 2003; Osterman, 2000), and it can be described as “investment…created when students appreciate and put forth effort in their school work…investment is ensured if students feel like they belong and that there are supportive people on whom they can rely” (Finlay & Heilbrunn, 2006.). Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel, and Paris (2005) three-factor model is comprised of three overlapping dimensions: emotional engagement (identification with the students’ school, emotional reactions to the classroom, and student relationships with peers and adults); behavioural engagement (positive conduct and involvement in academic-related activities and participation in school-related activities); and cognitive engagement (psychological investment and strategy used in learning). School success (the dependent variable) was defined as achievement (grades and credits earned) and positive behaviours (attendance rates and rule infractions). From different definition it is clear that school engagement mainly consisting three type of engagement:

I. Behavioural engagement

II. Cognitive engagement

III. Emotional engagement

In the present research school engagement refers to scores obtained by respondent on school engagement questionnaire prepared by the researcher.

1.3.3 Self-Esteem

Self-esteem can be defined as an individual’s judgment of his or her self-worth (Rosenberg 1965). Self-esteem is generally considered the evaluative component of the
self-concept, a broader representation of the self that includes cognitive and behavioural aspects as well as evaluative or affective ones (Tomaka & Blascovich, 1991). Some of the definition of self-esteem are as follows:

Self-esteem arises from the discrepancy between the perceived self, or self-concept (an objective view of the self) and the ideal self (what the person values, or wants to be like). A large discrepancy results in low self-esteem, while a small discrepancy is usually indicative of high self-esteem. (Pope et al., 1988.)

Self-esteem is the individual’s evaluation of the discrepancy between self-image and ideal self. It is an affective process and is a measure of the extent to which the individual cares about this discrepancy. (Lawrence, 1996.)

In the present research self-esteem refers to scores obtained by respondent on questionnaire of Self-esteem constructed and standardized by Prof. K. S. Likhia and Dr. P. B. Acharya.

1.3.4 Well-Being

Wellbeing is not the same as happiness, but can be thought of as a broad phenomenon that includes people’s emotional responses, domain satisfactions and global judgments of life satisfaction (Diener et al., 1999). Ryff (1989) suggested that wellbeing comprises six dimensions – self-acceptance, positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life and personal growth. Wellness, or a sense of well-being includes one’s ability to live and work effectively and to make a significant contribution to society. (Corbin, 1997). Well-being – to optimise health and capabilities of self and others. (Tasmania, 2000). Well-being is the state of successful performance throughout the life course integrating physical, cognitive, and social-emotional functions that results in productive activities deemed significant by one’s cultural community, fulfilling social relationships, and the ability to transcend moderate psychosocial and environmental problems. Well-being also has a subjective dimension in the sense of satisfaction associated with fulfilling one’s potential. (Bornstein, Davidson, Keyes, & Moore, 2003).

In the present research well-being refer to scores obtained by respondents on rating scale of well-being prepared by researcher.
1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In order to arrive the result of the study, the objectives are determined as follows:

1. To study the school engagement of students of primary school.
2. To study the well-being of students of primary school.
3. To study the self-esteem of students of primary school.
4. To study the school engagement of students of secondary school.
5. To study the well-being of students of secondary school.
6. To study the self-esteem of students of secondary school.
7. To study the school engagement of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
8. To study the well-being of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
9. To study the self-esteem of students during transition from primary to secondary school.

1.5 HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis testing is an important activity of empirical research. A well worked up hypothesis is half the answer to the research questions. Hypothesis supports the researcher to find an answer to the problem. Based on the objectives of the study, there were 30 hypotheses in the study.

1. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of behavioural engagement of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
2. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of emotional engagement of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
3. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of cognitive engagement of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
4. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of students during transition from primary to secondary school.
5. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of students during transition from primary to secondary school.

6. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of students during transition from primary to secondary school.

7. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of behavioural engagement of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

8. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of emotional engagement of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

9. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores cognitive engagement of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

10. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

11. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

12. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of students in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

13. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of boys in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

14. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of boys in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

15. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of boys in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.
16. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of girls in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

17. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of girls in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

18. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of girls in urban area during transition from primary to secondary school.

19. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of behavioural engagement of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

20. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of emotional engagement of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

21. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores cognitive engagement of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

22. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

23. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

24. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of students in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

25. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of girls in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

26. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of girls in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.
27. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of girls in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

28. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of school engagement of boys in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

29. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of self-esteem of boys in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

30. There will be no significant difference between the mean scores of well-being of boys in rural area during transition from primary to secondary school.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Delimitation are those characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of the study. It an opportunity to demonstrate or restrict the thought critically related to the research problem. The limitation of the study are as follows.

- The present study was confined to the students of primary and secondary school of Anand district.
- The present study delimited to Gujarati medium school of Anand district only.
- The present study was delimited to the data which collected in academic year 2011-12 and 2012-13.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Education is a lifelong process for human being. During this process of education children may experience number of transitions from one class to another or from one phase of education to another. Transition from one school to another or from one stage of education to another is an important process whose complexities need to be understood and managed successfully if children’s learning and well-being is not to be affected adversely by the impact of changes that come with transition. The move to secondary school presents new experiences to all children and unfamiliar situations are likely to occur for several weeks, or even longer. While some may do so, it is unreasonable to expect children to adjust instantly to the changes experienced and therefore common sense suggests that school transition is more of a process continuing over many months.
than a single episode occurring at one moment in time. School transition interrupts the continuity of life for all children, introducing changes in friendships, relationships with teachers, learning environments and daily routine and it would not be surprising to find that children experience a change in their attitudes towards school. Indeed, it is precisely because secondary schools are different from primary schools in so many ways that the concept of engagement was considered useful in providing a picture of the relative smoothness of transition during the course of a year. The changes experienced at this time may be sufficiently fundamental to impinge on perceptions of self-esteem and wellbeing, and possibly other areas of life. Many previous studies have suggested reasons for negative student reactions after transfer, particularly to explain a drop in academic performance. The study of school transition could focus on a number of relevant outcomes. However, there are strong arguments for examining the three concepts of engagement, as well as self-esteem and wellbeing, both as individual outcomes and in relation to each other. There do not appear to be any studies measuring how engagement changes during transfer to secondary school especially in India.

The main aim of this study was to investigate how far, and in what ways, the transition from primary to secondary school impacted on children’s attitudes towards school and on some key emotions. Of course, there are many areas of life that could be affected by school transition, but this study concentrated on examining changes in three elements of school engagement as well as in self-esteem and well-being. The result of the study may be sources of information regarding school engagement, self-esteem and well-being of students. The result of the study gives an idea about the impact of school transition on school engagement, self-esteem and wellbeing on students when they move to secondary school. This information may be useful to school administrators, school teachers and parents to support students during transition period and adopt strategies to maintain their school engagement, self-esteem and wellbeing.

1.8 SCHEME OF CHAPTERISATION

The scheme of chapterisation of chapter five is as follows.

The first chapter on introduction dealt with introductory aspects of study, statement of the problem, definition of the important terms, objectives of the study,
hypothesis of the study, limitation of the study, importance of the study and chapterisation.

The second chapter concerned to theoretical orientation and reviewed of the past studies i.e. definition and concept of school transition, impact of school transition, concept of school engagement, factor affecting school engagement, importance of school engagement and school engagement during transition, concept of self-esteem, types of self-esteem, impact of school transition on self-esteem of the students, concept of well-being, its dimension, importance of well-being. The reviewed of past researches was also shown in this chapter.

The third chapter based on the research methodology i.e. designing of the study, population, sampling, tools and their characteristics, development of the tool, item analysis, administration of the tools, techniques of the analysis of the data and statistics used.

The forth chapter describes about the data analysis and interpretation i.e. the descriptive statistics of school engagement, self-esteem and well-being among 8th standard students and 9th standard students and its graphical representation, result in tabulated form. This chapter divided into two parts. The first part concerned to the descriptive statistics. The second part described about comparison of mean scores in respect to relative hypothesis.

The fifth chapter provides the summary, major findings, conclusions, suggestions and recommendations for further study.