CHAPTER - 5

DISCUSSION
The basic objective of the study was to identify mothers' child-rearing practices and other socialization emphases that are related to the development of learned helplessness in children. A large number of socialization indicators categorized under four major domains such as expectancy, attitude, rearing practices, and self-perception were investigated. The findings offer many interesting features.

**Expectancy**

The results clearly show that mothers of girls report higher expectancies compared to boys' mothers. The domains of activity where such high expectancy is indicated include activities such as hearing, identifying mother, babbling, speaking, understanding words, sitting, walking and weaning baby from bottle to cup. Furthermore, trends of higher expectancy of girls' mothers are indicated in a few activity domains such as seeing, feeding by spoon, starting toilet training, and telling stories.

The findings are in the expected direction. It is likely that mothers' higher expectancy stems from their observation of girls' "growth spurt" at an earlier age compared to boys.

During the formative years, girls are in many respects more hardy, robust, and "mature" than boys. Boys appear to be more susceptible to disease, especially during infancy. More boys than girls suffer from impairments attributed to brain damage. With the approach of puberty, girls seem to be less susceptible than boys to adverse circumstances, such as malnutrition or other hardships, which might retard their physical growth (Greulich, 1951; Tanner, 1963, 1970). A more pronounced effect is probably
exerted by an additional important difference in the physical sphere — namely, in the onset of puberty, as indicated by the onset of the first menstrual period, and a corresponding stage of development in boys. Girls mature sexually at an earlier age than boys, and, correlated with this, a girl's adolescent "growth spurt" comes at an earlier age. There are many differences between boys and girls in the spheres of intellectual performance and social behaviour that variously might influence, or be influenced by, their views regarding their masculine and feminine roles. Girls tend to be somewhat superior to boys in early language development. From the time they begin their schooling, girls have fewer academic problems than boys. The proportion of boys who have difficulty in learning to read far exceeds the proportion of girls. Apart from reading problems, boys also far outnumber "problem pupils" at school. This is linked, in part, with the fact that girls tend more than boys to be confirming, while boys tend to be more rebellious.

An examination of the specific domains where higher expectancies have been expressed shows that barring a few, many of them are of verbal areas. There is overwhelming evidence to show that girls excel boys in terms of verbal ability (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1974), although this difference is narrowed as they enter into adulthood. Female superiority on verbal tasks has been one of the more solidly established generalizations in the field of sex differences. Recent research continues to support the generalization to a great degree. It is true that wherever a sex difference is found, they are usually girls and women who obtain higher scores, but the two sexes perform very similarly on a number of
verbal tasks in a number of sample populations. It has been thought that sex differences begin very early from the time of the utterance of the first word or even earlier, in babbling, and diminish as the boys "catch up". A source of this generalization is the 1954 McCarthy summary of studies of language development. The differences reported in that study tended to be small, and many, as McCarthy noted, were not significant even on large samples. However, when there was a difference it almost always favoured girls, and the many studies taken together added up to a significant trend. T. Moore (1967) found that girls had higher "speech quotients" at age 18 months, though not earlier or later. Clarke-Stewart (1973) found girls to be ahead in both comprehension and vocabulary at 17 months. The evidence points to such a conclusion, however, and it has sometimes been assumed that a female head start in verbal ability might be a function of girls' receiving more verbal stimulation or reinforcement from their caretakers.

The finding of higher expectancy of mothers regarding girls' development is in congruence with the different expectations that teachers hold for boys and girls. In the elementary school years, teachers often hold girls on higher esteem. They rate girls more highly than boys on almost every dimension including their effectiveness as learners (Coopersmith, 1976; Digman, 1963; Stevension, Hale, Klein & Miller, 1988). However, the role of the differential expectations for girls and boys is to be examined in the context of actual developments.
The findings of the present study clearly document the role of setting; it is shown that mothers in urban setting indicate higher expectancies compared to mothers of rural areas. The activity domains where such high expectancy is expressed include children's understanding words, walking, identifying pictures, feeding by spoon, stopping breast feeding, weaning from bottle to cup, starting self-feeding, starting toilet training and story telling. Although no study to date exists to indicate maternal differences across rural and urban settings in India, cross-cultural studies offer evidence regarding cultural variation in parental expectancies. Keller, Miranda, and Gauda (1984) studied parental expectancies of West German and Costa Rican mothers. The respondents were asked to indicate the age at which certain activities were likely to appear. Considering West German society as a culture emphasizing autonomy and Costa Rican society emphasizing compliance, higher expectancies were predicted for West German mothers. The empirical data supported the predictions.

Developmental psychologists have recently turned their attention to the context of child development and, in particular, to the family as a "learning environment", rather than focussing on the child to the exclusion of the environment in which he or she is reared (Goodnow, Burns, & Russell, 1985; Laosa & Sigel, 1982). One aspect of family environment that warrants attention is the cultural origin of its members. There is considerable evidence to suggest that cultural background influences, for example, parents' views about child-rearing practices (Lambert, Hamers, & Frasure-Smith, 1979; Rosenthal & Bornholt, 1987), their interactions with children, especially the strategies they use to teach their children.
Other studies have focussed on expectations that parents have of the development of various competencies in their children. It has been suggested that these expectations are mediated by, among other factors, the cultural settings in which children are reared. The values that are held to be important within a culture are likely to be reflected in the developmental theories held by parents within that culture, for example, in their expectations about the timetabling of developmental achievements in their children's lives. These studies, all of mothers, have shown that within a society expectations vary as a function of cultural background (Goodnow, Cashmore, Cotton, & Knight, 1984; Hess, Kashigawi, Azuma, Price, & Dickson, 1980; Ninio, 1979).

Rosenthal and Bornholt's (1988) study of Greek and Anglo-Australian families extends this work on mothers of young children in a number of ways. Expectations about the ages at which certain competencies emerge were elicited from members (mother, father, adolescent) of 20 Greek-Australian and 20 Anglo-Australian families. They were also asked to nominate desirable qualities for teenagers and adults. The developmental timetable questionnaire of 65 items representing behaviours in eight domains. Each respondent was asked independently to decide the age at which a child would be expected to show the characteristic described in each item. The correspondence between the qualities regarded as important and those examined in the developmental timetable questionnaire could then be assessed.
Preliminary analyses showed that there were no significant main effects of gender or ordinal position of the child, nor any significant interactions with ethnicity, for any of the developmental timetable subscores. However, the results suggested that in Greek-Australian families young adolescents are expected to engage in unsupervised activity and to show greater self-control and respect at an earlier age than in Anglo-Australian families. The converse holds for responsibility, social behaviour with peers, interpersonal sensitivity, initiative and independence, and personal maturity.

The dimension of cultural variation has been identified as significant in a number of studies across cultures. Although the Greek culture has been identified by Hofstede (1983) and Triandis et al., (1986) as midway between two extremes of individualism and collectivism, there is evidence of cultural change in Greece, with differences between urban and rural Greeks (Doumanis, 1983; Georgas, 1986). The study carried out by Rosenthal and Bornholt (1988) indicated differences in developmental expectations across rural and urban settings.

These cross-cultural studies document cultural variation in developmental expectancies. Although two different settings employed in the present study do not represent two distinct cultural groups, they can be thought of as two sub-cultural units. It is also postulated that urban settings place certain specific demands on response mechanism of individuals in India compared to their rural counterparts. This is particularly plausible in Indian socio-cultural system where rapid urbanization and
industrialization is taking place. Correlated with this rapid change, new expectations are placed on urbanites. In view of this adaptive value of high expectancies in activity domains that help to meet the demands of industrial life, urban children are expected to indicate early developmental indices compared to rural children.

Apart from adaptive value of expectancies in urban settings, urban children are exposed to an enriched environment in terms of well-managed schools, parks, recreational facilities, and televisions. With such broadened exposures, parents are likely to raise their expectation about the ages at which certain competencies emerge. In her study of socialization for competence, Anandalakshmy (1972, 1975) has also indicated such differential trend in urban and rural setting of India. According to her "not only is competence a trait of individuals, it could also be described as a trait of environments" (p.207).

With respect to Sex x Setting interactions, the findings indicate that mothers of girls raise their expectations when their setting changes from rural to urban locations. This kind of interaction is indicated in activities of seeing, crawling, and sitting. This could be explained in terms of plausible hypothesis that a change of setting differentially affects girls vis-a-vis boys. Because urban settings place demands on girls who are considered developmentally matured, mothers are likely to believe that girls would develop at a faster rate. On the contrary, demands and exposure stemming from urban industrial setting may generate some coping problems for boys who are considered less matured than girls. As boys
are believed to be vulnerable to extraneous influences, mothers expectations about boys may show a decline as their setting changes from rural to urban locations.

Thus, the examination of the mothers' differential expectancy is clearly shown in socialization. The effect of such differential expectation, however, has not yet been investigated. Whether mothers treat their children differently on the basis of their differential expectations and children behave in expectation-confirming ways can be further explored.

Attitude towards Socialization Emphases

Parental attitude has been recognised as a central component of socialization process. The attitudes and values parents carry are explicitly or implicitly mediated to their children through instructions, reward and punishment systems, and other techniques (Whiting, 1981). Although no study exists to examine the relationship between parental socialization and children's helplessness, some conjectures are derived from the literature on achievement motivation and psychological differentiation. Winterbottom (1958) has clearly shown that individual's need for achievement is linked to childhood training for independence. McClelland (1961) has emphasized this socialization as an important antecedent of achievement motivation. Similarly, Witkin (1974) and Witkin and Berry (1975) have also identified the role of masterly training in the development of children's psychological differentiation. Based on these observations, the present study predicted positive relationship between training for independence and autonomy and children's competence.
However, this has not been supported, although no contradictory evidence has been shown. Only with respect to a single item, urban and rural mothers have differed on their emphasis on autonomy.

Of all living organisms, the human infants are perhaps the most profoundly dependent upon the care of other persons for their survival. Other than a few simple reflexes and the physiological processes essential to life, the infant can do nothing for itself. At the same time, of all living creatures the human infant undoubtedly is endowed with the greatest potential for the development of personal adequacy and effectiveness. Each child, from early infancy, has individual temperamental and behavioural style. Children's behavioural effect on parents has received research support (Ashton, 1973; Osofsky, 1971; Yarrow, Waxler, and Scott, 1971). Sullivan (1953) stresses the crucial importance of the quality of mother's emotional reactions to her baby's needs both physical and emotional. The two factors of importance in determining the general nature of mother-infant interaction are, of course, the baby's temperamental nature and the mother's sensitivity and responsiveness to his or her basic needs. The nature of the baby's most frequent and prevailing affective experiences in relation to his mothers' care can thus range from feelings of anxiety and distress to feelings of security, comfort and "trust" in response to the mothers' "tenderness".

Actually, there is relatively little research evidence as to the relation between the kind of mothering young infants receive and their social development (Yarrow, 1961). However, Caldwell et al., (1963) have observed
that one year-old infants who had been cared for by their own mothers only were more active, more emotionally dependent on their mothers, and more emotional in their interactions with their mothers than were infants of the same age who had experienced "polymatric" care.

As the children's manipulative and locomotor capacities develop, the child's drive to explore and perceive more and more of their environment becomes a dominant factor in their behavioural and emotional development. As they move about among the objects of their environment, grasping and manipulating them in space, then make real gains in self-identification and in their awareness of the relation of their own acts to the objects about them. With their achievement of a measure of independence and competence, the dependable ones are no longer completely subservient to the care-taker's demands. The parents and care takers, on the contrary, begin now to be more restrictive and even punitive. This concern of the care-takers and their interference with children's freedom makes children more aware of these functions and the frustrations and gratifications associated with autonomy. The children thus become more preoccupied with freedom in relation to their growing sense of autonomy.

These developmental trends, however, do not function evenly for all children, because of certain selective environmental factors (Whiting, 1981) and specific qualities of parental interaction. There is a great variation in mother's personality make-up and in their beliefs regarding socialization. Similarly, the variation of cultural norms bring limiting and amplifying conditions for development of certain traits. There is a growing
body of literature in anthropology and psychology to indicate the role of parental attitudes towards socialization. Whiting and Child's (1953) work and Whiting, Child, Lambert and Whiting's (1963) six-nation study amply demonstrate this major issue.

The hypotheses developed in the present investigation were, however, based on more specific studies such as Witkin, Dyk, Faterson, Goodenough and Karp (1962) and Mc Clelland's (1981) investigations described earlier. The lack of predicted relationship between independence-oriented socialization emphases and children's mastery orientation may be explained in terms of poor congruence between attitude and behaviour. Mothers' belief regarding children's independence and autonomy may not transform into corresponding rearing practices emphasizing autonomy.

The analysis of interaction shows that with increasing helplessness of their children, urban mothers tend to perceive more positive consequences of independence training compared to rural mothers. This finding suggests that under conditions of children's helplessness, urban mothers do not feel restrictive and feel more inclined to allow freedom to their children. The rapidity of social change in form of enhanced social interactions, increased mass communications, and extended recreational networks bring several environmental inputs. The excessive restrictions placed on children who are already helpless are likely to further their inadequacy. This kind of perception on the part of urban mothers makes them more likely to believe in the efficacy of independence training. When children
are competent, a further permissiveness is believed to be of harmful nature because the children are likely to be carried away by excessive extraneous influences. On the contrary, rural mothers tend to be restrictive when their children show more helplessness. Without much extraneous influences in rural areas, the rural mothers allow independence to children who are believed to be competent to handle such autonomy and disallow independence to children who are believed to be helpless in handling situations adequately.

The observation that environment considerations may moderate the relationship between rearing beliefs and childhood development is consistent with McClelland's (1981) analysis that social and environmental structure may have a far important role than parental beliefs.

Recently, several authors have stressed and evaluated the nature of parent-child behaviour on the basis of parental attitude (Moss & Jones, 1977; Parke, Hymel, Power & Tinsley, 1980). According to Parke (1978), parental beliefs and attitudes are regarded as filters, through which the behaviour of the infants is processed. Parental attitude play an important role in the way in which parents and children mutually regulate each other. Although the present study does not identify the exact role of maternal attitudes, attempts for strengthening the methods of attitudinal research are necessary for more successful work in the field (Walker, 1980).

**Child Rearing**

The role of child rearing practices is more direct compared to attitudinal emphasis. A number of anthropologists and psychologists working
in the tradition of culture and personality have emphasized child rearing as factors in personality development. Even in recent years a growing body of evidence suggests the relationship between child rearing and adult personality (McClelland, 1981). The present study employed rearing indicators such as responsibility training, achievement-oriented training, dependency prone training, and leniency in punishment. On the basis of findings reported in the literature on achievement motivation and psychological differentiation, predictions were made with respect to positive relationship between autonomy-oriented rearing practices and development of competence.

However, the predictions have been partly supported. It is shown that mothers of mastery oriented children use responsibility training more often than do mothers of helpless children. It is plausible that mothers' assignment of responsibility to their children offers opportunity of successful performance on the part of children. This experience of effortfulness and success fosters competence in them. On the contrary, mothers who do not offer responsibility training to children tend to inhibit the growth of competence by restricting their children's opportunity to learn the value of effortfulness. The learning experiences associated with task performance have been identified as correlates of children's motivation (Dweck, 1986).

Furthermore, the responsibility training also includes training for self-control. When children are assigned tasks such as taking care of siblings, the successful completion of the task requires an adequate
management of their own emotion. Mothers who provide such opportunity tend to induce self-control in their children. The management of affect has been shown to be a correlate of learned resourcefulness, a process that runs counter to helplessness (Rosenbaum & Ben-Ari, 1985).

With respect to responsibility training given to boys vis-a-vis girls, no sex difference is found. Although Barry Bacon, and child (1957) report that responsibility is stronger for girls than for boys, the investigators also report cases where a more formal or systematic training of boys seem to imply greater pressure on them towards responsibility. The most convincing cases were the Masai and Swazi, where the investigators found responsibility pressurers greater in boys than in girls. In Indian socio-cultural system, two different types of role performance seem to generate similar pressures for responsibility training. Although responsibility training given to boys is geared to prepare them for economic roles, there is also pressure for responsibility training in the direction of preparing girls to meet the challenges of conflicting social roles. Thus, the absence of sex difference is consistent with the specialization of sex roles.

With respect to allowing the child's autonomy-oriented, independent, exploratory behaviour or, on the contrary, restricting such behaviours, we again find very little difference in the treatment of boys and girls, although the tendency is for the mothers of mastery oriented children to eliminate their children's fear and stimulate their curiosity to a greater extent compared to the mothers of helpless children. Similarly, urban mothers are less dejected when their children deviate from their instructions compared to rural mothers. These are the only autonomy measuring
items where significant differences across groups are found. Maternal treatment of young children's dependency is not different across sex groups.

In the relatively few studies that report parental reactions to children's clinging, proximity seeking, separation resistance, and demands for attention, positive and negative parental reactions seem to be about evenly distributed to boys and girls. However, there might be differences in more global aspects of child rearing that would have similar effects, even if the contingencies are less explicit. If it were true mothers held and caressed their daughters more than their sons, or interacted with them more frequently, this might have the effect of increasing the child's orientation and proximity seeking towards the mother. Here again, the evidence does not point to differential socialization. The total amount of interaction between mother and child is similar for the two sexes, as is the amount of expressed affection and "warmth" so that neither the global reinforcement conditions nor the specifically contingent ones are such as to differentiate the dependency behaviour of young boys and girls. The only global difference in child rearing that might affect the child's dependency is the more frequent physical punishment and other negative sanctions administered to boys. These might cause the boy to distance himself from his caretaker, and thus to score lower on certain measures of dependency. Yet, there is no sex difference in maternal reactions reported in the present investigation.
Another child-rearing dimension of some importance is the restrictiveness dimension. Mitchell (1968) found that mother rhesus monkeys restrained their female infants more than their male infants. In a number of factor analyses of the behaviour of human parents, the restrictiveness dimension has emerged as relatively distinct from the warmth-hostility dimension. Furthermore, those who assume that there is a sex difference with respect to the amount of independent or exploratory behaviour children show attribute the difference sometimes to parental tendencies to allow children of one sex more freedom than is allowed to the other. In the early study by Sears, Maccoby and Levin (1957), sex differences were not found in this area of parental behaviour. Mothers placed similar limits on boys and girls with respect to how far away from the house they were allowed to go. The mother checked on the child's whereabouts equally often when the child was out of sight, and allowed no more freedom to one sex than to the other when it came to making noise or being rough with household objects. Similarly, mothers held similar expectations for daughters and sons with respect to the kind of self-help they should be capable of. Nakamura and Rogers have made a useful distinction between what they call "assertive autonomy" and "practical autonomy". The former refers to a child's acts of independence that do not have labour-saving value for the mother; the latter, by contrast, involves the child's being helpful to the mother. The Sears' study found no sex differences in granting autonomy of either kind. The bulk of more recent studies have had similar results.
Cross-cultural work on autonomy (especially as it relates to sex differences) seems to have focused upon the field-dependence/independence dimension. Taking their lead from Witkin et al. (1962) Dawson (1967 a, b) and Berry (1966) have investigated the hypothesis that field-dependence will be more marked in cultures in which there is emphasis upon conformity, reliance upon authority, and restriction of the autonomy of the individual; field-independence, on the other hand, is likely to be more characteristic among individuals growing up in an atmosphere where independence is respected and encouraged. And within cultures, the hypothesis continues, the degree of difference in field-dependence between the sexes should be a function of the degree of sex-role differentiation the degree to which females are restricted and males are allowed independence.

The term "dependency" has sometimes been used to describe the process whereby a parent who has consistently given help or affection whenever the child wanted it begins to detach the child by ignoring such demands, guiding the child into more independent actions, or sometimes actively pushing the child away. Mischel (1970) says: "In regard to dependency, the average difference between the sexes seems consistent with the widely assumed greater permissiveness for dependency by females as opposed to males in our culture". There is evidence that reward for dependency is indeed associated with high levels of dependent behaviour in children (Maccoby & Masters, 1970, pp.141-42). But as Mischel notes, the prevalent view that the amount of reward by socializing agents for this behaviour is a function of the child's sex is usually an assumption
— little evidence is cited from direct observation or parent interviews concerning how parents do in fact handle dependency bids from sons as compared with daughters. In the Hatfield et al. study boys were more frequently punished by their mothers for dependency bids, but they were also more frequently punished for independent behaviour. It appears, then that these maternal reactions are part of the more general picture of greater punitiveness to boys; they do not appear to reflect any specific shaping of dependent, as distinct from independent behaviour.

In another study, mothers of boys were more likely to report that they responded positively to the child's dependency than were mothers of girls. In the Sears et al. study (1957), mothers were asked about their handling of the child's help seeking, attention seeking, and clinging. Mothers of boys and mothers of girls were highly similar in their permissiveness for such behaviour, and in the amount of reward and punishment they reported administering for it. In the Block study (1973), fathers reported feeling that it was more important to give comfort to a girl when she was upset than do so for a boy, but mothers made no such distinction. A similar work by Osofsky and Oldfield (1971) shows clearly that when a girl behaved dependently, her parents changed their behaviour towards her. During the time when the daughter was behaving dependently, both mothers and fathers talked to her more and became more controlling; perhaps more interesting is the fact that fathers, but not mothers, reacted positively to their daughters' increased dependency. Judging from the Rothbart and Maccoby (1966) findings, it is possible that mothers would react more positively to the dependency bids of sons than daughters.
Another theoretical contribution of interest is the significance of child rearing practices in the development of dependency in the Indian context (Sinha, 1981, 1988). Neki (1976) compared the attitudes prevalent in Western and Indian cultures towards dependence. His central thesis is that dependency has acquired a negative connotation in Western psychological and psychoanalytic literature and in the Western culture as a whole; however, it lacks such connotations in the Indian culture. Western child rearing encourages independence. Indian child rearing, on the other hand, fosters dependence. In the Indian family the infant and mother have virtually uninterrupted close physical contact, and the infant receives prolonged and indulgent attention from both the biological mother and several mother surrogates in the extended family. Neki's analysis of psychoanalytic, linguistic, and anthropological roots of the concept of dependency and cultural relativism in the positive and negative connotations associated with the dependence-independence dichotomy provides a refreshing perspective of theory building in the Indian setting.

Parke (1978) has pointed out that not all cultures share western assumptions about child care. Considering Indian society as a plural system, differences across subcultural groups such as urban and rural populations are well within expectations. The study clearly illustrates the differential responsibility training given by the mothers of mastery oriented children vis-a-vis the mothers of helpless children.

It can be conjectured that maternal training for dutifulness may stimulate children's growth in that direction. Keller et al. (1984) report the case of German mothers, whose training for self-responsibility fosters
self-striving in German children. Thus, the findings of that study provide important clues for exploring the role of mechanisms that mediate between maternal training and development of competences.

Self-Perception of Mothers

The development of child's self is influenced by mother's self-concept. Without her awareness, mothers' transmit their own concepts to their children. However, it is recognised that these transmissions interact with other extraneous influences stemming from peers, teachers, and neighbours. But the centrality of mothers' role provides a base line reference for such interactive situations. Although past studies of children's helplessness did not employ this variable of maternal self-concept, some conjectures were made on the basis of literature on psychological differentiation.

While studying the developmental context of field independence, Witkin et al., (1962) have reported that mothers' self-perception is crucial in the development of children's autonomous functioning. In their differentiation studies based on interviews, the investigators sampled mothers in two groups: Interaction Inhibiting Differentiation (IID) and Interaction Fostering Differentiation (IFD). In this analysis, an evaluation was made of whether a mother in interaction with her child tended mainly to foster or interfere with the development of differentiation in the child. It was their expectation that a mother who has herself achieved a sense of self-realization would be better able to permit her child to separate from her and to develop as an individual than a mother who lacks it. They also expected that mothers who are self-assured would have less hesitation
about setting and maintaining limits for their children, and so help them develop impulse control. Mothers who lack self-assurance might be inconsistent and wavering and thus fail to give support to a child's development of controls.

In selecting self-assurance and self-realization as focal characteristics, they thought those important for the development of differentiation in the child. They were not necessarily selecting characteristics most important for the development of good adjustment. For example, a mother who was judged as having a sense of self-realization might not show warmth toward her child which would help him develop trusting attitudes towards other people. A mother judged as self-assured might be overly meticulous and compulsive and in this way set standards which are unrealistic and difficult for the child to meet. There is evidence to suggest that the lack of self-assurance and self-realization in mothers inhibits differentiation in children.

Complaints of being tired, worn out, tense and nervous, and feeling unable to cope with family situations or problems in every day living entered into judging a mother as IID. Predominantly complaining attitudes about their children were considered evidence of a lack of self-realization in motherhood. Complaints of both material and emotional deprivation and neglect by husbands provided further evidence of a lack of self-realization, although it was not known whether such complaints were based on fact. Complaints that father and son were aligned against the mother were also considered indicative of a lack of self-realization. Some mothers reported
that the close relation between father and son had left them out and made them feel "unloved". Lack of self-realization was also indicated when a mother stated that absence of practical assistance or emotional support from her husband in bringing up the children had created burdens she did not feel adequate to assume. The manner in which a mother resolved conflicts with her husband about child care provided evidence for judging both her sense of self-realization and self-assurance. They considered it particularly suggestive of a lack of self-assurance in child rearing if a mother searched for and sought to elicit rules for child care from "the books", physicians, or theories in vogue, among neighbours or friends, and yet derived little comfort or security from the advice she obtained.

The significance of mothers' self-esteem needs was conceptualized in the context of stability and globality. Although maternal self-esteem was believed to be relatively stable evaluative disposition towards self, recent studies have indicated variations in mothers' self-esteem (Wells, 1988). Researchers now think of self-esteem as multi-dimensional and look for different types or aspects of self-esteem such as self-power and self-worth. It is studied in different contexts such as in class, with family, friends, the opposite sex, and adults. There are fluctuations of self-esteem during and after pregnancy (Leifer, 1980). The present study makes effort to conceptualize and measure self-esteem in more limited roles and contexts. Although the present study does not involve all aspects of mothers' self-evaluations, the association between self-assurance and competence - inducing training offers plausible explanation. It seems
likely that mothers with self-assurance tend to behave in a consistent fashion across situations. This consistency may help to induce contingent behaviour in children. Similarly mothers with high self realization are likely to administer rewards in a consistent manner. This behavioural consistency is likely to inhibit children's helplessness.

**Major Implications**

The general findings of the study are important from theoretical as well as applied point of view. Theoretically the results explicate factors that could be studied more systematically in a framework of causes and effect relationships. Possible causal links can be hypothesized and rigorous experimental situations can be investigated later. In applied terms, specific feedbacks can be communicated for child management programmes in family, school and community settings.

Differential expectancy across boys and girls supports the role of socialization model as opposed to biological model. The biological model often implicates that girls (also woman) are different from boys (also man) because of anatomical differences. However, the present study deepens the impression that quite significant differences may emerge across sex groups because social agents hold different expectations.

Jussim (1986) presents a model of the social and psychological processes underlying the role of expectancy. Self-fulfilling prophecy refers to situations in which one person's expectations about a second person lead the second person to act in ways that confirm the first person's original expectation. When applied to mother-child interaction, the
self-fulfilling prophecy refers to situations in which a mother's expectations about a child's future achievement evoke from the child performance levels consistent with the mother's expectations. Two rather similar descriptive models of the stages occurring in self-fulfilling prophecies exist (Brophy & Good, 1974; Darley & Fazio, 1980). Both models incorporate six or seven steps in a sequence of psychological and behavioural events, and both agree on three broad and general stages. Agents develop expectations, agents treat target persons differently depending on their expectations, and target persons react to this differential treatment in ways that confirm the expectations. Rosenthal (1974) focussed on teacher's differential treatment of students, and Eccles and Wigfield (1985) addressed students' reactions to differential treatment. These investigators have found support for self-fulfilling prophecy.

The findings of the present study in terms of differential expectations about development imply that social agents do hold differential expectancy. Within realistic limits, arise in expectancy may lead to pygmalion effects. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) observed pygmalion effects in classroom situations. It was found that rising expectation of teachers were associated with intellectual development of students. Although the empirical support for pygmalion effects in family is not yet available, this remains a plausible hypothesis in mother-child interaction. In view of the possibility that mothers treat children depending on their expectancies and children react to this treatment in expectancy confirming ways, the positive role of higher expectancies provides useful clues to persons responsible in child management situations.
The observation that mothers in urban setting hold high expectations provides the positive role of a circumstantial factor. What psychological factors are mediated by such urban setting are matters of conjectural nature. First, it is possible to think of positive role of exposure factor. Considering the expansive role of communication media, educational opportunities and stimulating environments, the positive effect of enriched environment may be surmised. In studies of older children, gains in cognitive development have been noted in children after they have been transferred from institutions to foster homes, after receiving special "mothering" (Salz, 1973), or after they have moved from one community to another offering better educational opportunities. Klineberg (1935, 1938) and Lee (1951) found that black American children who had come to Northern metropolitan areas from the South with their families and who had lived longer periods in the North earned higher average scores than those who had arrived more recently. Thus, a child's enriched environment and cultural opportunity foster competence (Nerlove & Snipper, 1981).

Secondly, an urban setting is also likely to place greater demands on response systems of individuals. The adaptive value is important, because adaptation consists not simply in yielding to external demands. It is a process through which, in interaction with the environment, the organism becomes more effective in dealing with the environment. It is through progressive and increasingly complex adaptations that children become more and more able to gain an intellectual grasp of the nature of the world in which they live.
However, it is not implied that urban setting is more enriched than rural setting in all respects. There are certain qualitative differences in life qualities of rural and urban areas of India. Yet, a number of opportunities that are valued in present day educational system are available in greater quantities in urban areas than in rural areas. It is thus relevant to point out that the qualities of mother-child interaction need to be supplemented by extra familial opportunities that an immediate environment offers.

Responsibility training holds a key role in fostering competence in children. In child rearing practices, they should also train their children for taking responsibilities of their younger siblings, which strengthen their self confidence. Mothers need to emphasize responsibility training in children, to train them for active participation in the management of the family which contribute to preparation for economic role as well as to enhance self-control in them. The present study posits the positive role of responsibility training.

The importance of responsibility training can be appreciated in the light of cross-cultural studies (Barry, Bacon, & Child, 1957). Responsibility training consists of imparting instructions on dutifulness. In a particular society, performance of certain functions is considered productive and dutiful. In typical Indian society, children are expected to take occasional care of their younger sibling, to help parents in the arrangement of important family functions, and to maintain impulse control. The study marshells the point that such training should form an integral part of
mother's rearing technique so that adaptive behaviours are likely to be shaped.

The study implicates that the children of mothers who lack confidence and poise, that is essential in handling problems arising out of child management situations, seem to be more helpless. The characteristics of mother as a person and the nature of a mother's interaction with her child would be related to the child's level of competence. The self-assured mother fosters the development of competence in children. She is essentially a high spirited, active, vital woman. She has definite "notions" of child rearing and acts on it without much conflict. Her attitude and behaviour make the children less helpless and let them grow from within. The present study identifies a significant effect of self-realization in mothers.

Similarly, the self-realized mother experiences overall satisfaction stemming from their happy relationship with the children, spouse, and neighbours. There is possibility of her happiness percolating to other domains of her activity. These mothers are likely to handle their children with warmth and understanding. The positive role of warmth in the development of the child's achievement has been documented elsewhere (Winterbottom, 1958).

Thus, the present study identifies the effective role of responsibility training and positive self-evaluations of mothers. It is suggested that individuals entrusted with child managements ought to hold high expectations about developments, to offer dutifulness training, and to maintain a positive image of themselves. The educational practices adopted for children need to recognize these points.
However, under a set of limited conditions, these positive factors may not lead to satisfactory results. Escalona (1963) observed "..... very different actions on the part of mothers may have very similar consequences in terms of their impact on the child's experience as reflected in behaviour; and conversely ..... similar or indentical external stimulation may have varying and opposite consequences in terms of the directions in which they alter behaviour" (p.242). Because of variation in children's response to the same or different kinds of care it is fallacious to take granted the definitive effects of mother-child interaction.

**Directions for Future Research**

The present investigation identifies several areas of possible exploration. Although a number of important findings have been reported in the present study, further investigation of relevant issues is likely to contribute to our understanding and application of the construct of helplessness. This study has taken care of effective operationalization in terms of using two measures of children's helplessness. However, the direct measures of helplessness, particularly the questionnaire method, are susceptible to certain influences such as social desirability considerations and response sets. More specifically, the factor of social desirability is an important consideration in view of collectivistic nature of the Indian socio-cultural system (Puhan,1982).

The future studies need to involve some other measures that are relatively free of social desirability biases. While an inclusion of the
performance measure for children has been useful to some extent, the possibility of projective inventory approach appears to be an important consideration.

The projective inventory approach, in sharp contrast to classical projective tests such as thematic apperception and ink-blot tests, combines the indirect assessment procedures associated with projective tests and objective scoring systems of psychological inventories. Persons are presented with stories culled from day to day life. They are asked to respond on agree-disagree format to a number of questions relating to the characters and incidents depicted. The assumptions that individuals project their private worlds as are supposed in projective tests underlie the development and validation of projective test. In addition, different projective inventories are developed in relation to specific attributes to be measured. The past research has indicated that this approach has satisfactory validity in Indian sociocultural system (Puhan, 1982). The development and validation of a projective inventory for measuring children's and individual's helplessness may be very effective in future research.

The study has examined the role of a number of socialization domains such as expectancy, attitudinal emphases, rearing practices, and mothers' self-evaluations. Although these domains serve to explicate the mediating mechanisms, a few other considerations seem to be very relevant.
An important domain of mediating mechanisms involves the contingency training. The reward contingencies parents hold, administer, and explicate are likely to influence the development of competence in children. The reward contingency has several aspects, however. For example, the clarity of parents' reward system and its lack of communicativeness may augment children's helplessness. How frequently parents are reinforcing the children's competence is also important. A mother who consistently and frequently rewards competence behaviour tend to make their children skilled, while inconsistency in her behaviour discourages competence of the children. Alternatively, children's opportunity to experience and encounter learning situations appropriate for the formation of skill-oriented behaviour come from parents' demonstration of contingent behaviours. When parents, particularly mothers, lack in such demonstration, it impairs child's learning of appropriate association between events and behaviours. For example, the gap between words and deeds on the part of parents is likely to exacerbate children's helplessness. Thus, a possible direction of future research may involve mothers' contingency training to their children.

In the reformulated version of helplessness theory (Abramson et al., 1978; Peterson & Seligman, 1984), the role of attributional or explanatory style has been ascribed a central function. It is postulated that attributions of internality, globality, and stability operate as risk factors in helplessness. The studies of helplessness on children have also indicated that these dimensions are involved in children's skills, their academic attainments, and other performance.
The attributional factors are postulated to have definite effects. An internal explanation affects self-esteem loss following uncontrollability. If individuals explain uncontrollability in terms of their own ability, they are likely to experience self-esteem loss. In case of a stable explanation, depressive reactions tend to be chronic. If the bad event is explained by a transient factor, then depressive symptoms would be short-lived. Finally, a global explanation would lead to cross-situational generality. An individual employing global explanation is likely to experience helplessness in a wider variety of situations. On the contrary, a specific explanation would circumscribe the deficit to a single domain of activity.

Thus, explanation and explanatory style are accorded the status of risk factors. While both the original and reformulated theory stress expectation of no control as a sufficient condition for the helplessness syndrome, the reformulated theory ascribes causal explanation as a risk factor, for symptoms of helplessness and depression. In such a scheme, the situational (reality factors) and dispositional (explanatory style) factors are ascribed specific roles. A study by Cantwell and Carlson (1979) identifies such roles in Western context. Empirical studies in Indian context have shown similar patterns of results.

A study by Jain (1988) examined the attribution-behaviour link in the context of learned helpless model. The evidence is presented to show that depressed subjects tend to be more vulnerable for learned helplessness and for attribution of internality, stability, globality and importance for their failure. Furthermore, it is shown that performance deficits due to
learned helplessness can also be reduced by reattribution training. It is argued that attribution and behaviours link is quite strong through cognitive and motivational factors.

Another study on causal thinking and expectation of success in the achievement context (Dalal & Agarwal, 1987) convincingly demonstrated that causal thinking does mediate in forming future expectations from attributional judgements. The induced causal thinking influenced attribution. There were expectation linkages in the success condition, whereas causal thinking appeared to be spontaneous in the failure condition. Thus, the findings of Weiner (1985) and of Wong and Weiner (1981) that failure promotes spontaneous causal thinking were supported. The expectation-attribution linkages were, however, stronger when the causal thinking was present.

The mediating role of causal thinking was also hypothesized in an experimental study by Dalal and Sethi (1987). In their experiment, subjects who were high or low on achievement need made attributions for repeated success (or failure) on an anagram task. They found that the expectation of future success was associated with stable causes in the case of high achievers only. They argued that the high achievement need subjects are more inclined to think about the causes of the outcome (particularly failure outcome) than are low achievement need subjects. Consequently, high achievement need subjects can see the linkage between attribution and expectation. The possibility of differential arousal of causal thinking,
however, explains why stability attribution was not found to be a good predictor of the expectation of future success in some of the studies in which Weiner's (1985) attribution theory was tested.

In view of the role of attributional style, some investigators tried to provide some programmes that seek to alleviate children's helplessness. A study by Dweck (1975) was to determine whether altering attributions for failure would enable learned helpless children to deal more effectively with failure in an experimental problem-solving situation. Twelve children with extreme reactions to failure were identified and were given intensive, relatively long-term experience with one or two training procedures. It was hypothesized that a procedure which taught the helpless children to take responsibility for failure and to attribute it to lack of effort would result in unimpaired performance following failure in the criterion situation, but that a procedure which provided success experiences only would lead to changes of a lesser magnitude. The results revealed that following training, the subjects in the Success Only Treatment continued to evidence a severe deterioration in performance after failure while subjects in the Attribution Retraining Treatment maintained or improved their performance. In addition, the subjects in the latter condition showed an increase in the degree to which they emphasized insufficient motivation versus ability as a determinant of failure.

Another interesting study (Dweck & Leggett, 1988) with children has demonstrated that those who avoid challenge and show impairment in the face of difficulty are initially equal in ability to those who seek
challenge and show persistence. Indeed some of the brightest, most skilled individuals exhibit the maladaptive pattern. Thus it cannot be said that it is simply those with weak skills or histories of failure who avoid difficult tasks. Their efforts to explain this phenomenon lead them to the more general conceptualization of goals (Dweck & Elliott, 1983). The investigators proposed that the goals individuals are pursuing create the framework within which they interpret and react to events. Specifically, in the domain of intellectual achievement, they identified two classes of goals—performance goals and learning goals. They then tested and supported the hypothesis that these different goals foster the different response patterns—that a focus on performance goals (competence judgments) creates a vulnerability to the helpless pattern, whereas the pursuit of learning goals (competence enhancement) in the same situation promotes the mastery-oriented pattern (Elliot & Dweck, 1988; Farrell & Dweck, 1985; Leggett & Dweck, 1986).

These discussions deepen the impression that attributional styles in terms of internality, globality, stability, and importance are significant dimensions of helpless. The programmes of alleviating children's helplessness through retraining methods (Dweck, 1975) suggest the learning aspect of explanatory styles. It could be conjectured that parents may transmit their own explanatory style to their children. The examination of the role of mediating mechanisms in such transmission is an interesting candidate of future research. Similarly, future studies may be addressed to examine whether retraining programmes geared to change mothers' maladaptive attributional style would lead to the development of adaptive explanatory style in children.
The study also does not cover full spectrum of socializing agencies. The role of a parent obviously involves more than a succession of separate acts. His or her qualities and characteristics as a person will have an important bearing on his or her performance as a parent. Shirley (1941) has maintained that the attitudes and personality of the mother determine the manner in which she administers each phase of child care, even in such matters as bathing and dressing her child. From a study of twenty-five mothers, Behrens (1954) concluded that a child's upbringing is influenced more by the quality of the mothers' "character structure" and its effect on the "total mother-child interaction" than by specific child-rearing practices and techniques. But it is not the mother's personality alone that is decisive. The father's personality is also an important part of the picture. Lamb (1986, 1987) has presented a large number of studies to demonstrate the ability of fathers to influence children's development even in the first year of life. The studies are presented both in unicultural as well as cross-cultural contexts. As the present study involves only the role of mother, the role of father can also be equally examined for future studies.

The influence a parent can exert is modified, as the child grows older, by the influence of peers, teachers, and other members of the community (Fagot, 1973). A study by McGuire (1953) is one of several investigation which discuss this aspect of personality development. A child and his parents face an especially complicated situation if the standards established in the home strongly conflict with those of other children in
the community. In dealing with this situation, children sometimes adopt one line of conduct at home and another when with their peers.

A child's teachers may also influence him or her in ways that are largely beyond the control of parents. Amatora (1954) rated teachers and pupils on twentytwo elements of personality such as kindness, sympathy, dependability, and thoughtfulness of others, and found a positive correlation between the personality ratings of teachers and of children on all the scales that were used. Amatora concludes that while a similarity between the personality of teachers and children does not prove that the teachers have caused the traits children display, the findings at least indicate that care should be taken to employ teachers with well-adjusted personalities. The interplay between the personalities of teachers and the behaviour of children has also been brought out in a study by Anderson, Brewer, and Reed (1946), and by Herrick (1945).

Recent evidence has indicated that the pattern of teachers' socialization is related to students' attributional style. Dweck and Licht (1980) has found that teachers employ effort-attribution when boys fail on tasks whereas teachers use ability attribution when girls fail on those tasks. This differential task may widen the gap between boys and girls with respect to their emphasis on effort. However, more fine grained studies are needed to explicate the role of teachers' socialization. Future studies may involve teachers socialization in terms of their expectancy, attitude, behavioural intentions, and self-evaluations parameters used in the present study for the study of mothers' socialization practices.
In the context of Indian sociocultural system, political socialization needs to be considered. Ghosh (1981) has shown that political socialization plays a very significant role in the socialization of the Indian child. The present political leaders vascillate between their words and deeds. The major gap between what they promise to the people and what they fulfill introduces elements of uncertainty into the cognitive map of children. Since political socialization plays an important role in amplifying children's ambition and their subsequent frustrations, the attitude children adopt towards political reality of a nation is likely to influence their helplessness. It is important to study the role of political socialization in the development of learned helplessness, especially in Indian sociocultural context.

Finally, the robustness of a study depends on the convergence of results obtained from a number of procedures. The use of multi-method to examine the role of socialization is an enterprising scientific pursuit. Although the present method has used structured interview for generating a clear-cut picture of the role of various indices, an application of open-ended interview might have generated other indices of significance.

More specifically, the need for a pluralistic approach seems to be a challenging task that is lying ahead. As cogently stated by Willems (1973):

It is important to keep in mind that only a rich methodological pluralism has made possible the progress we see in this area, Trace experimental analysis, loosely controlled experiments, field experiments, naturalistic observations, indepth interviews, retrospective
interviews, staged encountered, and questionnaire studies have all contributed much. However, it is only when the whole set is taken together that the single contributions became clear. Considered in isolation, each particular study can be criticized and analyzed to death (p. 216).

In the context of such a future programmatic research, the study generates much inputs for training mothers, revising reading materials for children and for educational innovations. While future studies need to be addressed to strengthen methodological rigour and to consider broad spectrum of socialization, the present work is intended to be a contribution towards developing workable manipulations and testable predictions in the area.