CHAPTER 3

EARLIER STUDIES

Various works have been conducted to find out the relationship between parental behaviour and the personality of the child. But it is difficult to review the vast literature that has flourished over the last forty years. It is true of course that many of the works are based not on empirical data, but on observation and speculation. Stogdill's (97) work may claim the pioneer contribution in this field. He used two questionnaires for assessing attitudes toward parental control and social behaviour of children. Read (78) studied parental attitudes and personality adjustment of the child, but found no significant relation between the two. The leadership status and social acceptance of the child by the school group were found to be related with parental attitudes in the study of Anderson (4). Rodke's (79) investigation suggests that unfavourable conduct of the child is related to parental strict discipline. He assessed punishment, freedom etc. imposed on the child through parental attitude scales constructed by himself and child's behaviour through ratings by teachers. Shoben (94) found significant relation between parental attitude and child's adjustment by studying
child-rearing attitudes of mothers of normal children and mothers of children staying at juvenile courts. Corty (13) studied parental attitude and achievement motivation of their children by parental attitude research instrument (PARI) constructed by Schaefer and Bell (83) and found up to .25 as coefficient of correlation, the N being 95. Burchinal (12) found no measurable relationship between parental behaviour and children's adjustment. The studies conducted by Baldwin (8), Carter (15), Sears et al (86), and Watson (106) indicate that the relationship between the parents and their child definitely influences the personality development of the child. But the results are seldom clear, specially when attempt was made to find a correlation between child-rearing practices and the child's later personality development. The works of Harris et al (47), Sewell (39), Sewell & Mussen (90) and Straus (98) are indicator of that findings. Though apparently it is clear that parental attitudes towards child-rearing are significantly related to the personality development of their children yet on scrutiny it is clear that the study of Shoben (94) did not match the two groups - the controlled and the experimental - in all respects. The scales which Rodke (79/) used for his study were ad-hoc. So from the angle of scientific precision the ad-hoc scales have home weakness. Moreover the studies of Rodke (79/) and Read (73) tell that there is only marginal significance between the two variables. Moreover there was no cross validation of the findings of those marginal
significance. The works of Morrow & Wilson (71), Green & Parker (41), Shaw & Datton (92) indicate that the nature of relationship between the child and his parents determines the latter's school achievement and his occupational choice.

The earlier studies reveal that the scales used to study parental behaviour from the reports of the child did not differentiate both the parents. The studies of Ausubel et al (6), Cooper (17), Hackett (44), Hawkes et al (50) and Watson (106) are of that sort. Bach (7) and Gardner (35) collected information about one parent only. The works of Anderson (4), Emmrich (23), Hayward (51), Johnson (60) and Stott (100) did not take information regarding both the parents on the same items. The works of Rodks (79/), Baldwin et al (8), and Sears et al (86) though outstanding, they did not study thoroughly the father's attitudes and their impact on the child's personality and behaviour. A review of literature from 1929 to 1956 indicates that majority of the studies are on mother-child relationship. During that period there are only 10 articles that are concerned with father-child relationship. In contrast there are 169 publications that dealt with the child's relation with his mother. Mention may be made of the studies of Miller and Swanson (69), Sears et al (85), Sears et al (86) who stressed the influence of the father on the child. But one important point to be noticed here is that they did not directly interview the father. Rather they obtained information about the father.
either from the mother or from the child, but not from the father himself. This sort of approach has some weakness from the standpoint of methodology. Because appraisal of parental behaviour and the child's personality or behaviour (that is, the assumed antecedent and the dependent variables) has been made from a single individual. When the same individual assesses the predictor and the criterion, some extraneous factors may interfere which with the true responses. The earlier studies did not obtain information regarding child-rearing from both the parents could not avoid this source of error. It is desirable to collect information regarding the child's personality and parental behaviour, in such a way so that the two measures be independent of each other. The works of Davidson et al (20) and Peterson et al (77) have been designed on that point. But Davidson interviewed the mothers and the child but took information from the father through a check-list to be filled in by the father in the absence of the interviewer. Peterson et al (77) though interviewed the child and both the parents, but did not obtain independent observation of the behaviour of the child. The study of Leonard et al (64) has overcome certain drawbacks inherent in the earlier studies. They interviewed both the parents and took information about the child's behaviour from others.