REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

In order to build up an adequate theoretical foundation, the scanned literature is arranged in the following sections.

(1) Preschool children

(2) Environmental stimulation

(3) Temperament

(4) Learning

At the end of each section, an evaluation of literature and position of the present study is included.
2.1 Preschool children

2.1.1 Definitions

According to Devadas and Jaya (1984), Clarke - Stewart and Friedman (1987), Craig (1989) and Chauhan (1996), a preschool child is a child between the age of two and six years.

Constable (1988) has called a three to five year old child a preschooler.

Singh (1997) defines preschool age as the age of the children before they enter into class first or primary education.

2.1.2 Importance of preschool years

Many psychologists and educators have brought out the importance of preschool years. The preschool period is the most formative years on which rest the later years of the entire human life span (Shamsuddin, 1971), it is the period of flowering of self (Leeladevi, 1975). This period is the most crucial one in the life of an individual (Govilkar, 1979, Singh and Jain, 1982), is the most sensitive and vulnerable stage of physical, intellectual, emotional and social development and is a tender and impressionable period (Miller 1983). The foundation of personality trait is laid in this period as per Khan (1981).

Fontana (1986) has stated that the child’s social life begins at home and his early social experiences play a dominant role in determining his/
her future social relationship and patterns of behaviour toward others.

To Papalia and Olds (1987), a child’s pattern of growth and development and his personal and social adjustments during early childhood period strongly influence his later attitudes, interests, emotional reactions, behaviour patterns and interpersonal relationships.

It is during the early years that the child is susceptible and responsive to the positive environmental influences, which enhance or expand his/her development. As mentioned by Montessori (1988) it is this sensitive period, which enables him/her to assimilate images from his/her environment in a truly prodigious fashion.

The future of a nation depends on how children are educated during the formative period of their lives. Creative impulses must be nurtured in the earliest formative periods (Craig 1989) and that there is dramatic growth in the child’s self control and social competence during the four important years of life from age two to age six.

During the early years the major development that is taking place is the control over the environment so as pointed out by Lombardi (1992), the early childhood environment should be based on developmentally appropriate practice.

Curiosity is often the only incentive a child needs to take him/her into new unfamiliar words and it is at peak in preschool period in the view of Nakra (2000 November)
2.1.3 Evaluation of literature and position of the present study


It can be seen that there are no studies giving a significant view to the stimulations offered from the home and school environment, for preschool children.

2.2. Environmental stimulation

According to Baldwin (1967) in describing the environment of the child and its impact upon him, the first point to be consider is its effect upon maturation. He adds that the second and probably the most important impact of the child is the incubation of social rules and social roles.

Thomas et al (1968) says that the objective surrounding and circumstances with which a child interacts depend among other things, upon the age of the child and social class to which he belongs.
A stimulating linguistic environment - one that offers good language models together with linguistic variety, novelty and rewards for verbal responses - enhances verbal ability, cognitive development and intelligence test scores. Dull, unstimulating environment have the opposite effects (Russen et al, 1969).

In the words of Mc Kinney et al (1971), the restriction of early environmental stimulation and marked deviation from the normal developmental conditions of preschool children produce drastic and enduring effects on emotionality, learning ability, activity level and social behaviour.

According to Stott (1974), since changes in the level of one's functioning result directly from functioning and since functioning is basically a matter of responding to the stimuli, internal and external that impinge upon one's sense receptors, the vital importance of stimulation its quality and appropriativeness as well as its adequacy becomes already apparent.

In the view of Karlin (1975), the readiness for reading challenging materials can be promoted by relating children's experiences to the ideas they will be reading about and by teaching difficult words, classifying unknown concepts and setting reading purposes.

According to Freidrich - Cofer and Susman (1977) children in open environments have more varied social contacts, positive towards school
and show both self-reliant and co-operative behaviour in learning situations.

Bayles and Bates (1986) says that individual differences in children’s language acquisition and progress are associated with variations in the language learning environment.

According to Watkins and Durant (1992), environment influences the people who live and work in them. Children are particularly vulnerable to these influences as they have fewer strategies for coping of responding to any negative impact from the space around them. He adds that in early childhood settings adults have a particular, responsibility to develop an awareness of the environments effects.

In the words of Lata (1998), the young child acquires his early language habits largely through imitation of the language patterns of those around him. According to him, educational objectives and teaching techniques also influences the child’s language development.

Devi (1998) says that a child growing up in a poor environment lacks the richness of perceptual stimulation and experience available, to the child growing up in a relatively superior environment.

2.2.1. Environmental stimulation in the school environment

Good (1959) defined educational environment as the sum of all physical, social, emotional and mental factors that contribute to the total teacher-learning situation.
Preschool children in institutions where they are neither highly motivated to speak nor rewarded frequently or consistently for their speech responses are also handicapped in many areas of language development - including speech sounds, intelligibility and level of language organization, (Mussen et al 1969).

To Sullivan (1974), educational environment consists of school climate as well as the teachers approach to teaching. They consider activities of teaching methods and institutional programmes as well as the school climate to be features of the educational environment.

According to Ebbeck and Ebbeck (1974), the school environment must allow each child the opportunity to grow and develop. It must be broad enough in scope to meet the individual child’s needs and be stimulating enough to arouse in each child the desire to learn.

He adds that the school environment must be enriching so that it not only complements the home but allows the child to experience things which may in some important fields be is far beyond what he is able to get at home.

Bhatnagar (1977) observes that, the unique quality of the environment largely, depends upon specific ways the pupil are treated in the school and class room.

Hetherington (1979) say that variations within the school setting have
an important impact on children’s emotional and social adjustment as well as on their academic progress.

According to Singh (1997) the preschool education term has been used to refer to group setting for children between approximately three and five years old which are deliberately designed to stimulate and support their mental, physical, emotional, language, social development etc.

Devi (1998) defined educational environment as the conditions, process and psychological stimuli which affect the educational achievement of the child. It refers to those forces in the environment of the learner which have the potentiality to contribute to academic development of the learners. These forces may be a part of the school or college environment, the home environment or the environment of various other social organisations.

2.2.2. Factors involved in the stimulation of school atmosphere

2.2.2.1. Physical facilities & structures

Rioux (1968) says that, the school size determines the extent of involvement in extra curricular activities. Both class size and the pupil’s location in the class determine the extent to which he or she participates in classroom activities. While participation is higher in smaller class rooms, the child located in the front and center of the class, the action zone, participates more than children seated in other parts of the room.

Stott (1974) says that the unspoiled nature of the child is free,
spontaneous and creative. The atmosphere of the school room in which the child finds himself is very important. School should be a place where the child is encouraged on his own, but with guidance as needed, to acquire certain skills essential to effective functioning.

According to Freidrich et al (1977), children in open environments have more varied social contacts, positive attitudes toward school and show both self-reliant and co-operative behaviour in learning situations.

Sutherland et al (1977) says that physical facilities should be functional for the developmental level of the children and should be selected to allow for a wide range of abilities and growth pattern.

According to him, the early childhood physical environment must be or flexible one, making it possible for the site and space, as well as furniture and equipment to be free to expand, shrink., disappear completely or move outdoors if necessary. He adds that although physical facilities do not determine the environment, satisfactory facilities greatly assist in developing a challenging and satisfactory learning situation. Either the absence of adequate facilities and materials or the provision of quantities of inappropriate materials may curtail the effectiveness of learning.

In the words of Hetherington (1979), seating arrangements, class size, wall colour and ventilation affect the child's scholastic achievement, his attitude toward school or the degree to which he actively participates in class and extra curricular functions.
He says that variations within the school setting, have an important impact on children’s emotional and social adjustment as well as on their academic progress.

According to Harris and Smith (1980) the class room environment must make it easy to read and the class room atmosphere must make it important to read. The selection of a suitable location for building a class room reading corner involves finding a quiet relatively isolated area, which influences learning.

In the view of Sylva and Hunt (1982), a variety of different activities and materials and separate corners and tables ensure that children work and play in manageable groups and are given the opportunity to interact each other. Provide the materials and the environment for the child to explore and let him then do the rest almost by himself, motivated to learn by his own country.

Watkins (1992) says that class rooms are places where the atmosphere can have a considerable impact on a child’s behaviour and opportunities for learning. The atmosphere in a class room is created by the interactions of two complementary aspects of the environment. He adds that the outdoor environment offers many opportunities for physical activity, for exploring, discovering and learning.

According to Ayers and Francesca (1998), teachers should consider how the seating arrangements in their class rooms affect learning and
2.2.2.2. Availability of equipment, toys and educational materials

Newson (1968) says that as with learning every other skill, there must be a preparatory period during which the child engages in activities which will prepare him for the task of learning to perform handwriting. During this period, the child must give opportunities to handle objects, to manipulate them and eventually to do so for particular purposes. These activities will include handling and manipulating toy cars, toy trains, dolls, doll's clothes, playing with constructional toys especially those involving the use of tools - playing with rods, blocks, counters or any other materials which can be handled and manipulated and handling clay and sand.

According to Hetherington (1979), children are influenced not only by their teachers and peers but also by reading material to which they are exposed. Many of the attitudes and cultural values that are slowly emerging during the early schools years are directly shaped by the content and themes of the text books and materials provided to the children.

According to Dallmann et al (1982), puppetry can be used as a means of motivation, for school work in various areas. It can provide opportunity for oral reading in a functional and interesting setting.

In the view of Clarke - Stewart (1990), the physical materials and equipment in turn may encourage more frequent intellectual activities.
Wagner et al (1994) say that one of the earliest things a child must learn, when starting to learn to read is to recognise that the different letters vary in shape and that the shape of each letter is invariable. This can be achieved in a variety of ways - alphabet books, matching alphabet books, playing with wooden letters, matching individual letter, tracing with the fore finger, letter made of velvet and tracing on a sand tray much of it incidental and unstressed as part of learning to read.

2.2.2.3. Curriculum

Cable (1958) says that while planning preschool curriculum provision should be made for outdoor play that involves musical instruments, easel painting, clay modeling or even following a slow moving animal which influence learning.

According to Eysenck (1958); the instructional programme in the preschool should be so organized that for each desirable growths in basic reading skills and abilities are fostered.

Jefferson (1970) says that in the development of the curriculum there is no one formula or method that the teacher can use to plan an effective programme. This task calls for intelligence and understanding, imagination and flexibility rather than formulas. There is need for knowledge of research and the factors that influence children’s learning. According to Jefferson, these includes what the children are like, how they learn, what the culture expects and academic content and skills.
Wakefield (1971) says that those involved in curriculum planning for the preschool children must define the broad goals of the programme and provide for a variety of developmental evaluation techniques.

Hymes (1974) says that, the children are the most significant consideration in planning the curriculum. The teacher will find it important to remember how young children learn, not just what they need to learn.

According to Ebbeck (1974) opportunities must be given during free activity periods for children to explore their new environment. It is essential that a variety of experience be available to the children and that they be allowed to experiment without unnecessary intervention or coercion from the teacher.

Karlin (1975) says that oral language experiences involving children in conversation, discussion, reporting, story telling and creative dramatics will help to develop language skills and possibly contribute to reading readiness.

According to Hurlock (1976) since learning to read is one of the principal components of the first grade curriculum, the child who is ready to read makes better adjustments to school than one who is not ready.

In the words of Rowen, Byrne & Winter (1980), the more the child is exposed to stories, poems, signs and other printed symbols, the sooner he is exposed to stories; poems, signs and other printed symbols.
In the words of Harris and Smith (1980) a combination of independence and sharing can be promoted by having two periods a week during which everyone in the class reads anything that appeals, to him, the teacher too.

While planning the curriculum for the preschool children, the programme should include activities which satisfy children’s need for group activities and individual activities, Rowen et al (1980).

According to Dallmann et al (1982) an activity centered curriculum makes it somewhat easier to adapt reading instruction to individual differences.

According to Virginia (1987), the primary purpose of a preschool should not be to teach reading and writing, a well designed programme can enhance a child’s already considerable language skills by providing ample opportunity for her to use reading and writing in her daily activities.

In the view of Singh (1997), preschool education programme, provides opportunities to children to play in groups. The pre- school education provides a new environment and new opportunities to come in contact, with the people of different age group and different social groups.

2.2.2.4. Teacher - pupil interaction

According to Deutesch (1965), the manner in which the teacher interacts with the children under her charge has important implications
with their future social development.

In the words of Hawkes and Pease (1969), the interaction between child and teacher goes on at a fast clip because of the nature of the teacher's task. To facilitate learning, he must be in constant contact with as many pupils as possible.

According to Helms and Turner (1976), children need to communicate with others, either verbally or non-verbally such as with a smile, a gesture, drawing, painting or through music activities. Since each in their own right, becomes a vital part of the communication process, they should be adult supported and encouraged.

Delamount (1976) says that the teacher strategically establishes her dominant position in the class room by imposing her definition of the situation on the pupils by talking, teaching and questioning them.

Purkin (1976) says that the quality of teacher-pupil relationship in the class is the major aspect of the class room climate.

Leeper et al (1984) says that before successful learning can take place children need to feel secure and good about themselves. Teachers can help children feel positive about themselves by creating a nurturing, supportive environment in which children feel loved, secure and safe. He adds that verbal encouragement is needed along with touching, smiling and sharing. It may also be important to examine the quality of interactions with children.
rather than the number of contacts.

According to Avers & Gray (1998), the kinds of interaction between teachers and pupils will to a great extent determine learning and behaviours in classroom.

2.2.2.5. Teaching methods

According to Warner (1962), when audio visual materials are used in connection with other activities of the class room, their effectiveness is increased. Audio visual aids may be used to motivate a project, to provide data and to summarize learnings.

He adds that facts learned from audio visual materials were retained for a significantly longer period of time.

Sutherland and Arbuthnot (1977), says that children look for illustrations that interpret the story. The content, mood and the feeling of the illustrations should be relevant and should match the plot and tone of the story.

Warbois (1978) says that the school environment has a significant influence on language growth. According to him, a set of flash cards with a letter of alphabet on one side and related picture on the other are the best to be used in the classroom.

In the words of Rowen et al (1980), the more the child is exposed to stories, poems, signs and other printed symbols, the sooner he will display
an interest in trying to interpret them. To encourage verbal expression, it would be helpful if the teacher understood the primary language of the children in the class. One could respond with at least a few words in the language spoken in the child’s home.

Hetherington and Parke (1986) points out that films, slides, film strips and television programme can contribute to children’s understanding when used for specific purposes. He adds that the most effective use occurs when the bulletin board reflects current interests of the group and when children are engaged in the activity. Such boards are called involvement bulletin boards.

2.2.3. Stimulation in the home environment

Goldfarb’s (1943) classic investigation of institutionalized children showed that by preschool years, these children have language deficiency in speech sounds and intelligibility when compared with youngster reared in foster homes.

Lesser, Filter and Clark (1965) says that poverty may influence the process of development of cognitive functioning.

Baumrind (1971) found that an authoritarian parenting style in which parents stress obedience and respect for authority is associated with children who are less socially competent relative to children whose parents have an authoritarian parenting style.
Tripathi & Misra (1975, 1976) reported that the prolonged deprivation has negative relationship with cognitive efficiency.

According to Bradley & Caldwell, (1976) favourable cognitive development and social development have been associated with predictability and regularity of home environments, that is with homes where things have their time and place, where meals bed times and other routines are regular and where the child has a place for the belonging to a safe place in which to play, and a quiet place to study.

Rao (1976) revealed that high socio economic status and high income help the development of cognitive competence. Sylva and Lunt (1982) says that the female head of the family is the most important factor determining the character and quality of the home environment as she performs her roles as a person, as a wife and particularly as a mother and child rearer.

Lupton (1984) found that parents of high achievers are often socially higher than parents of average achievers and they frequently provide richer learning environments and appear to exert subtle but effective pressure on their children.

According to Schaeffer and Bayley (1985) parents who have more progressive presenting styles and who view their children as being active and independent agents tend to have children who score higher in ability tests.
Stewenson and Baker (1987) found that the relation between parent education and school performance was mediated almost entirely by parents' level of involvement.

Wentzel, Feldman and Weinberger (1991) investigated two non-intellectual factors (self restraint and emotional adjustment) which partly explain the relation between parenting and academic achievement in children. Their findings underscore the contribution of social and emotional developments to academic and intellectual achievements and the key role of parent-child relationships in influencing social development.

According to Singh (1997), no one specific member of the family is responsible for socializing the child. If the total environment of the family is conducive, the chances are that favourable social attitude will develop in children. He adds that the social behaviour and attitude of the children reflect the treatment they receive at home.

Devi (1998) says that child-rearing attitudes, mother-child relationships and parental behaviour are important factors involved in the home environment which influences learning.

Agnihotri (1998) states that preschool children's intelligence, language development, learning style and general competence are related to their mother's method of teaching them and guiding their daily lives.
2.2.4. Factors involved in the stimulation of home atmosphere

2.2.4.1. Exposure to objects and media

According to Dallmann (1982) the child's background of experience can be extended by going on field trips, examining objects, looking at pictures, observing or participating in demonstrations and experiments and listening to stories.

Pictures serve as an important means of broadening the experience background of children. Mounted pictures, post cards and snap shots, will be a source of pleasure and of learning.

Harris and Smith (1980) says that field trip is a whole class activity that can benefit each child by broadening his background.

Mohanty (1998) says that books are an individual matter and the parent who wishes to encourage children to read should know something about books before beginning. The parents should provide a local book store or library for the children.

2.2.4.2. Parent - child interaction

Belson (1959) states that, two basic dimensions of parental behaviour in relation to the children are warmth, hostility and premissiveness control. The interaction of these two variables is associated with different clusters of behaviour in children. He adds that warm parents who are moderately restrictive and use consistent love oriented discipline practices such as
explanation, reasoning and withdrawal of affection, have children who exhibit many behaviours regarded as socially desirable such as adaptability, self-esteem, competence, self-control and popularity with peers.

According to Hess and Shipman (1965) children need to communicate with others, either verbally or non verbally such as with a smile, a gesture, drawing, painting or through music activities. Since each in their own right becomes a vital part of communication process, they should be adult supported and encouraged.

Landreth (1967) says that by responding to and encouraging young children’s speech, parents can do a great deal in helping to facilitate overall language development. He also adds that adults become active stimulants when they offer novel verbal learning situations to the child such as singing and rhyming games, reading aloud or expanding upon their youngsters remark.

According to Kayan, Winiberger and Bobbitt (1969), the parent child transactions are determined by unique characteristics of the child as well as social cognition.

Kuppuswamy (1974) says that warmth, regardless of the specific reasons for satisfaction, if the parents finds his role gratifying he is basically an acceptant and warm parent. His motivation encourages him to spend time with the child, to find the necessary sacrifices not difficult ones to accept his responsibilities without two much conflict and to love the child.
Helms et al (1976) states, that the time that parents spend verbally interacting with their children promotes language development. Investigations have revealed that upper class parents more than lower class parents, offer this type of stimulation to their children, obtaining positive results in the process. Those children receiving little or no stimulation at all exhibit retarded speech development.

Sandeep (1978) says that parent child interaction is a factor that plays a vital role in cognitive development. Low parental encouragement, low education, lower motivation, lack of identification and less interaction with adults result cognitive deficiencies.

Rollins & Thomas (1979) says that children having a positive relation with parents tend to do better in school.

Carew (1980) states that high levels of responsive maternal verbal and play stimulation are associated with relatively advanced cognitive and language skills.

Basic psychological needs like love, affection and feeling of security will be given through rewards, by giving more attention, by giving more chances to express their deeds and thoughts (Roberts 1989).

According to Lata (1998), parent child interaction is a major factor that plays a vital role in cognitive development.
2.2.4.3. *Time spent with the parents and children*

Television increases the amount of time families spend together viewing TV but decreases the amount of time families spend in non TV related joint family activities with friends, relatives and neighbours. Although it has been reported that TV can increase family conversation by stimulating discussion about programmes and even commercials, it is often used in ways that intentionally reduce family interaction.


2.2.4.4. *Evaluation of literature and position of the present study*


It is found that no studies have been conducted giving a significant view on the stimulation given in the home and school environment and its impact on temperament and learning ability of preschool children.

2.2.5 Temperament

2.2.5.1. Definitions

The Latin word temperare means to regulate to restrain one’s self or to soften. Different theorists and researchers define the concept of temperament in a variety of ways.

Thomas et al (1963), (1977) define temperament as the characteristic tempo, energy expenditure, mood and rhythmicity typifying the behaviour of the individual infant.

Temperament according to Gardner (1964) is the more or less characteristic, persistent emotional disposition of an individual probably having a constitutional basis.

Temperament refers to the inherited personality traits that appear early in life (Buss and Plomin 1975).
In the view of McConnell (1977) one’s temperament is the way one regulates oneself, that is, one’s characteristic attitude or behaviour pattern.

Lansdown (1984) defined temperament as the child’s persistent, prevailing mood, that which determines the characteristic adjustment to life.

According to Hetherington and Parke (1986) temperament is the biologically based difference among individuals in reaction to stimuli, in the expression of emotions, in arousal and in self-regulation.

Temperament may be considered as a subset of personality (Rutter 1988), or specific traits of personality (Buss 1989).

A child’s general style of responding is called temperament as noted by Atkinson et al (1987).

In the words of Hall and Lindzey (1994) temperament is that disposition that is closely linked to biological or physiological determinants and that consequently show relatively little modification with development.

According to Hurlock (1998) temperament is that aspect of personality, which is revealed in the tendency to experience moods or mood changes in characteristic ways.

2.2.5.2. Dimensions/aspects of temperament

Some of the earlier observations of temperament or behavioural profile in children were made by Fries (Fries and Lewi, 1938, Fries 1944, Fries
and Wolf 1953). Studying infants from birth to ten days of age under controlled conditions, she differentiated three activity types of infants, in terms of the amount of activity, differences in characteristic muscle tones and crying within the normal range. She labelled three types - the active, the moderately active and the quiet. Extremes beyond either end of the normal range were considered pathological.

A contemporary approach to the question of individual differences is found in the series of papers of various combinations of Thomas, Chess and Birch. (Thomas and Chess 1957, Chess, Thomas and Birch 1959, Thomas, Chess and Robins 1961, Thomas Chess and Hertzig 1962, Thomas, Chess and Birch (1972). These authors were involved in longitudinal study of 110 middle class children who had been followed systematically from the age of two or three months with interview and observations. They were able to identify nine categories of reactivity which persist through the first two years of life as activity level.

2.2.5.3 Theories of temperament

2.2.5.3.1 Psychoanalytic theory of Freud

According to Freud (1924), personality consists of three major systems - the id, the ego and the superego. Id is the original personality system out of which the ego and the superego develop. It is unconscious and operates by pleasure principle and always tries to get pleasure and to avoid pain. The ego enables the organism to deal with reality and can be called the
executive of personality. The superego seeks perfection. Freud believes
that these potent inner forces determine human behaviour.

2.2.5.3.2. Buss and Plomins theory (1975)

They postulated four dimensions of temperament, emotionality,
activity, sociability and impulsivity. To them these dimensions are heritable,
stable, adaptable and predictive of adult's personality. This theory is
interactive in three ways (1) the child elicits certain types of parental
behaviours as a function of his or her temperament/ (2) the impact of such
parental behaviours varies as a function of children's temperament and (3)
the efficiency of modelling of parental behaviour is a function of
temperamental similarity between the parent and the child.

2.2.5.3.3. Thomas and Chess theory (1977)

This theory defines temperament as the behavioural style - how of
the behaviour. They emphasised the interactive processes both between
infant temperament and parental care giving style and between temperament
motives and abilities within the individual for later development and mental
health. They find the 'goodness of fit' between the individual and the
environment as the central feature of the interaction. They also pointed out
that the same trait might be manifested through different behaviours during
developmental periods. They identified nine dimensions of temperament -
activity level, rhythmicity, approach withdrawal, adaptability, threshold of
responsiveness, quality of mood, vigour of reaction, distractibility and
attention span and persistence. Based on these temperamental traits they
categorised the children into three groups having easy, difficult and slow-
to-warm-up personality.

2.2.5.3.4. Rothbart and Derryberrys' theory (1982)

They proposed a multilevel theory of temperament. The key concepts
of this theory are the reactivity of the nervous system and the self-regulation
of the reactivity. They specified somatic, endocrine and autonomic response
systems through which reactivity and self-regulation are expressed. They
postulate a connection between temperament and affect. They believe that
the child's biological make up is influenced by heredity, maturation and
experience. The child's reaction to the changes in the environment is
reflected in the somatic, endocrine and automatic nervous system. They
identified five dimensions of temperament-activity level, smiling and
laughter, fear, distress to limitations and soothability.

2.2.5.4. Internal structure of temperament

Various studies suggest that temperament may be relevant to mild
behavioural disorders (Thomas and Chess 1977); early educational
adjustment (Keogh 1982) negative reaction to the birth of a sibling,
aggressiveness; helping behaviour and impulsive accidents (Huttenem)

2.2.5.5. Stability of temperament

Findings of many studies provide support for the long-term stability
of temperament. According to Thomas, Chess and Birch (1977) the original characteristics of temperament tend to persist in most children over the years.

Escalona et al (1971) found that differences in the motor activity of an infant, particularly in characteristic level of activity, was a trait of stability.

According to Boss, Block and Block (1980) there is stability in activity level in infants measured from birth. There is also stability of irritability measured from birth (Worobey and Lewis 1988).

Some of the personality traits change under social impacts as noted by Chaube (1992).

2.2.5.6. Temperament/behavioural profile during preschool years

Children differ in their temperament. One cries a lot and another very little. Some children are whiny and difficult and others are more easygoing and adaptable as per Hetherington and Parke (1986). Children show individual differences in the activity level, responsiveness to environment and irritability as denoted by Atkinson et al (1987). Some children seem to smile and laugh almost all the time while another reverses the pattern in the views of Papalia and Olds (1987) and some children are more placid while others are active.

2.2.5.7. Effects of temperament on adjustment

About one third of the New York Longitudinal Study subjects
developed behaviour problems at the same time. No temperamental type was immune to problems. Even easy children had them when their lives held too many stresses. If a highly active child is confined to a small apartment and expected to sit still for long periods, if a slow-to-warm-up child is pushed to adjust to many new people and situation or if a persistent child is constantly taken away from absorbing projects, trouble may result.

The key to healthy adjustment is "goodness of fit" between children and demands made upon them as noted by Papalia and Olds (1994). Recognition of inborn temperament relieves parents of some heavy emotional baggage. They can focus on helping the child use his or her temperament as strength rather than seeing it as an impediment (Hetherington and Parke 1996).

2.2.5.8. Factors influencing the temperament

In the views of Hilgard, Atkinson and Atkinson (1975), Joshy and Tiwari (1977), Ojha and Singh (1988) and Sperling (1990), genetic and environmental factors play a balancing role in the personality development of children. To Hetherington and Parke (1986) personality characteristics are the result of complex interaction between the genetic and environmental factors through three processes namely, range of reaction, canalisation and niche picking.

and Olds (1987), and Clarke-Stewart and Friedman (1987) all have proved that the new born babies may look alike but they differ greatly in their temperament. Sameroff and Zax (1973) have suggested that temperament may be fashioned by physiological and chemical influences on brain before birth to Thomas, Chess and Birch (1971) the observed differences in temperament is due to heredity. In the views of Thomas and Chess (1977) genetic and pre-natal environmental origins that interact with caretaking differences in infancy produce differences in the child personality. According to Sostek and Wyaitt (1981) biological differences may be at the root of temperamental diversity. In the words of Fontana (1982) the temperamental differences are far more likely be due to inheritance than to learning.

Salient environmental influences on temperament were reported by McDavid and Harari (1974). According to White (1972) the family form a social system within which the growth of personality takes place. The family (Ramaiah 1976, Parthasarathy and Rengnathan 1983) and the family relationships (Kiran and Singh 1982) have a crucial guiding influence on the child’s personality development. Children from violent families have more behaviour problems and difficult temperament (Holden and Ritchie 1991) and those from rigid families are field dependant while children from flexible family environment are field independent (Paramo, Dosil and Finajero 1991). A study on the preschool children in Kerala (Thomas 1991) has revealed that pre-schoolers reared in the home have more easy
temperamental traits whereas those reared in orphanages have difficult temperament. Another study by George (1993) has reported that the temperament of infants in the SOS and intact families are similar in their reaction pattern but they differ in their intensity of reaction.

Beckwith (1979), Dunn (1980) and Hetherington and Parke (1986) have pointed out that the temperament of the preschool children changes depending on the responses of the parents. Early parent-child relationships leave its imprints on children’s later behaviours (Kumar and Prasad 1987), parental attitudes and examples shape the attitudes and behaviours of the child (Pandy 1987) and early mutuality and signalling later blossom in a variety of behaviour (Craig 1989).

Parental approval and reinforcement make the children, cheerful (Schneider 1984), whereas parental rejection fosters a distorted and devaluated self (Ramaiah 1976) and makes the child fearful, (Deepshikha 1982). It has been noted down that children having excess parental love are incapable of living (Nandy and Kakar 1980) and children from family with higher parental structure have fewer aggressive coping strategies (Hardy, Power and Jaedicke 1993).

It has been proved that children having affectionate father and attentive mother are emotionally stable, secure, and confident (Joshi and Tiwari 1977) and children of supportive mothers have greater task oriented persistence and competence during play (Frody, Bridges and Grulnick.
The social system in which the child lives influence the child's personality. Children having experiences with different care-givers accept strangers with less anxiety (Maccoby and Feldman 1972) and make easy adjustments (Jacobson and Willie 1986). A study by Mathew (1992) has revealed that play school attending pre-schoolers base more easy temperamental traits and those staying at home have difficult temperamental traits. Crow and Crow (1956) and Banerji (1963) have suggested that the Guru can transform the student's personality.

An attempt by Lee (1990) has found children engaged in solitary play as less active, less intense, less distractable and with less will to approach new stimuli, those interested in group play as more active, more intense, more distractable, less persistant and moody and those engaged in constructive play as children with good mood, more persistance and higher threshold of responsiveness.

Kundu (1990) has pointed out that one's culture influences every aspect of his or her personality. Studies by Friedman (1974 and 1979) and Gupta and Arora (1984) have found significant cross-cultural differences in the temperament of children whereas a study by Bruneau (1985) has found no overall significant difference in the primary self-concept scores of Native-American and Anglo-American preschoolers. Meanwhile Escalona and Corman (1971) have reported that Negro child far exceed
the Caucasian child in attention span and persistence.

The child himself is a factor influencing his own temperament. The child’s body build (McConnell 1977 and Mussen 1988). Popularity (Mohan, Schgal and Bhandan 1982, Chaube 1986) language skills (Brody 1984), conscious thinking (Brody 1988), the child’s expectations about others (Harris el al. 1990) and the child’s achievement (Kumar 1983 and Khurshid and Fatima 1984) all influence his or her own personality.

2.2.5.9. Evaluation of literature and position of the present study


Theories of temperament given in the review include psychoanalytic theory (1924), Buss and Plomins’ (1975) theory, Thomas and Chess’ (1977) theory, and Rothbart and Derryberrys’ (1982), theory.


From the review, it was evident that very few studies have been conducted in Indian context regarding temperament of preschool children. Hence an attempt has been made here to study the impact of environmental stimulation on the temperamental traits of preschool children.

2.2.6. Learning - definitions

Allport (1963) defines learning as the modification of psychological
characteristics resulting from experience.

Marx (1970) defines learning as more or less permanent changes in behaviour attributable either to reinforcement or to classical conditioning.

Earnest (1972) defined learning as the process by which an activity originates or is changed through reacting to an encountered situation, provided that the characteristics of the change in activity cannot be explained on the basis of native response tendencies, maturation, or temporary states of the organism.

Hurlock (1973) defines learning as the development which is brought about partly by a cause which results from the activities of the child himself.

Sheperd and Willoughby (1975) defines learning as the process by which changes in behaviour occurs as function of an organism's interaction with the environment, excluding such short term changes that results from such factors as fatigue, drugs, altered psychological states etc.

According to Faw (1989), learning is typically inferred process in which one observes a change in behaviour that does not result from the physical maturation or deterioration of the organism, states of fatigue or arousal or other transient physical states of the organism.

Morgan et al (1996) defines learning as any relatively permanent change in behaviour that occurs as a result of practice or experience.
2.2.6.1 Determinants of learning

Ebbeck & Ebbeck (1974), says that if we are encouraging learning by discovering, then the atmosphere should be one which promotes the seeking of new knowledge and the exploring of new and interesting situations. It should be an environment full of opportunities for experiences which lead to good learning.

According to Stott (1974) since the child is constantly doing something, he is constantly learning something. The conditions about him, the events that happen to him or about him the attitudes and behaviours of others towards him and many other aspects of his daily milieu, all conspire to determine what he learns. But subjective or inner factors play a vital role as conditions of learning.

Karlin (1975) says that children learn best when they are relieved of undue pressure to compete and when they feel reasonably confident that they can accomplish what is expected of them and they learn best when their efforts are appreciated by their teacher and their classmates. According to him, learning opportunities are richer for children when they are not restricted to the things the teacher knows.

Mac ginitie (1976) says that the amount of actual writing will depend on the child’s experiences and interest as well as intellectual, physical and emotional maturity.
According to Hurlock (1976) since learning to read is one of the principal components, of the first grade curriculum the child who is ready to read makes better adjustments to school than one who is not ready. He adds that reading readiness is greatly enhanced by good family relationships and by a home environment that shows a respect for and an interest in the printed word.

In the words of Ollila (1980), the amount of actual writing will depend on the child's experiences and interest as well as intellectual, physical and emotional maturity. Formal writing instruction is not included in nursery school and is not usually undertaken in kindergarten.

2.2.6.2. Family

Helen (1972) says that through play, children develop motor coordination and intellectual skills, and thus sibling play is an important mode of learning.

Stott (1974) says that since the child is constantly doing something, he is constantly learning something. The conditions about him, the attitudes and behaviours of others towards him especially family members and many other aspects of his daily milieu all conspire to determine what he learns. But subjective or inner factors play a vital role as conditions of learning.

According to Helms & Turner (1976) the type of family setting that the child is brought up in, particularly its socio economic level is thought to have considerable emphasis on language growth.
Smart and Smart (1986) states that preschool children’s intelligence, language development, learning style and general competence are related to their mother’s method of teaching them and guiding their daily lives.

According to Stevenson & Barber (1987), parental involvement is a key mediator between background factors such as parent education and academic achievement.

2.2.6.3. Peers

Peer interaction occurs more in open or unstructured programmes with fewer teacher directed activities like lessons (Miller and Dyer 1975).

Smith (1982) says that peers can form attachments to one another, but more importantly they provide stimulation to each other and shared interests at a similar cognitive level.

Children’s competence in Chicago study by Clarke - Steward (1984) was however correlated with the number of different children with whom they interacted with in the centre care setting.

According to Denham and Holt (1993) the child’s relationship his peer group is likely to influence his self concept and therefore have an effect upon his achievement in school.

2.2.6.4. Mass media

The mass media of communication, especially television are extremely popular with children. The relation between television and reading appears
to depend to a considerable extent, on the nature of the programme. Teavelogues, science programmes and biographical and historical presentations probably serve to encourage some children to read more widely. (Rouch et al 1976).

With younger children it is effective to have story telling period with a make believe microphone. Such stimulated ‘broad casts’ may serve to encourage the A shy child who normally would hesitate to speak before a group. Visits to local radio studies will furnish ideas for procedures and physical settings. (Dallmann et al 1978).

The opportunity to present a discussion of childrens books on radio or television can serve as powerful motivation for children to read many books.

According to Cohen and Manion (1985) radio, television, video recorder, record player, tape recorder, cassette tape recorder, microphone, loud speaker, movie projector, skip projector etc. will facilitates learning.

By about 2½ years of age, a child shows real interest in radio listening. His interest in learning increases every year. It helps to increase child’s knowledge about history, geography etc. It improves his vocabulary and grammar. (Pettit et al 1988).

Learning clear pronunciation and the sense of rhythm are advantages of TV viewing. He will able to develop better social outlook (Goswami 1991)
2.2.6.5. *Intelligence*

In the words of Watson, (1969), intelligence is related to learning. According to him, one learns more and faster because of more efficient intellectual functioning. He adds that, intellectual development and learning are inextricably intertwined intellectual development results in gaining knowledge, and this is a result of learning.

According to Harris (1972), the most important single factor in learning is general intelligence, which being an average of many phases of mental growth is significantly belated to most of the other factors.

In the words of Hurlock (1973) the relationship between intelligence and speech has been found to be so marked that it is frequently claimed that the child’s speech is the best single indicator of his intellectual level, which in turn influences learning. This holds true not only for the onset of speech and intelligibility at early ages but also for the size of vocabulary at different ages throughout childhood.

Karlin (1975) says that intelligence is a major factor in learning to read. However, the possession of high intelligence is no guarantee of reading success., and furthermore, high mental age does not assure success in beginning reading.

According to Dallmann et al (1979) intelligence is the rate at which an individual is able to learn, and the rate of growth in reading is affected by intelligence. If intelligence is thought of as an inherited ability, the role
of the school and the teacher is to provide an environment that will help the child function up to his ability.

2.2.6.6. Constraints on learning

According to Mussen et al (1969) children from bilingual homes, in general, have greater difficulty than those from monolingual homes in learning. However, if the child is taught in school, the potentially deleterious effects bilingual atmosphere are likely to be reduced.

Earnest (1972) says that, the teacher as a parent figure may arouse false expectations or reinstate continuing battles, some symbols used in teaching may be so freightened with personal meanings as to be defended againsts conflicts over authority may result in non reading or in spelling handicaps, for no subject matter is clothed more with arbitrary authority than English pronunciation and spelling.

Bradley and Caldwell (1976) says that high levels of noise and stimulation from which the child cannot escape adversely affect cognitive development. If the home is noisy, small and over crowded with the TV on most of the time and with too much stimulation from the family members or visitors, the cognitive level of the child may be depressed.

According to Dallmann et al (1979), fear of loss of parental love or fear of punishment and satisfaction from approval and love are powerful motivating forces in learning at all ages, especially in childhood.
2.2.6.7. Role of rewards and punishment in learning

Learning in a punishment situation is considerably different from what has commonly been supposed. Punishment can have quiet varied and apparently unpredictable effects upon behaviour. It surely is not the case that punishment just weakens the response upon which the punishing stimulus is made contingent. There are situations in which punishing a response appears to strengthen it (Miller 1963).

Reward normally considered by learning theorists to be effective in modifying responses alone is shown possibly to be effective in modifying even fundamental preceptions. (Marx 1972)

According to Kundu (1989), punishment if too severe, or inflicted when the reason for punishment is not clear and acknowledged, may breed resentment, antagonism, and desire to avoid the form of learning to which it is attached.

A sense of accomplishment may sometimes be included by an actifial or even unjust fied reward, but it is far better grounded if based on the pupils awareness of real success in learning. The rewarding nature of felt progress helps to explain the stimulating effects of progress charts and similar evidence of educational achievement and there is a close relationship between awards and the next form of extrinsic motivation, namely, knowledge of progress.
According to Feldman, (1977), the major mechanism underlying learning is reinforcement, the process by which a stimulus increases the probability that a preceding behaviour will be repeated. Primary reinforcers involve rewards that are naturally effective without prior exposure because they satisfy a biological need. Secondary reinforcers in contrast begin to act as if they were primary reinforcers through frequent pairings with a primary reinforcers.

2.2.6.8 Theories of learning

2.2.6.8.1. Hull’s Theory

Hull’s theory is avowedly mechanistic and studiously avoids reference to consciousness. Its central concept is habit and it derives most of its information about habit from experiments with conditioned responses. He has adopted Thorndikes law of effect. Hull substitute a positive programme of trying to explain purposes, insights and other phenomena difficult for a behaviourism to encompass. One of Hull’s principal theoretical contributions is a definite and workable conceptualisation of the distinction between learning and performance - more specifically, of the contributions of learning and motivational conditions to the determination of behaviour at any time. The effects of prior learning are represented in the concept of habit, including inhibition which may be viewed as a sort of negative habit. Behaviour at any time is taken to be a joint function of habit and drive.
2.2.6.8.2. Stimulus - Response Theories

Stimulus Response theories include those of Thorndike, Hull, Guthrie, Spence and Skinner. The basic account of learning by the SR theorist is in terms of responses to stimuli. Thus for the SR theorist what is learned is a system of habits, each habit involves a specific response to a specific stimulus or situation, with complex habits being “built up” as a compounding of simple habits.

Practice, according to the SR theorist result in an assembly of habits which, if they are appropriate to the solution of a new problem, will bring it about. If not, the learner engages in trial and error behaviour until a solution is reached. The solution when attained, establishes a new habit, and so forth. Thus the SR theorist believes that complex problem solving and cognitive activity may be deduced from the principles of habit formation.

2.2.6.8.3. Ethological theory

It was proposed by Bowlby in 1969. According to this theory, infants are born with a set of behaviours that elicit parent care and so increase the infants chances of survival. These attachment facilitating behaviours include sucking, clinging, crying, smiling, gazing of the care giver’s face and crawling after the care giver. As infants emit these behaviours, they elicit attention and caring behaviour from adults. This is turn forms the foundations for the development of the reciprocal bonds of attachment.
2.2.6.8.4. Vygotsky’s socio cultural theory

According to Vygotsky, infants are endowed with basic perceptual, attentional and memory capacities that are shared with other animals. These undergo a natural course of development during the first 2 years through simple and direct contact with the environment. But once children became capable of mental representation especially through language, their ability to participate in social dialogues is enhanced. Soon young children start to communicate with themselves in much the same way that they converse with others. As a result, basic mental capacities are transformed into uniquely human higher cognitive process.

2.2.6.9. Evaluation of literature and position of the present study


Watson (1969), Harris (1972), Hurlock (1973) Karlin (1975), and Dallman (1979) have given the importance of intelligence in learning. Constraints on learning was stated by Mussen (1969), Earnest (1972) and Caldwell (1976).

Hence it can be seen that there are no studies giving a significant view about the stimulations offered from the home and school environment and its influence on learning.