The empirical investigation of child rearing antecedents as related to children's helplessness required a sequence of activities. A brief description of these steps is indicated below.

An Overview of the Design

The present study adopted a 2 (sex) x 2 (helpless vrs. mastery oriented) x 3 (urban vrs. rural vrs. tribal settings) factorial design. There were 30 participants in each of 12 cells. Equal number of boys and girls were sampled from urban, rural and tribal settings of Orissa. In accordance with children's performance on measures of helplessness, boys as well as girls from all three settings were classified into helpless versus competent categories on the basis of median split.

Following such classification of children, their mothers in the respective categories were required for subsequent participation in the study. These mothers were individually given measures of parental interactional styles and attributional styles in the form of structured interview.

The comparison of mothers responses across participants' categories was undertaken to identify the role of rearing techniques. Apart from the measures of helplessness administered, the children were also administered children's attributional style questionnaire. The comparison of childrens' attributional style scores across 12 groups was undertaken.
Participants

Three hundred and sixty high school students (180 boys and 180 girls) from urban, rural, and tribal settings were randomly sampled from Cuttack and Balasore districts of Orissa. The participants were in Grades 9 and 10 when the study was conducted. Their age ranged from 12 to 16 years and most of them were from middle class socio-economic status. These students participated in Phase I of the study and were categorized on the basis of their helplessness scores.

The mothers of these 12 categorised groups of children subsequently participated in Phase 2 of the study. Most of these women were also from middle socio-economic status and their age ranged from 25 to 50 years. Except for tribal mothers, most of the mothers had high school education and some of them had college education.

Measures

The study employed two sets of measures; one set of measures for children and the other set of measures for mothers. The children's measures included Children's Helplessness Questionnaire (CHQ), Projective Inventory Helplessness Questionnaire (PIH), and Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (CASQ).
The measures used for mothers included Parental Interactional Style Questionnaire (PIS) and Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ).

**Children's Helplessness Questionnaire (CHQ).** The Children's Helplessness Questionnaire (CHQ) measures an extent of child's helplessness (see Appendix A). It scales the extent of his/her expectancy that behaviours and outcomes are independent. It contains 40 items in true-false format presented in the regional language (Oriya). Out of the total items, about half of the items are sampled from educational experiences and other half are sampled from interpersonal domain. Similarly, half of the items are positively keyed and other half are negatively keyed.

The internal consistency of the questionnaire was established in a number of studies involving more than 400 subjects (Sahoo, 1985). Sahoo (1985) has also demonstrated convergent validation with measures such as academic failures and obedient, shy and group-dependent personality subscales of Cattell's (1973) High School Students' Personality Questionnaire (HSPQ).

Items from educational experience includes such statements: sincerity brings reward; your education helps you to be creative; you can solve your academic
problems by consulting your teachers; there is no use of education.

Items from interpersonal domain includes such statements: if you behave well, others would be pleased; if you work well, you develop good relationship with your senior; strangers can not be made friends; good manners go unappreciated by teachers.

Projective Inventory Helplessness Questionnaire (PIH). In view of the problems of obtrusiveness associated with direct self-report measure, a projective measure of helplessness has been developed and validated (see Appendix B). The usefulness of this approach has been documented in a number of studies (Puhan, 1982). It has been shown that the approach is effective in getting around the problem of obtrusiveness and social desirability.

Three stories, culled from day-to-day life, are given to represent the situation of helplessness. The stories are from different domains of contemporary life and they are approximate to Indian life. Each story is accompanied by twenty statements, each statement characterising individuals and incident depicted in the stories.

Subjects are asked to read each story and indicate their agreement/disagreement with each statement. A scoring key specifying whether agreement or disagreement denotes
helplessness is used for scoring an individual's responses. An individual's score indicates the degree of helplessness. Of twenty statements following each story, eight items are meant for helplessness dimensions and other twelve statements measure attributional styles.

Half of these 12 items depict positive events and the other half depicts negative events. Four items are sampled to indicate internal-external attributions, four items depict stable-unstable attributions; four items denote global-specific attributions.

It is important to note that the projective measure has been developed from a preliminary format. In the preliminary format there were four stories. More number of statements accompanied each of the story. However, only three of the stories were selected on the basis of pretesting. Similarly, items which were highly correlated with the total score and a criterion score were finally retained. This process of item analysis resulted in selecting twenty items for each story. The preliminary testing has also shown satisfactory levels of reliability and validity.

**Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire (CASQ).** Seligman (1984) and his associates have developed a Children's Attributional Style Questionnaire to measure children's attributional styles. The present questionnaire has been
adapted by Sahoo (1987) to suit the local condition (see Appendix C).

CASQ measures to what extent a child employs internal, global and stable factors while explaining various events. This questionnaire contains 48 items in A-B format about day-to-day events presented in the regional language (Oriya). The participants are asked to imagine the situation happen and then give tick mark (✓) on any one of the answer depending on their choice. The items include statement like the following:

1) You did better in your examination, because :-
   (a) You are competent in all work.
   (b) You are good in the particular subject you gave the examination.

2) You are almost drowned when swimming in a river because :-
   (a) You are not a very cautious person.
   (b) Some days you are not a cautious person.

3) You did good in your school, because :-
   (a) School course is very easy.
   (b) You are laborious.

In the first example, answer 'A' expresses globaility; 'B' expresses specificity. In the second example 'A' expresses stability and 'B' denotes unstability. In the third example 'A' denotes externality whereas 'B' denotes internality.
Each item presents a hypothetical event and two possible causal explanations are given. In the first example, the stability and internality dimensions are held constant, whereas the global-specific dimension is varied. There are 16 events that pertain to each of the three explanatory dimensions. Half of the events are positive and half are negative. Thus, there are six subscales in the CASQ: internality, stability, and globality scales for bad events, and internality, stability, and globality scales for good events. A composite explanatory style score for positive events (CP) is obtained by adding the child's scores on each of the three subscales for positive events. A composite explanatory style score for negative events (CN) is obtained by summing the scores for the subscales for negative events. An overall explanatory style score (CP-CN) is obtained by subtracting the composite negative score from the composite positive score. The lower the overall style score, the more the child explains bad events in terms of internal, stable and global causes, while explaining good events in terms of external, unstable and specific causes.

The psychomatrlic efficacy of the CASQ developed by Seligman et al. (1984) has been reported elsewhere. The present adaptation of the CASQ has been fill-tested prior to its use in the present investigation. The
preliminary data of this use indicate satisfactory level of reliability and validity (Sahoo, 1987).

**Parental Interactional Style Questionnaire (PIS).** This interactional style questionnaire (PIS) measures parental socialisation (see Appendix D). The questionnaire presents 49 statements indicative of different interactional patterns. Respondants are asked to read each statement and mark on a five-point scale to indicate the extent to which they adopt a specific interactional style. The factor analytic study on this PIS has indentified nine specific style of interaction.

**Authoritarian style** is denoted by attempts to shape, control and evaluate the behaviour of the child according to a set standard of conduct. These parents value obedience and favour punitive forceful measures to curb behaviour they think is wrong. When such parents show rejecting attitude, their style is described as authoritarian-rejecting. The **authoritative style** defines parental direction on the child's activities in a rational, issue-oriented manner. These parents encourage verbal give and take; the child is given reason for policy. Although control is exercised by these parents, the child is not hemmed with restrictions. The **permissive patterns** attempts to behave non-punitively, and in accepting and affirmative way towards the child.
The parents avoids control on the children and the child is allowed to regulate his or her behaviour. The rejecting - neglecting pattern is characterized by minimal encouragement of independence and by failure to enrich the child's environment. These parents also discourage emotional support. The harmonious pattern is denoted by a quality of harmony at home. These parents are non-conforming. They encourage independence and provide a very enriched environment. Harmonious families are characterized as having control but not as exercising control.

Indulgent-protective parents demonstrate a pattern emphasizing emotional dependency of their children. These parents show unnecessary expression of care and don't allow their children to experiment and to mistake. Appeasing pattern defines an approach which is predominately conciliatory. These parents tend to avoid issues and try to circumvent problems that arise. Temporizing style is indicative of vascillating approach. It does not follow any consistent pattern, rather changes rapidly. Confusion characterizes this pattern.

The responses yield nine separates scores, each score relating to a specific interactional style. The psychomatomic properties of these scales have been reported elsewhere (Sahoo, 1989). The previous studies have indicated satisfactory level of reliability and validity.
Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ). This Attributional Style Questionnaire is intended to measure parental attributions (see Appendix E). It is similar to the CASQ meant for children, except that it contain 24 items. The scale was developed by Sahoo (1987) in an earlier study. The 24 statements in ASQ are A-B format. The events relate to incidents of our life.

Respondants are instructed to imagine the events happening to them. Then they have to choose one of the two explanations which is appropriate in their case. In this questionnaire, statements include items of the following types:

(1) You did a good work, because :-
   (A) You are competent in all work.
   (B) You were competent in the particular work that was given to you.

(2) You make a good friend, because :-
   (A) Your behaviour is good.
   (B) The behaviour of those who keep relation with you is good.

(3) You wanted to borrow money from somebody, but they didn't give you, because :-
   (A) Every one is asking loan on the pretext of something or other.
   (B) Nobody wants to give loan.
All the items in this questionnaire are presented in regional language (oriya). Here also half of items are positively keyed and other half are negatively keyed. In each example, two explanations hold two of the explanatory dimensions are constant while varying the third. As with the CASQ, in the first example, the stability and internality dimensions are held constant, whereas the global-specific dimension is varied. An overall positive attribution score is obtained by adding the mother's score on each of the three subscales for positive events and an overall negative attribution score is obtained by summing the scores for the subscales for negative events. And a differential explanatory style (CP-CN) is obtained following the method same as in CASQ.

In addition to examining the psychometric efficacy of the CASQ, Sahoo (1987) also documented the robustness of the ASQ. It was found to be satisfactory. Its use in the present investigation provides further support for its internal consistency.

Procedure

The study has adopted an extreme group design. One hundred and twenty children (60 boys and 60 girls) from urban high school in Cuttack city, 120 students (60 boys and 60 girls) from rural high school in Balasore district, 120 tribal students (60 boys and 60 girls) from high schools
in interior part of Balasore district of Orissa were randomly sampled. Most of the children were from Grades 9 and 10.

In the beginning, permission was taken from the school authorities of urban areas. For rural and tribal areas permission from the district collector was obtained. Then with due permission of the school authorities of rural and tribal areas, the study was conducted.

First, two questionnaires (CHQ and PIH) were administered to the children individually and they were asked to respond according to the instructions. Approximately two weeks after the first administration, the CASQ was administered to the participants. They were asked to respond freely and spontaneously.

On the basis of the scores of students on CHQ, PIH and CASQ, the boys and girls in each setting were categorized into mastery-oriented (MO) and learned helplessness (LH) groups.

In phase 2 of the study, mothers of these 12 groups were contacted for testing. The mothers of each of the 12 groups were individually administered the PIS. The method of structured interview was adopted while collecting the data.
In urban area, there was no difficulty for interviewing mothers. But rural and especially in tribal settings, it was somewhat difficult to communicate with them. Sometime the investigator had to express certain aspect in simple and local language.

While interviewing mothers, care was taken to maintain maximum possible neutrality. But mother participated in the interview in her own natural habitat. The responses of participants were recorded by the investigator on the questionnaire. Each item of the questionnaire was evaluated according to the scoring key. Responses of mothers of high helplessness children and mothers of low helplessness children in each of six subgroups were compared on several dimensions of socialization.

Following the completion of the study, each mother was debriefed about the purpose of the investigation.