Chapter 2

Theoretical Constructs on Parental Stimulation, Peer Experiences and Social Relations

This chapter depicts the theoretical background on the criterion variables selected for the study so as to yield convincing theory support for the selection of variables under investigation. Thus, in this chapter, theoretical constructs on Parental Stimulation, Peer Experiences, and Social Relations are given.

2.1. Parental Stimulation

This is an era of increasing concern about the quality of education in our country. States are taking a greater role in monitoring and maintaining academic standards. Communities are ever more watchful of the expense of public education. Local schools are concerned about continuing to provide high-quality teaching and other services with dwindling resources. Parents want assurance that their children will receive adequate preparation to lead rewarding adult lives. Parental Stimulation are valuable resources, if largely tapped for schools struggling to provide quality education.

The term "Parental Stimulation" signify various connotations. It includes several different forms of participation in education and with the schools. Parents can support their children's schooling by attending school functions and responding to school obligations (parent-teacher conferences,
for example). They can become more involved in helping their children improve their schoolwork by providing encouragement, arranging for appropriate study, time and space, modeling desired behaviour (such as reading for pleasure), monitoring homework, and actively tutoring their children at home.

Outside the home, parents can serve as advocates for the school. They can volunteer to help with school activities or work in the classroom. Or they can take an active role in the governance and decision making necessary for planning, developing, and providing an education for the community of children.

2.1.1 Effect of Parental Stimulation on student achievement

There are hundreds of books, journal articles, and standard reports on the subject of parents' involvement in their children's education. These writings include research reports, expert opinions, theory papers, programme descriptions, and guidelines for setting up programmes meant for parental involvement. A great many of these reports are informative and useful, and Parental Stimulation has become a ‘hot topic’ in the past few years. The research overwhelmingly demonstrates that Parental Stimulation in children's learning are positively related to achievement. Further, the researches show that the more intensively parents are involved in their children's learning, the more beneficial are the achievement effects.
This holds true for all types of Parental Stimulation in children's learning and for all types and ages of students.

Looking more closely at the researches around the world, there are strong indications that the most effective forms of Parental Stimulation are those which engage parents in working directly with their children on learning activities at home (Clark, R.M., 1990). Programmes which involve parents in reading with their children, supporting their work on homework assignments, or tutoring them using materials and instructions provided by teachers, show particularly impressive results (Baker, and Laura M. 2000).

Similar researches of Snow et al., 1991, Kurdek, Fine, and Sinclair, 1995, Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, and Dornbusch, 1991 have found that the more active forms of Parental Stimulation produce greater achievement benefits than the more passive ones. That is, if parents receive phone calls, read and sign written communications from the school, and perhaps attend and listen the parent teacher conferences, greater achievement benefits accrue than would be the case with no Parental Stimulation at all. However, considerable greater achievement benefits are noted when Parental Stimulation is active when parents work with their children at home, certainly, but also when they attend and actively support school
activities and when they help out in classrooms or on field trips, and so on. (Rowland, S. 1997)

The researches of Schiamberg & Chin, 1986; Milne, 1989; Tocci & Englehard, 1991; Zimilies & Lee, 1991; Lee & Croninger, 1994 also indicate that the earlier in a child's educational process Parental Stimulation begins, the more powerful the effects will be. Educators frequently point out the critical role of the home and family environment in determining children's school success, and it appears that the earlier this influence is ‘harnessed,’ the greater the likelihood of higher student achievement. Early childhood education programmes with strong Parental Stimulation components have amply demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach.

Those research studies of Rose, Gallup, and Elam, 1997; and Williams, D.L. & Chavkin, N.F. 1989; have compared the Parental Stimulation programmes that include orientation/training components with those that do not indicate to provide orientation and training enhances the effectiveness of Parental Stimulation. Research in this area indicates that parents generally want and need direction to participate with maximum effectiveness. Orientation/training takes many forms, from providing written directions with a send-home instructional packet; to providing ‘make-and-take’ workshops where parents construct, see demonstrations
of, and practice using instructional games; to programmes in which parents receive extensive training and ongoing supervision by school personnel.

While research indicates that orientation/training activities are beneficial, those researches (Epstein, 1995) who have looked at the extent of training have found that a little is better than a lot. That is, programmes with extensive parent training components do not produce higher student achievement than those with only basic training, and they sometimes experience considerable attention presumably because their time and effort requirements overtax the willingness of parents to stay involved. Researchers (Dauber and Epstein, 1989) have also found that the schools with the most successful Parental Stimulation programmes are those which offer a variety of ways parents can participate. Recognizing that parents differ greatly in their willingness, ability, and available time for involvement in school activities, these schools provide a continuum of options for parent participation.

2.1.2 The effect of Parental Stimulation on student attitude and behaviour

The research report of Henderson and Berla, 1994 was based on the relationship between Parental Stimulation and achievement and then also look at the Parental Stimulation on student outcomes other than achievement. These include attitude towards school or towards particular
subject areas, self-concept, classroom behaviour, time spent on homework, expectations for one's future, absenteeism, motivation, and retention.

While not as extensively researched as the Parental Stimulation-student achievement relationship, the relationship between Parental Stimulation and those affective outcomes appears to be both strong and positive. All the research studies which address these areas found that Parental Stimulation has positive effect on student attitudes and social behaviour.

As might be expected, the pattern of Parental Stimulation shown to confer the most positive effect on students' achievement is also the most beneficial with respect to other student outcomes. In general, active Parental Stimulation is more beneficial than passive involvement, but passive forms of involvement are better than no involvement at all. As for which specific kinds of involvement in children's learning have the greatest effective benefits, no clear answer emerges from the research. Whereas direct Parental Stimulation in instruction seems to be the single most powerful approach for fostering achievement benefits, all of the active forms of Parental Stimulation seem more or less equally effective in bringing about improvements in students' attitudes and behaviour (Rose, Gallup, & Elam, 1997).
Although the main focus of the present study effect of Parental Stimulation on student outcomes, it is certainly worth noting that research reveals many benefits for school systems and for parents themselves when parents become involved in their children's learning. School personnel benefit from the improved rapport that generally accompanies increased Parental Stimulation (Clark, R.M. 1990). This rapport is often expressed in parents' increased willingness to support schools with their labour and resources during fundraising activities or special projects. And certainly, the many ways in which Parental Stimulation benefits students' achievement, attitudes, and behaviour have a positive impact on school staff.

The research of Morton-Williams, R. 1964 also reveals that improved parent attitudes toward the school and improved parent self concepts characteristically result when parents become involved in their children's learning. Parents often begin their participation doubting that their involvement can make much difference, and they are generally very gratified to discover what an important contribution they are able to make. In this connection, it is important for school people and parents to be aware that Parental Stimulation supports students' learning, behaviour, and attitudes regardless of the factors such as parents' income, educational level, and whether or not parents are employed. That is, the involvement of parents who are well-educated, well-to-do, or have larger amounts of
time to be involved has not been shown to be more beneficial than the involvement of less-advantaged parents.

2.1.3 Parental Stimulation at the middle school and secondary levels

There is a much higher incidence of Parental Stimulation at the preschool level and in the primary grades than at the middle school or secondary level (Chavkin, N.F. 1989), and, consequently, the majority of research on Parental Stimulation has been conducted with young children and their families. Indeed, just a few years ago, research on Parental Stimulation in the education of older students was too limited to permit drawing any conclusions about its effectiveness. In recent years, however, more research has been conducted with middle school and secondary students and their families. This research shows that Parental Stimulation remains very beneficial in promoting positive achievement and affective outcomes with these older students.

Researchers (Cotton, K., Wikelund, K., Northwest Regional, et. al, 2004) have identified various differences in the incidence and types of Parental Stimulation as students move through the upper elementary and secondary grades. They point out that parents generally become less involved as their children grow older for many reasons: schools are bigger and farther from home, the curriculum is more sophisticated, each student has several teachers, parents of older students are more likely to be
employed, and students are beginning to establish some sense of separation and independence from their parents. For these reasons, the kinds of Parental Stimulation engaged in by parents of younger children are no longer relevant or useful.

The research on the effectiveness of Parental Stimulation with older students, Leler, H. (1983), therefore, often focuses on different forms of participation--e.g., parents monitoring homework, helping students make postsecondary plans and select courses which support these plans, parent-school agreements on rewards for achievement and behavioural improvements--as well as some of the "standby" functions, such as regular home school communication about students' progress and parent attendance at school-sponsored activities.

2.1.4 The role of Parental Stimulation with disadvantaged students

The research report of Ueltschy, L. C. (2001) focused on the effects of Parental Stimulation on achievement and other outcomes for students in general. The nature of this Parental Stimulation research base makes this question easier to address than it might be if it were necessary to mount all-new research efforts with disadvantaged populations. As it is, much of the general Parental Stimulation research has been conducted with low-income. Sometimes this has occurred because both the Parental Stimulation activities and the evaluations of them have been mandated as part of
government-funded programmes for disadvantaged children Weiler, R. K. (2001). In other cases, educators sensed the potential of Parental Stimulation programmes in poor neighborhoods, set these up, and then compared outcomes with those from other schools which are demographically similar Hogg, R. V., H. J. Newton, et al. (1999).

In the study of Wilson, B. and N. Shullery (2000), the first thing researchers discovered is that minority or low-income parents are parents involved with the schools. There are numerous reasons for this: lack of time or energy (due to long hours of heavy physical labour, for example), embarrassment or shyness about one's own educational level or linguistic abilities, lack of understanding or information about the structure of the school and accepted communication channels, perceived lack of welcome by teachers and administrators, and teachers and administrators' assumptions of parents' disinterest or inability to help with children's schooling.

Perhaps one of the most important findings of the research, however, is that parents of disadvantaged and minority children can and do make a positive contribution to their children's achievement in school if they receive adequate training and encouragement in the types of Parental Stimulation that can make a difference. Even more significant, the research dispels a popular myth by revealing, as noted above, that parents can make
a difference regardless of their own levels of education. Indeed, disadvantaged children have the most to gain from Parental Stimulation programmes.

Because of the special problems and the potential associated with minority and disadvantaged Parental Stimulation, care must be taken to emphasize the concept of parents as partners of the school (Kwok, R. C. W., J. Ma, et al. 2001). Too often, because of the discontinuities between teachers or administrators and the communities in which their schools are located, school personnel tend to view the parents and surrounding community as needing to change and having little to offer. This "deficit model," as it has been called, is clearly detrimental to the development of positive attitudes about education and good working relationships between the community and the school. The guidelines offered at the end of this report can help schools and communities break down some of these barriers and move toward genuine working partnerships.

It is worth mentioning that Parental Stimulation benefits members of other special student populations as well. While the investigation leading to this area (Kadel, S. and J. Keehner 1995) did not involve an in-depth analysis of evidence regarding these populations, the research reviewed does indicate that special education, gifted, and other student groups also
experience achievement and affective benefits when their parents are involved in their learning.

2.1.5 The effect of Parental Stimulation in school governance

The term "governance" here includes any activity which provides parents the opportunity to take part in decision making about school programmes. This may include being a school board member, a participant on a parent advisory committee or a local school improvement council, or an active member of the PTA. Areas in which parents may be helping to make program decisions include goal setting, development and implementation of program activities, assessment, personnel decisions, and funding allocations. This area of Parental Stimulation is one of the most controversial. Studies (Hogg, R. V., H. J. Newton, et al. 1999) show that most parents would like to play a more active role in this type of involvement, whereas most school administrators and teachers exhibit great reluctance to encourage parents to become partners in governance.

The literature reviewed for this study conducted by Hoger, E. A. (1998). indicates that although administrators agree that parents should be involved with the schools in a variety of ways and that school personnel should spend time encouraging and training parents to become involved, they disapprove of Parental Stimulation in administrative areas such as teacher and principal selection and evaluation, and are less enthusiastic
than parents regarding the utility of parent participation in other activities, such as the selection of texts and other teaching materials or setting priorities for the school budget. They also tend to feel that parents do not have enough training to make school decisions, although surveys of parents indicate that the majority of them feel they are capable of making sound decisions. In this study, no examples were found of programmes in which parent participation in decision-making roles could be directly linked to improved student achievement. The relationship between parent participation in decision making and student achievement is not nearly as extensively researched as the effects of Parental Stimulation in students’ learning (Heppner, P. P. and J. A. Johnston 1994). Indeed, writers on the topic indicate that it is more difficult to assess the effects of Parental Stimulation in decision making precisely because the connection to student outcomes is more indirect.

The lack of evidence linking Parental Stimulation in governance and student achievement should not be taken to mean that parents should not be included in some aspects of school decision making, however. Researchers Calegari, M. J., G. G. Geisler, et al. (1999) have identified benefits other than student achievement which have been found to emerge from involving parents in governance. These include:
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- The elimination of mistaken assumptions parents and school people may hold about one another motives, attitudes, intentions and abilities

- The growth of parents' ability to serve as resources for the academic, social and psychological development of their children--with the potential for much longer-term influence (because of continued interaction with their children over time)

- The increase of parents' own skills and confidence, sometimes furthering their own educations and upgrading their jobs, thus providing improved role models for their children

- The increase in parents serving as advocates for the schools throughout the community

The study of Brown, G. and M. Pendlebury 1992. indicated that the kinds of Parental Stimulation referenced earlier in this report--attending parent teacher conferences and school functions, volunteering in classrooms, tutoring children at home, etc.--provide the best training ground to help prepare parents for roles in school decision making. These activities enable parents to understand something of the school's structure and its instructional programmes and provide basic experience in working with school personnel. These experiences can expand parents' knowledge
and increase their credibility with school staff as they move into decision-making roles.

2.1.6 Engaging meaningful Parental Stimulation in the schools

Investigators Becker, W. E. and M. Watts (1999) have identified lack of planning and lack of mutual understanding as the two greatest barriers to effective Parental Stimulation. School staff wishing to institute effective programmes will need to be both open-minded and well-organized in their approach to engaging parent participation. Research has established that the most successful parent participation efforts are those which offer parents a variety of roles in the context of a well organized and long-lasting program. Parents will need to be able to choose from a range of activities which accommodate different schedules, preferences, and capabilities. As part of the planning process, teachers and administrators will need to assess their own readiness for involving parents and determine how they wish to engage and utilize them.

Other guidelines include:

- Communicate to parents that their involvement and support makes a great deal of difference in their children's school performance, and that they need not be highly educated or have large amount of free time for their involvement to be beneficial. Make this point repeatedly.
- Encourage Parental Stimulation from the time children first enter school (or preschool, if they attend).

- Teach parents that activities such as modeling reading behaviour and reading to their children increase children's interest in learning.

- Develop Parental Stimulation programmes that include a focus on Parental Stimulation in instruction—conducting learning activities with children in the home, assisting with homework, and monitoring and encouraging the learning activities of older students.

- Provide orientation and training for parents, but remember that intensive, long-lasting training is neither necessary nor feasible.

- Make a special effort to engage the involvement of parents of disadvantaged students, who stand to benefit the most from parent participation in their learning, but whose parents are often initially reluctant to become involved.

2.2. Peer Experiences

Schools and families are two important contexts of development. Every child’s development occurs in numerous contexts which include home, schools, peer groups etc. A peer group is a group of approximately the same age, social status, and interests. To work out the relationship with peers, there can be confusion for people to find out how they fit in. Some
groups are socialised by peers rather than by their families. They define themselves as a circle of friends. Santrock (2007) defines peers are children of about same age or maturity level.

The concept peer group is used in two different senses: first as a term for a small group of friends or associates who share common values; interest and activities, second as a term of virtually all persons of the same age. Peer group influence can therefore be the influence that friends exercise on one another.

In childhood, when dependence on parents is high, the peer group serves as an extension of the socialisation meditated by the family and peer associates are likely to be governed by parents (Harvey and Lamp, 1986)

Mussen (1983) clustered major variables of social and educational experience for convenience in terms of influences related to the family, peers classroom, teachers, school, larger community and the culture. The peer variables include the target child’s popularity; bi number and closeness of relationship with same – sex and opposite sex individuals; the nature degree of involvement in school related peer groups, and the neighborhood groups; peer group attitude and values; and the nature and degree of peer presence.
It should be noted that before the age of four, the child’s personality as well as its social development is largely determined by the home environment, its interaction with parents or its own peculiar temperament. However, after the age of four, the child begins to spend more time in the outside world rather than the private world of its home, with the consequence of expanded interaction with new places, people and experiences. This is the stage of transition from infancy to childhood and is crucial in the sense that the experiences gained by the child during this time will have a lasting impression on its personality and disposition.

A notable behaviour of the child during this period is its frequent and ready interaction with peers, rather than its parents. As the child begins to enjoy a new world of expanded interaction, it becomes all the more imperative for the child to make new adjustments and behaviour adaptations. In short, during the age between 4-10, the child gradually shifts from the primary ties with parents to secondary ties with peers and other adults outside home.

According to Lewis (2001), children’s’ responses to peers are not exactly interactions, but simple reactions. The child is genuinely interested in other children of his or her age and resorts to radical observation of its peers. Also, peers do not evoke stranger anxiety in the child as adults do. Apparently, the child easily draws parallel between the size and actions of
itself with that of its peers. As the child begins to get closer and closer with his peers, there is an increase in group play activities and these play sessions often continue for longer and longer periods. According to Valentine (2007), by the time the child attains the age of five, he spends more than half of his time with other children. Green (2003) says that at the age of ten, the child prefers to play with peers it does not particularly like, rather than play all alone. As also, despite the show of signs of real cooperation, friendliness and sympathy, there is also a good deal of competition, fighting and quarrelling.

In a related study on children between two to five years of age, Parten (2007) found that social participation of a child was directly proportional to its age. Studies by Hattwick and Sanders (2007) and Heathers (2007) show that as the child grows older, it seeks more attention and approval from their peers rather than from their parents.

2.2.1 Peer Related Theories

Repeated studies have shown that peer interaction is conducive, perhaps even essential, to a host of important early achievements: children's understanding of fairness, their self-esteem, their proclivities toward sharing and kindness, their mastery of symbolic expression, their acquisition of role-taking and communication skills, and their development of creative and critical thinking.
According to Scaffer (2004), the relationship formed among peers has a noteworthy influence, distinct from that of parents. Associating with other children’s help in the acquisition of a variety of social skills and in the formation of child’s social identity, peer collaboration also furthers intellectual development.

Hartup (1992) also supported this view and added that Peer Experiences contribute substantially to both social and cognitive development and to the effectiveness with which we function as adults. Indeed, the single best childhood predictor of adult adaptation is not school grades, and not classroom behaviour, but rather, the adequacy with which the child gets along with other children.

Kemple (1992) viewed that peer group has special role in maintaining a child's level of social acceptance. Once a child has established a reputation among peers either as someone with whom it is fun to play or as someone with whom joint play is unpleasant or dissatisfying, this reputation may influence the way other children perceive the child's later behaviour. Children's understanding of emotional expressions and situations has been found to relate to how well peers like or dislike them.

Harry Stack and Sullivan (1993) observed that elementary school students tend to work with larger peer groups, which are usually the whole class with whom the young student spends their academic days.
Behaviourist theories proved that relationships between people affect learning only as much as people reinforce each other (or not) in the academic arena. If the peer group encourages education and learning, then the individual student within that group will value learning, because the individual is reinforced, or rewarded, for behaviour that indicates that learning is valued. Students in peer groups that do not value education lack the stimulation and reinforcement needed to encourage personal learning. These peer groups presumably stimulate and reinforce other values.

Abraham H. Maslow viewed that a student with deprived relationship concerns will be less able to participate in classroom learning opportunities. The ability to learn is built on a foundation of comfortable relationships with others, including peers and family, and classroom learning is all about learning with and in the presence of others. Scott, Burton and Yarrow (1999) also stresses that peer group is a powerful controller of children’s behaviour in the classroom.

Albert Bandura had opined that peers with positive attitudes and behaviours toward education will allow and teach each other to set goals that include opportunities to learn and achieve. Vygotsky stresses the view by pointing out that the learner cannot reach full potential without the aid of others.
Varied theories agree that the values and attitudes of the peer group are essential elements in motivation and learning. Students who surround themselves with academically focused, goal-oriented peers will be more likely to appreciate, internalize, and exhibit these features themselves.

Johnson (2000) advocates a child's peer group influences social and academic development and that these influences begin at the very start of formal education. Influences and motivations for all kinds of children's behaviour, including study habits and personal academic development, come not only from their peers, but also from their parents, teachers, and others with whom they come into close contact. Because of the sheer amount of time the typical child spends each day with his or her friends, the peer influence on a child can be substantial.

Peer approval leads to a pro-social behaviour in many areas of a child's life, including academics. This in turn will tend to affect the self-esteem of the child, which has other social consequences.

### 2.2.2 Developmental Sequence of Peer Influence

Children influence each other from the cradle. Young infants begin to cry when they hear the wailing of other babies. Toddlers imitate the way other children share and fight. Quality of peer interaction in infancy provides valuable information about socio-emotional development. Pre-
schoolers social behaviour follows certain pattern that lead up to involvement with other children in the middle years.

Ladd and Coleman viewed that peer interaction begins in infancy, when as early as two months of age, babies show an interest in peers. By the middle of the first year, they direct smiles and vocalisations toward other infants.

From the age two to five, children become more dependent on other children and somewhat less dependent on adults. During the middle childhood children spend more time away from their parents and more time with other children.

Peer group tend to be homogenous with regard to age, sex and socioeconomic status. In the primary school years, groups are all-girl or all-boy, partly because of mutuality of interest, partly as an outgrowth of the group’s function of teaching sex-appropriate behaviours, and partly because of the difference in mutuality between girls and boys.

During this period reciprocity becomes especially important in peer interchanges. Children play games, function in groups, and cultivate friendship. The amount of time children spend in peer interaction rises during middle and late childhood.
2.2.3 Functions of peer group

Peer group provide a realistic gauge for us to measure the development of our abilities. Peer group helps children form attitudes and values. They provide a forum for sifting through parent derived values and deciding which to keep which to discard.

Dinkmeyer (1965) considers the peer group as the important corrective agent. Peers serve to keep the child conforming to the social expectations of the group. They actually provide for the child a workshop in human relationship.

One of the important functions of the peers is to provide a source of information and comparison about the world outside the family. Children receive feedback about their abilities from their peer group. Good Peer Experiences are necessary for normal socio-emotional development.

Piaget and Sullivan stressed that it is through peer interaction that children learn how to interact in symmetrical, reciprocal relationships. With peers, children learn to formulate assert their opinions, appreciate the perspective of peers, cooperatively negotiate solutions to disagreements, and evolve standards of conduct that are mutually acceptable. According to Piaget and Kohlberg children develop their social understanding and moral reasoning through Peer Experiences ship.
Peers promote the transfer of loyalties from the family unit to the group, serving as a stepping stone in the development of loyalty to a wider group in the society. Peers also have an important effect on the child’s self concept by giving him a feedback about the kind of person he is and the kinds of behaviour for which he will be accepted or rejected by the peers.

2.2.4 Peer interaction and Social Relations

According to Papalia and Olds (1978) peer group is an important socialising agent. Children learn from others how and when adjust their desires to those of others, when to yield and when to stand firm.

Hartub establishes that peer interaction is an essential ingredient in the process of childhood socialisation, which is helpful for the total development of the children.

During the primary school years peers determines many aspects of children including what to wear, how to behave, and how to speak. Essa (1999) considered social peer interaction as the important element in the development of social competence.

During the elementary school years children’s peer interaction and prospective taking ability increases. Quality Peer Experiences ship influences the perspective taking ability of the children.
Bee (2004) - developmentalists have reawakened to the fact that a great deal of experience on which the child’s cognitive progress is based occurs in social interactions. Social Relationships present the child with a unique set of demands, both cognitive and interactive, and have unique consequences for the child’s social and emotional functioning.

**2.2.5 Parental Stimulation and Peer Experiences**

Parent and Peer Experiences seem to complement one another. Parents’ provide affection and guidance, granting children security and social skills they need to enter into the world of peers. Peer interaction, in turn, permits children to expand their social skills further.

Children’s first experience of relationship generally occurs within the family. This small intimate group is the basic setting within which most children are introduced to social living, where the rules of interpersonal behaviour are occurred and will continue to serve them as a secure base when they encounter the often bewildering world outside.

The parents’ personality determines the kinds of child rearing techniques they adopt; this in turn will affect the child’s personality characteristics, which will then play a part in the kinds of relationships formed with other children. The family relationship and Peer Experiences ship are linked each other. (Scaffer, 2004).
The child who has been accepted and valued by the family who has learned how to interact with his siblings is better able to choose a peer group in which he can find his place without sacrificing his values.

Parent’s skilful advice on how to solve peer problems helps children develop social competence and gain peer acceptance.

Parents told their children how to mediate disputes or how to become less shy with others and also encouraged them to be tolerant and resist peer pressure. Parent-child relationships serve as an emotional bases for exploring and enjoying peer experiences.

2.2.6 Parental Stimulation and Social Relationship

Off all the factors of social situation, the more powerful and immediate in shaping the personality of the child is the family. Family influences the child’s life in all its aspects—physical, mental and moral.

Researchers view family from a social system perspective and considered it as a complex set of interacting relationships affected by the larger social context.

Lynn (1969) on the other hand pointed out that parental discord has been associated with children’s social uncertainty, poor adjustment, lack of opportunity, failure to assume leadership, low self esteem, failure to take
initiative in carrying out tasks, poor self acceptance, lower IQ, poor scholastic achievement and learning problems.

Parents also influences child’s Social Relationship by offering guidance on how to act toward others.

Socialization is the process by which people, particularly children, learn the customs, practices, ideas, and behaviour of their culture and immediate social group.

The term socialization encompasses the learning values, attitudes, knowledge, skills which a society possesses. Socialization covers all learning.

According to Lesslie (1979) no society allows socialization to proceed according to chance. The family institution includes norms defining proper parental behaviour. It defines what parents properly may teach children and what they may not. Beyond the familial contribution and intertwined with it. There always lie a body of knowledge and practice shared by the society at large which the society transmits to all new members. The organization of the socialization process outside family is the educational institution.
2.3. Social Relations

Social Relations theory of Vygotsky establishes that Social Relations play a fundamental role in the development of cognition. Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals." The social learning theory of Bandura emphasizes the importance of observing and modeling the behaviours, attitudes, and emotional reactions of others.

The potential for cognitive development depends upon the "zone of proximal development" (ZPD): a level of development attained when children engage in social behaviour. The full development of the ZPD depends upon full Social Relations. The range of skill that can be developed with adult guidance or peer collaboration exceeds what can be attained alone.

To promote cognitive development, Social Relations must have inter-subjectivity and scaffolding. Inter-subjectivity creates a common ground for communication, as each partner adjust to the perspective of the other. The capacity for inter-subjectivity is present early in parent-infant
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mutual gaze, exchange of emotional signals and imitation. Later language facilitates it. Between ages three and five, children increasingly strive for inter-subjectivity in dialogues with peers, as when they affirm a playmates message add new ideas and contribute to ongoing play to sustain it. Scaffolding involves adult assistance that adjusts to the child’s current level of performance, promote cognitive development ( Berk 2005).

According to Bandura most of the human behaviour is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others one forms an idea of how new behaviours are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action. Observational learning can take place at any stage in life, but it is important during childhood.

Bandura gives more importance to observational learning-learning occurs through observing what others do. It is also referred to as imitation or modeling. In observational learning, people cognitively represent the behaviour of others and some times adopt this behaviour themselves.

Social development influences children's ability to make and interact with friends and their ability to learn cooperatively in school. Perspective taking allows students to consider problems and issues from others' points of view. Social problem solving includes the ability to read
social cues, generate strategies, and implement and evaluate these strategies.

Children change as they grow from infancy to the early childhood and on through middle and late childhood and adolescence. The five year old and the two year old have different needs and abilities. A competent parent adapts to the child’s developmental changes.

Santrock (2007) observes good parenting means committing yourselves day after day, week after week, month after month, and year after year to provide your children with a warm, supportive, safe and stimulating environment that will make them feel secure and allow them to reach their full potential.

In the first year, parent-child interactions moves from heavy focus on routine care taking to later include more none care giving activities, such as play and visual-vocal exchanges. During the second and third years of the child parents often handle disciplinary matters by physical manipulation. As the child grows older parents increasingly turned to reasoning, moral exhortation, and giving or withholding special privileges.

As children move into the middle and late childhood period, parents spend considerably less time with them. Collins, Harris and Susan
pointed out that this drop in parent child interaction may be even more extensive in families with little parental education. Although parents spend less time with their children in middle and late childhood than in early childhood, parents continue to be extremely important socialising agents in their children’s lives.

Because school aged children roam farther from home, spending more and more time with peers, it is tempting to assume that they are less strongly attached to their parents. But this assumption is wrong. Children at this age still depend on their parents to be a safe base (Bee, 2004).

### 2.3.1 Parenting style and its influence on peer and Social Relationship

Diana Bauman describes four types of parenting style. The first one is the authoritarian parenting in which the parent exhorts the child to follow the parent’s directions and to respect their work and effort. Firm limits and controls are placed on the child, and little verbal exchange is allowed. This style is associated with children’s socially incompetent behaviour.

The authoritative parenting style encourages children to independent but still places limits and control on their actions. Extensive verbal give-and–take is allowed, and parents are warm and nurturing toward the child. This style is associated with children’s socially
competent behaviour. Children reared in such families are achievement oriented in school and get better grades in elementary school.

Bee (2004) notes authoritarian parenting style is effective because it creates a climate in which the child is more open to parental influences and makes the specific parenting practices more potent.

Neglectful parenting is a style in which the parent is much uninvolved in child’s life. It is associated with children’s social incompetence. Indulging parenting is a style in which the parents are highly involved with their children but place few demands or controls on them. This is associated with children’s social incompetence. Neglected children continue to show disturbances in their relationships with peers.

The optimal learning environment for a child involves a close collaboration of school and the family. Senge Mc-Cabe, Lucas, Smith, Dutton, kleiner (2000) suggested that involve parents and empower them to define their own challenges systematically, especially the challenges that might be in the way of an optimal education for their children, and search out unique solutions that will work for them can enhance the optimal learning of the child.

Parental involvement can be broken into two types: on-site involvement (at the child’s school), and at-home involvement. At-home
involvement is considerably more productive than on-site involvement at the child’s school. By interacting with children in the educational process at home, parents impart skills to their children, communicate to them the value of education, help cultivate their interest in learning, and create an expectation of attention to schoolwork. Thus, children with involved parents have a head start in terms of basic skills, motivation to learn, and the value they ascribe to education.

When parents follow up their at-home involvement with involvement at school, they reinforce for the child their commitment to and belief in the importance of his or her education. They also serve as a conduit for important information from home to school and school to home, which can also improve learning outcomes.

Dodenhoff (2007) an advocate of parental involvement argue that choosing an appropriate school for a child is not enough. Once the choice is made, parents must then become actively engaged in the child’s education, both at home and at school. This engagement can take a variety of forms, including:

- attending general school meetings;
- attending parent-teacher conferences;
- attending a school or class event;
• serving on a district governing board;

• participating in a parent-teacher association or school council;

• volunteering at school events or in the classroom;

• designating a specific time and space for study at home;

• helping the child with homework, or checking to make sure that homework has been completed;

• discussing school issues with the child; and

• reading to, or with, the child.

Home–school relationships refer to the formal and informal connections between the family and elementary school setting. Home–school relationships in elementary school—including parents communicating with the teacher, helping in the child's classroom, and participating in school activities—have positive benefits for children.

Although most studies indicate the important role of mothers, fathers' involvement is equally important. Fathers who observe children in the classroom, attend parent teacher meetings, and meet with counselors have children who experience educational success more often than their peers whose mothers are the only involved parents.
Continuous and consistent parent involvement in elementary school shields and protects children from the negative influences.

Family involvement is more likely to occur when schools are committed to it. Schools with formal parent involvement programmes report higher academic achievement.

Parent involvement in reading-related activities with their children outside of school is strongly related to children's reading performance. When teachers provide interactive reading assignments and explicitly instruct parents on how to help their children, parent involvement significantly improves students' reading scores.

Caspe, Lopez and wolos (2007) reports parents' involvement in their children's homework can make a difference. When parents guide their children's homework with helpful and appropriate support, children perform better in the classroom. When parents have a positive attitude toward homework and use homework as an opportunity to teach study skills and time management, children are more likely to believe that homework will help them learn.

Conclusion

Parental stimulation to the children can play a vital role in the development of a child. It helps them in holistic development both in
scholastic and co-scholastic areas. The stimulation from the parents will stimulate the cognitive and non-cognitive growth. Peer experience and social relations provides an opportunity to the children to develop themselves as good citizens.

Thus the selection of the topic is duly rewarded by the close interplay between the variables selected for the study, which have a direct bearing on the central theme of the present investigation.