Chapter III

Problem and Hypothesis

The perusal of literature in the preceding chapter shows that chlorpromazine impairs acquisition and retention of a wide range of appetitive and aversive tasks (Courvoisier et al. 1953; Steinberg and Watson, 1959; Kumar, 1971; Cameron et al., 1972; Lepose et al. 1974).

Since CPZ is an anti-anxiety drug which has a varied effect on behaviour, the tenability of these studies has been questioned. It has been proposed that the effect of CPZ on memory might not be due to an influence on specific information processing mechanism but might be mediated by disruptive influences on other behavioural dimension.

The present investigator feels that since CPZ reduces anxiety and fear it should facilitate the acquisition of a fear inducing task. However, this facilitatory effect would be limited only to the initial trials since the fear element of the task would influence performance only during the first few trials (Slathia and Muhar, 1978). In view of the clinical importance of CPZ the following problem was formulated.
Problem:

To investigate the effect of chlorpromazine on the acquisition of a pipe walking task.

Hypotheses:

i) Since low doses of chlorpromazine facilitate memory consolidation, acquisition of a pipe walking task would be faster in the chlorpromazine injected group.

ii) Since high doses of chlorpromazine inhibit memory consolidation, this facilitating effect would be limited only to the initial few trials.