CHAPTER III

PROBLEM AND HYPOTHESES

Parental attitudes go a long way in their influence on child development. It's impact is not only limited to psychological aspects but it may also be equally important on all the other aspects of development.

Number of factors regarding parental attitudes and child rearing practices have been identified. The most important environmental factors in the mental health of the child appears to be those connected with the parental attitudes and handling.

Normal child growth and development are essential conditions for healthy adult life play a crucial role for prevailing these (Parents, both the father and mother). It is here where children develop their own identity and recognise others. With proper parental guidance they develop the essential skills to meet the demands of ever changing times.

Various assessment measures have been devised and used for study of parental attitudes and / or parental handling of their children. Various parameters have been reported to be significantly related to psychological morbidity in children. Parker et al (1979), studied two parenting variables, i.e. care and over protection. Findings on the basis of factor analytical work rendered care only as the major parental dimension as compared to overprotection.
Such a study in India has been made possible by the development of an adequate assessment measure, i.e. Parental Handling questionnaire (Malhotra, 1990) comprising of two significant parental dimensions, i.e. care and control. The earlier devices of the same nature had certain limitations such as making judgment in a retrospective manner as well as eliciting information not from the parents but from the respondent. In addition, the existing measures were not even culturally relevant with the Indian child rearing practices.

Variables such as care and control may be influenced by number of parental and social factors. In Indian set up fathers and mothers seem to differ in their handling of their children in terms of the extent of control and care exercised by them. However, an investigation into these factors can provide empirical insight into these assumptions.

These parental handling practices may further be influenced by parental Socio-economic status. The available research evidence has indicated importance of certain socio economic and socio demographic variables in such practices.

Since mother and father play differential roles in handling of their children, especially in terms of care and control exercised by them, and parents are an integral part of a socio economic status which may further be instrumental in determining parental child rearing practices, these variables would be studied as independent. These variables may further influence their perception of psychopathology amongst children. In recent years a scale to assess childhood Psychopathology has been developed and standardised by Malhotra, Verma, Verma and Malhotra (1988) on Indian population. It helps to identify disturbed children of both the sexes, from general population.
As the effects of parental child rearing practices seem to be very wide-ranging from their immediate activities to overall socialization, in the present study the relationships between the above mentioned variables and academic achievement would also be investigated. Such a study would have important practical implications especially in the context of present times. Parent’s concern with demands from their children are ever increasing because of highly competitive social conditions. In the present investigation the effect of parent’s and their socio-economic status would be studied on care, control, psychopathology and academic achievement of the children. In order to provide empirical evidence to the above mentioned assumptions following hypotheses would be tested:

1. Parents, (father and mother,) would have differential effects on care, control and psychopathology of children.

2. Socio-economic status of parents would have differential effect on care, control and psychopathology of children.

3. Parents and their socio-economic status would have interactive effects on care, control and psychopathology of children.

4. There would be differential effect of parent’s socio-economic status on academic achievement of children.

5. There would be inter-relationships between care, control, psychopathology and academic achievements of children.