Introduction
INTRODUCTION

At the threshold of the 21st century and heading towards an "information Society" when in the coming times more and more knowledge and skills would be in demand with greater mechanization in every area of life and work. Those countries which acted now would be miles ahead of others in the next century with an " intellectually superior human resource than those who missed the flight. Arrangements would have to be made for providing a better intellectual diet for all children right from the earliest years of life.

It seems that man is different from other animals very largely because of the far greater richness of his cognitive processes; associated with memory of individual events and sophisticated generalizations, they allow subtle analogies and explanations and ability to draw pictures and speak and write.

The term 'cognition' means knowing or understanding, and when cognitive development concern it refers to mental development in the broadest sense, including not only intelligence but also such complementary or component processes as perceiving, recognizing, recalling, and interpreting information, as well as all forms of reasoning. Cognition includes a wide range of human mental abilities. Cognitive development is a third major area of human development, in addition to physical and social development.

On the otherhand, 'cognition' means knowledge or understanding, but more broadly it refers to all the processes by which we know about the world, especially perception, memory, and thinking.
Neisser (1967) defined 'cognition' as those processes by which "sensory input is transformed, reduced, elaborated, stored, recovered and used, cognition is involved in every thing a human being might possibly do".

The elements of cognitive structure are called cognitions. A 'cognition' is an individual's perception of personal attitudes, beliefs and behaviors.

**COGNITIVE THEORY**

In cognitive theory, the basic premise of which is that the mental activities of the individual are important determinants of social behavior. These mental activities, called cognitive processes, include perception, memory, and judgement, as well as problem solving and decision making. Cognitive theory does not deny the importance of external stimuli, but it maintains that the link between stimulus and response is not mechanical or hardwired. Rather, the individual's cognitive processes intervene between external stimuli and behavioral responses, individuals not only actively interpret the meaning of stimuli but also select the actions to be made in response to stimuli.

Modern cognitive theorists (Wyer & Srull, 1984; Markus & Zajonc, 1985; Fiske & Taylor, 1991) depict humans as active in selecting and interpreting stimuli. According to this view, people do more than react to their environment; they actively structure their world cognitively.

First, because they can not possibly attend to all the complex stimuli that surround them, they select only those stimuli that are important or useful to them and ignore the others. Second, they actively control what categories or concepts they use to interpret the stimuli in the environment. One implication of this, of course, is that several individuals can form dramatically different impressions of a complex stimulus in the environment.
COGNITIVE STRUCTURE AND SCHEMAS

It refers broadly to any form of organization among cognitions (concepts and beliefs). Because a person's cognitions are interrelated. Cognitive theory gives special emphasis to exactly how they are structured or organized in memory, as well as to how they affect a person's judgements.

Social psychologists have proposed that individuals use specific cognitive structures called schemas to make sense of complex information about other persons, groups and situations. The term 'schema' is derived from the Greek word for 'form' and it refers to the form or basic sketch of what we know about people and things.

Schemas are important in social relations because they help us to interpret the environment efficiently. Whenever we encounter a person for the first time, we usually form an impression of what he or she is like. In doing this, we not only observe the person's behavior but we also rely on knowledge of similar persons we have met from the past—that is, we use our schema regarding this type of person. Schemas help us process information by enabling us to recognize which personal characteristics are important in the interaction and which are not. They structure and organize information about the person, and they help us remember information better and process it more quickly. Sometimes they fill gaps in knowledge and enable us to make inferences and judgements about others.

COGNITIVE CONSISTENCY:

One way to study cognitive structure is to observe changes that occur in a person's cognitions when these are under challenge or attack. The changes will reveal facts about the underlying structure or organization of cognitions. An important idea emerging from this approach is the principle of consistency. Which
maintains that individuals strive to hold ideas that are consistent or congruous with one another, rather than ideas that are inconsistent or incongruous. If a person holds several ideas that are incongruous or inconsistent, then he or she will experience internal conflict. In reaction, he or she will likely change one or more ideas, thereby making them consistent and resolving this conflict.

Social psychologists have developed several useful theories based on the general notion of consistency. Among these are balance theory and the theory of cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive theory has made many important contributions to social psychology. It treats such diverse phenomena as self concept, perception of persons and attribution of causes, attitude change, impression management and group stereotypes.

BALANCE THEORY

An important theory about the linkages between attitudes is balance theory. This theory assumes consistency and that cognitive systems generally are consistent. This theory was formulated by Heider (1958) and elaborated by Rosenberg and Abelson (1960).

THE DRIVE TOWARD CONSISTENCY:

The elements of cognitive structure are called cognitions. A cognition is an individual's perception of personal attitudes, beliefs and behaviours. Consistency among a person's cognitions that is, beliefs and attitudes—is widespread. It is observed that most people's cognitions are consistent with one another implies that individuals are motivated to maintain that consistency. In general, these consistency theories hypothesize that if inconsistency develops between cognitive elements, people are motivated to restore harmony between elements.
BALANCED COGNITIVE SYSTEMS

According to balance theory, two types of relationships may exist between elements. Sentiment relations refers to sentiments all evaluations directed toward objects and people, a sentiment may be either positive (Liking, endorsing) or negative (disliking, opposing), symbolized as 't' or 't'. Unit relations refers to the extent of perceived association between elements. For example at unit relation may result from ownership, a social relationship (such as friendship or marriage), or causality. A negative relation indicates dissociation, like that between ex-spouses or members of groups with opposing interests. A null relation exists when there is no association between elements. Balance theory is concerned with the elements and their inter relations from P's (speaker) view points. It is based on all three sentiments like P (speaker), another person O, and an impersonal object (X). It is balanced if all three sentiment relations are positive or in which one is positive and the other two are negative. Mainly cognitive balance theory assumes that people strive for consistency among their cognitions.

THEORY OF COGNITIVE DISSONANCE

Another major consistency theory is the theory of cognitive dissonance. Whereas balance theory deals with the relationship among three cognitions, dissonance theory deals with consistency between two or more elements (behaviours and attitudes). There are two situations in which dissonance commonly occurs (1) after a decision, or (2) when one acts in a way that is inconsistent with his or her beliefs.

Dissonance theory assumes there are 3 possible relationships between any two cognitions. Cognitions are consistent, or consonant, if one naturally or logically follows from the other. They are dissonant when one implies the opposite of the other. Two cognitive elements also may be irrelevant; one may have nothing to do with the other.
Whenever we make a decision, there are some cognitions attitudes, beliefs, knowledge that are consonant with that decision, and other cognitions that are dissonant with it. Dissonant cognitions create an unpleasant psychological state that we are motivated to reduce or eliminate.

Some decisions produce a large amount of cognitive dissonance, others very little. The magnitude of dissonance experienced depends on the proportion of elements that are dissonant with a person's decision.

LIMITATIONS OF COGNITIVE THEORY:

One drawback of cognitive theory is that it simplifies and sometimes oversimplifies the ways in which people process information, an inherently complex phenomenon. Another drawback is that cognitive phenomena are not directly observable; they must be inferred from what people say and do. This means that compelling and definitive tests of theoretical predictions from cognitive theory are sometimes difficult to conduct. Overall, however, the cognitive perspective is among the more popular and productive approaches within social psychology.

Neisser (1967) addresses the cognitive system's ability to store and recover information. Cognition creates representations that are used by people. Cognition has a functional value, it enables people to accomplish some things that would be difficult to accomplish, to put it mildly, without it.

Cognition begins with sensory input. Our cognition processes are always about something, our senses bring energy from the physical world outside our bodies into our neural and cognitive systems, where it will be further worked on. Physical energy from the world must be converted into a pattern of neural events—a kind of neural energy—that can be used as the basis for all subsequent cognitive processing. Once the physical energy in the sensory stimulus has been transformed
into a pattern of neural events, then any physical stimulus that has been transformed into a pattern of neural events, then any physical stimulus that has not been transformed may be lost for good. This is the transformation that takes place when our cognitive system reduces sensory input.

The cognitive processes involved in perceiving, encoding, thinking, inferring, remembering, judging and communicating social information are distinct from cognitive processes about the physical world.

The term cognition is essentially the process of knowing. It encompasses thinking, decision making, judging, imagining, problem solving, categorizing and reasoning - all the higher mental processes of human beings. They all depend on knowledge that derives from learning and memory.

Cognition is the capacity of individual to function with understanding, effectiveness and facility in relation to the external environment, perception, memory, imagination, thinking, reasoning, problem solving, concept formation and use of language etc. are different forms of cognitive process. These cognitive variables are the individual's abilities necessary to function at a level of abstraction.

Piaget (1952) held that experience plays an important role in cognitive development of children. Rural and Urban life settings provide different experiences to children through different exposure of stimuli in the surroundings, so these two environmental conditions may highly influence the cognitive functioning of a child.

According to cognitive developmental theorists, individuals structures of thought influence the ways in which they organize their experiences (Zigler, Lamb & child, 1982). Cognition includes perceptions, thinking, concept formation, abstraction and problem solving. Basic to all these processes is "Intelligence".
Cognition encompasses the higher mental processes of humans, including how people know and understand the world, process information, make judgements and decisions, and describe their knowledge and understanding to others.

Cognitive development is the process by which a child's understanding of the world changes as a function of age and experience. No theory of cognitive development has had more impact than that of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget. Piaget suggested that children throughout the world proceed through a series of four stages in a fixed order. He maintained that these stages differ not only in the quantity of information acquired at each stage, but in the quality of knowledge and understanding as well. He suggested that movement from one stage to the next occurred when the child reached an appropriate level of maturation and was exposed to relevant types of experiences. Without such experiences, children were assumed to be incapable of reaching their highest level of cognitive growth.

Piaget's four stages are known as the sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational stages. He suggested that movement from one stage to the next occurred when the child reached an appropriate level of maturation and was exposed to relevant types of experiences. Without such experiences, children were assumed to be incapable of reaching their highest level of cognitive growth.

I. SENSORI-MOTOR PERIOD : (Birth to two years)

Piaget uses the term 'sensory-motor' to describe this period because it involves co-ordination of sensory perceptions and motor movements. During this initial period the child has relatively little competence in representing the environment using images, language, or other kinds of symbols. Consequently, the infant has no awareness of objects or people who are not immediately present at a given moment lacking what Piaget calls object permanence. Object permanence
is the awareness that objects-and people-continue to exist even if they are out of sight. Object permanence is a critical development during the sensorimotor stage.

**II PREOPERATIONAL PERIOD**: (Two to seven years)

The most important development during the preoperational stage is the use of language. Children develop internal representational systems that allow them to describe people, events, and feelings. They even use symbols in play, pretending, for example, that a book pushed across the floor is a car. The range of cognitive functioning and thinking are expanded.

Although children's thinking is more advanced in this stage than it was in the earlier sensorimotor stage, it is still qualitatively inferior to that of adults. Their way of thinking is based on his or her own perspective. Preoperational children think that every one shares their own perspective and knowledge. Thus, children's stories and explanations to adults can be maddeningly uninformative.

**III CONCRETE OPERATIONAL STAGE**: (Seven to Twelve years):

The beginning of the concrete operational stage is marked by mastery of the principle of conservation. The conservation of weight and volume—that are not fully understood for a number of years.

During the concrete operational stage, children develop the ability to think in a more logical manner, and they begin to overcome some of the egocentrism characteristic of the preoperational period.

**IV. FORMAL OPERATIONAL STAGE**: (Twelve to adulthood)

The formal operational stage produces a new kind of thinking—that which is abstract, formal, and logical. Thinking is no longer tied to events that are observed in the environment but makes use of logical techniques to resolve problems.
Children in the concrete operational stage approach the problem haphazardly, without a logical or rational plan of action. Since they are varying all factors at once, they are unable to tell which factor is the critical one. In contrast, people in the formal operational stage approach the problem systematically. Acting as if they were scientists conducting an experiment, they examine the effects of changes in just one variable at a time.

Some developmental psychologists suggest that cognitive development proceeds in a more continuous fashion than Piaget's stage theory implies. Instead, they propose that cognitive development is primarily quantitative in nature, rather than qualitative (Gelman & Baillargeon, 1983; Case, 1991).

**What can parents do to promote the competence of their children:**

Because environmental factors play such an important role in cognitive development, child rearing practices can have an important effect on the degree to which a child realizes his or her genetic potential. Parents can help their children by being emotionally responsive and involved with their children, giving children a chance to make and learn from mistakes, giving them the opportunity to explore their environment, providing appropriate play materials and being verbally interactive.

It appears that cognitive development is an important area of human development which usually refers to the process involving knowledge about the world, capacity to infer, to think and to understand a phenomenon rightly. This emphasises on the ability to generalise and formulate idea to solve problems. Cognitive change at any period in the life span is affected to certain extent by perceptual development. As the child grows, much of his development of cognition comes first from the organisation of the perceptual processes. The cognitive frame
work of a young child is less complex than an older child as a result he fails to recognise the distinctive features among similar objects.

Cognitive development is also a gradual, continuous process, resembling the growth of a seedling into a flowering plant. Some other psychologist believe that children pass through a series of cognitive stages, although each stage of development builds on previous ones, the child's thinking patterns at each stage are radically different from thinking patterns at earlier periods. As children mature and gain experience with the world, their mental functions go through a series of reorganizations, after each reorganization, the child passes into a more advanced cognitive stage.

CHILD-REARING PRACTICES:

Immediately after birth the role of the mother had been found to be highly significant. Edward Short had cautioned: "But in the immediate post birth period the mother by her care, protection, closeness and cuddling will try to make her child's existence approximate as closely as possible to his pre-birth life. Of course she will not be a person to him, but a vague, warm, nourishing, something which envelopes him and eases the transition from womb to the outside world." This is his birth right, and if he is denied it his unfolding personality may suffer. Children who are deprived of early intellectual stimulation will never reach the heights of which they might be capable.

Proper bringing up of children is recognized as a serious responsibility in the society as well as in the world of today. Improvement in child care and child education can transform society for the better.

To a mother or a father, no other types of work can yield deeper satisfaction in life than child rearing. Surely, the understanding of psychology of infancy, childhood and adolescence is considered very vital worldwide.
The child comes in the world as a tender and delicate creature. It, therefore, needs someone who can nourish it with diligence and love and protect him from all harm. A mother can do this in the best manner. The period of infancy, from birth to about the age of 3 years is considered to be the most significant period of life. It is a formation period - a period of learning and habit formation. Habit and traits of character formed at this age have a profound effect on the future of the child. Family have always been embedded in network of relatives, neighbours and friends. These members have undoubtedly influenced the rearing of children, sometimes directly and often indirectly.

The mother's contingent and appropriate responsiveness produces in the infant a sense of control over the environment, thus facilitating a secure attachment to the mother (Maccoby, 1980).

Child-rearing is an art. It plays an important role in giving final shape to the child's physical, emotional and the cognitive urges. Child-rearing practices include child care means feeding and weaning, bathing and clothing, toilet training, health care, parent child interactions etc. Though both father and mother have responsibilities in up bringing of children, it is the mother whose effect is significant on the early development of the child. It is she who takes major responsibility in moulding the child's personality and cognitive urges according to the expectations of the culture where she lives.

Child-rearing practice can be defined as "ideas, beliefs and attitudes widely held in community on how to bring up children. The process of child-rearing is greatly influenced by the characteristic way of thinking, feeling, and acting prevalent in the cultural group to which the family belongs."
BREAST FEEDING:

Breast feeding is a vital natural resource that can make a major contribution to health and family planning goals. Studies have repeatedly shown that breast feeding programmes have measurable impact because breast milk is the healthiest, safest, cheapest and most nourishing food for the baby. Breast feeding is associated with improved survival and better child health and reduction in fertility. Therefore an increase in breast feeding could reduce the burden on family planning, maternal and child health and health programmes. In addition, breast feeding does not expose babies to the risks of contaminated breast milk substitutes, bottles and artificial nipples. All of these effects of lactation of health, nutrition and fertility are reasons alone for mothers to choose breast feeding for their child as well as for communities and societies to advocate breast feeding, especially exclusive breast feeding, as a desirable social norm.

Breast feeding should be continued as long as possible. However, after 3 to 4 months some mothers will not have enough milk for this to be the sole source of food for the baby, and so some other food will have to be started in addition.

WEANING:

Weaning or food supplementation is the process by which food other than breast milk are introduced for the child. Needless to add, good weaning practices are a major factor in avoiding faltering growth of the child and in promoting health. Weaning practices, if not properly followed, may prove to be the greatest danger to life and health for the babies being breast fed. For the mothers, who are breast feeding, food supplementation task turn out to be the most demanding. The mother should be careful to know its signs when the baby wants to cooperate.
There are some cultural beliefs in different parts of India regarding the suitable time for starting solid food. Most communities have a religious ceremony 'Annaprashana' between the 6th and 9th month of age. This however is limited to the middle class urban population and is not usually practised by the poor rural and tribal population.

The human or cow's milk in reasonable quantities alone can not provide all the energy and protein required for maintaining an adequate velocity of growth for the infant after the age of 4 months. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce more concentrated nutritional supplements by this age. Weaning means accustoming the infants to nourishment other than the mother's milk. (Ghai, 1990)

Khan (1978) reports in his monograph on child rearing practices in India that Irani conducted a study on the pattern of child-care in 50 middle class Parsi families in an industrial urban community of Bombay. It was revealed that Parsis observed a definite schedule for feeding. By the age of 4 months weaning was completed. Supplementary food was included in a child's diet at the age of 3 months. Toilet training started at 9-12 months and was completed by two years. In the same article Khan mentions another study by Madhok. Madhok collected information about child rearing practices among rural women of Mohupalpur village, New Delhi. She found no significant difference in child-rearing practices among the mothers belonging to higher castes and higher classes started feeding their children earlier and those with higher education weaned their children within one year. On the other hand, majority of low caste and low class women weaned their children after two years, toilet training started at the age of three months and was completed by the time child was 3 years. Bed wetting period was longer for children from higher caste and class group. On the whole, it was reported that rural women were permissive. Another study by Khan on child-rearing patterns in middle class Muslim families revealed that feeding was done not on demand but as per a fixed
The children were weaned completely by one and a half years and supplementary foods were started. Toilet training began from the 6th month and was completed at the age of 2-5 years.

Bhogle (1978) conducted a study on child-rearing practices in 3 cultures. The three cultures chosen for this comparative study were: caste Hindus, Backward Hindus and Muslims. The study investigated some aspects of child-rearing which are feeding, weaning, bathing and toilet training practices. It revealed that breast feeding appears to have cultural influences. There is a certain amount of awareness about child-care in caste Hindu and Muslim mothers but not so in the backward Hindu mothers.

Parents show striking differences in their beliefs about the nature of authority and power within their relationships with children. Most parents see themselves as occupying a position of authority with respect to their children. Some parents, however, easily respond to child behaviours as posing an interpersonal threat an interpretation that motivates their establishment or reestablishment of authority and dominance within the relationship. They adhere to the belief that children are unruly and hedonistically motivated and that proper parenting requires a heavy emphasis on very broad retention of power and authority. Such differences may reflect either the 'cultural scripts' they have learned about parent-child relationships or the implicit understanding of parenting they have as a function of their own personal experiences. (eg. Nisbett, 1993).

Erikson believed that two major aspects of parenting are especially important during the pre-school and grade school years. That two are (i) parental warmth (ii) and parental control.
I. PARENTAL WARMTH:

Parental warmth refers to the amount of responsiveness and affection that a parent displays. Parents classified as warm by responsive often smile at, praise, and encourage their children even though they can be quite critical when a child misbehaves. By contrast, "hostile" parents are often quick to criticize, belittle, punish, or ignore a child they rarely act in ways that would let the child know that he is valued or loved.

II. PARENTAL CONTROL:

Parental control refers to the amount of regulation or supervision parents undertake with their children. Controlling parents limit their children's freedom of expression by imposing many demands and actively monitoring their children's behavior to ensure that these rules and regulations are followed. Uncontrolling parents are much less restrictive, they make fewer demands and allow children considerable freedom to pursue their interests, express their opinions and emotion, and make decisions about their own activities. A common assumption is that parents become less restrictive as their children mature, although the available longitudinal data suggests that, if anything, middle-class parents actually become somewhat more controlling from early elementary school years through mid adolescence.

STYLES OF PARENTING:

Studies have been made of how parents may vary in their styles of child rearing. Some parents believe in strong discipline, others do not, for example. In a series of landmark studies, an American psychologist, Diana Baumrind gathered information on child rearing practices by observing parents' interaction with their preschool children at home and in the laboratory. Baumrind found three main categories of parenting styles. The authoritarian parents are rigid and punitive
and value unquestioning obedience from their children. They have strict ideas about discipline and behaviour which are not open to discussion. They also discourage expressions of disagreement.

Permissive parents give their children lax or inconsistent direction and, although warm, require little of them. They have relaxed ideas about behaviour and discipline.

Finally, authoritative parents are firm, setting limits for their children. As the children get older, these parents try to reason with and explain things to them. They also set clear goals and encourage their children's independence.

These three kinds of child rearing styles are associated with very different kinds of behavior in children. Children of authoritarian parents tend to be unsociable, unfriendly and relatively withdrawn. In contrast, permissive parents' children are immature, moody, and dependent and have low self control. The children of authoritative parents farebest: their social skills are high, they are likable, self-reliant, independent and cooperative.

Maccoby, (1992) found that authoritative parenting among Americans facilitated academic success in adolescent children. In a similar study, academic success was negatively associated with both authoritarian (high control, low responsiveness) and permissive (low control, high responsiveness) parenting styles, whereas authoritative (high control, high responsiveness) parenting was positively associated with good grades among high school students.

PATTERN OF CHILD-REARING:

Variations in any one of these four dimensions of the family environment, emotional tone, control, communication and cognitive enrichment - do seem to make a difference in the rate or quality of a child's development and in the style of
interaction with others that she may develop. But in the real world these four dimensions don't occur in isolation, they combine into intricate patterns, or styles. Given the infinite complexity of human behavior and of family interaction, the member of different individual style is probably infinite, too. But some combinations are more common than others, and it helps our understanding to look for some basic types.

Diana Baumrind, whose research and thinking have focused on two particular dimensions: the degree of demand or control, on the one hand. The intersection of these two dimensions creates four parental types. Three of these types correspond fairly closely to Baumrind's authoritarian, authoritative and permissive parental styles.

I. THE AUTHORITARIAN CHILD-REARING:

Children growing up in authoritarian families with high levels of demand and control but relatively low levels of warmth or responsiveness typically are less skilled with peers than are children from other types of families, and they have lower self-esteem. Some of these children appear subdued, others may show high aggressiveness or other indications of being out of control. Which of these two outcomes occurs may depend in part on how skillfully the parents use the various disciplinary techniques.

The authoritarian style of child-rearing practice is clearly biased in favour of parents' needs: children's self-expression and independence are suppressed. Baumrind found that pre-schoolers with authoritarian parents especially boys, were high in anger and defiance. Girls were dependent and lacking in exploration and they retreated from challenging tasks.
In adolescence, young people with authoritarian parents continue to be less well adjusted than those exposed to an authoritative style. Authoritarians are characterized by a propensity for cognitive rigidity, intolerance, and aggression (Christie, 1991; stone, L. & Christie, 1993). Nevertheless, teenagers used to authoritarian child-rearing do better in school and are less likely to engage in antisocial acts than those with undemanding parents—that is, who use either of the two styles. (Baumrind, 1991).

II. PERMISSIVE CHILD-REARING:

The permissive style of child-rearing is nurturant and accepting, but it avoids making demands or imposing controls of any kind. Permissive parents allow children to make many of their own decisions at an age when they are not yet capable of doing so. They can eat meals and go to bed when they feel like it and watch as much television as they want. They do not have to learn good manners or do any household chores. Any they are permitted to interrupt and annoy others without any parental restraint. Although some permissive parents truly believe this approach to child-rearing is best, many others lack confidence in their ability to influence their child’s behavior and are disorganized and ineffective in running their households.


Neglectful parenting is a style in which the parent is very uninvolved in the child's life; it is associated with children's social incompetence, especially a lack of self control. Children have a strong need for their parents to care about them; children whose parents are neglectful develop the sense that other aspects of the parents' lives are more important than they are. Children whose parents are neglectful are socially incompetent they show poor self control and do not handle
In the case of indulgent parenting, the parents are highly involved with their children but place few demands or controls on them. Indulging parenting is associated with children's social incompetence, especially a lack of self control. Such parents let their children do what they want, and the result is that the children never learn to control their own behaviour and always expect to get their way.

Children growing up with indulgent or permissive parents show some negative outcomes too. Dornbusch finds that they do slightly less well in school in adolescence and they are likely to be more aggressive particularly if the parents are specifically permissive toward aggressiveness and to be somewhat immature in their behavior with peers and in school. They are less likely to take responsibility and are less independent.

III. AUTHORITATIVE CHILD-REARING:

In authoritative child-rearing, parents make reasonable demands are more likely to show impulsive or antisocial behavior at adolescence and to be much less achievement oriented in school (Pulkkinen, 1982).

As children grow up in families, each unique and each with its own strengths and weakness. And families in turn, live in communities rich or poor, simple or sophisticated, comfortable or chaotic. Both family and community have a decided influence on children's development. For example parents of different social classes have different values, different lifestyles and different resources; therefore, they also bring up their children differently (Kohn, 1979). One major difference has to do with autonomy; middle class parents place a higher value on self direction than do working class parents, who are more concerned that their children conform to expect standards of behavior.
The contextual dependency of perceiving and remembering have profound implications for cognition. The shared mental representations that are assumed to be constant across repeated moments of knowing must be engaged by processes of percephon and memory, processes that are always contextually nuanced.

Cognition is perceiving and remembering. These are the processes through which we make contact with the world and with all that we know. As such they are essential to understanding knowledge and knowing. Cognitive development may not exist separately from those processes, but proceed only through them.

The children growing up now will spend most of their lives in the 21st century. As well as coping with the complexity that multicultural environments have created, they will also be living with the tremendous social and technological changes that are now taking place in all the Asian countries. There is thus a great need to understand the role of culture in modern Asian context.

The relationship between infant care and intellectual development appears to depend partly on the family's income and environment. Positive relations of infant care to intellectual development and achievement have been found more consistently for children from low income families than for children from more advantaged families (Lamb, 1997).

Information obtained as part of the NICHD (1997a & 1997b), study of early child care was used to explore the association between child care experiences and children's cognitive and language development. Results indicate that quality of child care was a reasonably consistent predictor of children's cognitive and language performance. It has shown that sensitive care giving was related to cognitive and language outcomes throughout the first 3 years of life.
Poverty, low levels of maternal education, and demographic correlates of these variables are associated with less cognitive stimulation in home environment (Smith et al. 1997). Provision of cognitively stimulating experiences in the home has repeatedly been linked to child's IQ. (Bradley et al. 1994).

Psychologists have stressed the importance of early family experience on the child's behaviour and parent child relationship happen to be a central factor in the process of socialization, where one learns method and competence. How a child performs usually depends on various parenting styles with which they are being brought up. Parents are supposed to create a most congenial, happy democratic, lucid and warm atmosphere (Erickson, 1974) where a child can blossom his own hidden potentialities and may also develop social and intellectual skills (Bharadwaj, 1995).

Parental unfavourable attitude towards the individual or ignoring parents usually after the individuals adjustment capacities to a large extent. Parental acceptance was found to be associated with self reliance, love on onehand and dependence, selfishness and hate are found to be associated with parental rejection. (Bharadwaj, 1998).

To-day "humanity" is perhaps sitting on the top of volcano and facing many challenges in bringing a healthy society. Every today appears to be more tense than the past day either due to lack of understanding and confidence among themselves or in shade of psycho-pathic morbidities like- parent child relationship, loveless domestic life, broken families, global terrorism and narrow considerations.