CHAPTER III

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE
3.1. Review of Literature

3.2. Justification for Conducting present Investigation.
3.1 Review of Literature

In the preceding chapter the significance of the problem is discussed. This chapter presents an overview of the relevant studies in India. It is done with a view to gaining insight into the problem.

In our country, in the field of educational research, it appears that research on classroom teaching has acquired a significant place. Buch (1979) rightly states that "Any improvement in education should essentially reflect changes in the process of teaching the bulk of institutionalized education is carried out in the form of classroom teaching. Therefore research in the area of teaching and teaching behaviour as exhibited in the classroom has received considerable attention." The language education in the country has remained as enigmatic as it was prior to independence. Time and again, changes have been introduced both at the state and national levels regarding the language education. But, there actions have been guided more often by expediency than research based findings. At the same time it should also be mentioned that educational researchers themselves have remained unduly lax and unconcerned in talking the reading problems and issues related to the language education. All though certain studies related to the language curriculum in school had been undertaken earlier, research on the language education began in a serious manner only in the decade 1961 to 1970. From there onwards it has made considerable progress. In India there are more than 700 languages and out of which 58 are used in classrooms of education institutions (Forth survey of research in education 1983-88). The Indian constitution provides education through mother tongue at the primary stage. This provision is honoured more in the breach than in observance. The constitution is not a natural document.
It has a social purpose too. One that is neglected in regard to mother tongue at the stage of primary education, causes illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, dropouts and stagnation in education. Language teaching standards are divergent in different regions of the country. One thing common to all is the consistently low standard of achievement in language as well as subjects. Instead of learning subjects through language, subjects are used to learn languages. Therefore, students are poor both in subjects as well as language. Minimum competence in languages must be a precondition to the study of subject which in turn enlarges the scale of language learning.

In India numerous studies have been conducted in the field of language development. The investigators so far have concentrated on any of the following area.

1) Linguistic studies.
2) Vocabulary studies.
3) Teaching of language.
4) Achievement and diagnostic tests in languages.
5) Studies on Reading.

But the present investigator has not been able to locate a single study in the subject carried out on the Reading Comprehension of primary school children (Class III). The present investigator aims at measuring the reading comprehension of Std. III children in Gujarati and examining the institutional differences and sex differences in reading comprehension of children and also the aim is to explore the relationship between Reading Comprehension and children's performance / achievements in the school examination.

It will therefore, be appropriate to discuss here the different aspects on the basis of the selected literature on the subject so that the present study could be seen in its right perspectives. Reading plays an important role in school education. It forms
the basic tool for achieving proficiency in all other school subjects. The success of any student in the school is largely dependent on the extent to which his reading skills have been developed.

Numerous studies have been conducted in recent areas in foreign countries in the field of reading from various perspectives. Many of them are on reading habits, reading readiness, reading speed and comprehension reading interest and methods of teaching reading. In our country also attention of educationists and researchers has been directed to these fields and a few studies have been reported by the investigators in the languages of Marathi, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, and Tamil. These studies have indicated the need for greater refinement in measuring reading achievement and monitoring standards and progress in reading at different levels of schooling.

Several reading surveys were conducted in many countries at different periods to ascertain reading standards and also the incidence of backwardness in reading. Notable among these surveys were those carried out in England and Wales by the National Foundation of Education and later for the Department of education and science. It was estimated that in England, during the sixteen years covered by the surveys there had been an advance of 17 months of reading age for 11-year-olds and 20 - 30 months for 15-year-olds. But such large scale surveys which are of immense value have not been attempted in our country. Similarly, there are not many reported research studies on reading and reading disability in our country. A few research have attempted to assess the reading comprehension and reading speed by selecting a limited sample.
Rahman (1959) studied different aspects of reading for pleasure and found a real paucity of good English language books in school libraries (1969), who studied the level of reading comprehension at the college level, found the average reading speed in English to be 150 words per minute for a slow reader, 250 words for a fair reader and 350 words for a good reader with about 70 percent comprehension.

Badami and Badami (1970) studied reading interests of college students through a questionnaire. The important finding of the study were: (1) about sixty percent of the students were interested in reading various types of books; more than sixty percent of the students were found to have interest in novels and short stories while a few had indicated their interest in readings, Poems, essays, travel and scientific materials, criticism, letter, arts and science books were disliked by the groups, significant sex difference were observed in amount of interest expressed for reading books and dislike for several types of books.

Ansuva R. (1970) attempted to establish criteria for the improvement of reading efficiency of the pre- university students. The major findings were, after having made a sharp increase in the reading rates, the students seemed to comprehend less for a short interval. However, with continued practice the comprehension skill was regained at a higher rate. At the end of the experiment it was found that the reading efficiency of all the groups had increased from 48 words to 270 words per minute.

Koppar, B. (1970) made an inquiry into factors affecting reading comprehension in English of Gujarati medium school students of Std. XI. The major findings of the study were reading comprehension was related positively to reading attitude,
dependence was related positively to reading comprehension; Anxiety was related negatively to reading comprehension; other factors related to reading comprehension were (a) reading readiness (b) academic motivation (c) attitude towards study English (d) quality of classroom teaching (e) presence or absence of proper direction (f) educational status of parents (g) social and economic compulsions.

Krishnamurthi (1971) assessed reading readiness of pre-school children by developing reading readiness tests and other materials. The major findings were—children of 4+ were ready to take instruction in reading; girls of 4+ to 5+ did better in reading readiness tests than boys of the same age. The copying test was not so easy to the children as the visual perception test.

Deshpandey (1973) attempted improvement of teaching to beginners through improvement in the preparation of reading materials and in the process of evaluating reading programmes. The study revealed that the total performance of the experimental group children on the reading test was better than that of control group children and the difference between the mean scores of both the group was found to be statistically significant. It was found that the reaction of those who implemented and did not implement favoured the experimental reading programme.

Bhagoliwal (1973) tried to find out whether the different typographical dimensions, viz. type size, line, width and interlinear spacing had any direct effect on readability of Hindi-Book print and found no direct effect from any of the three dimensions under study when taken up individually.
Ahuja and Ahuja (1974) assessed speed and comprehension in silent and oral reading of children of Standard VIII. The study aimed at assessing and finding out relationships between silent reading speed, silent reading comprehension, oral reading speed, and oral reading comprehension. The major finding of the study was the coefficient of correlation between silent and oral reading speed was 0.72, silent and oral reading comprehension was 0.32, silent reading speed and comprehension was 0.40, oral reading speed and comprehension was 0.25 and between silent and oral reading indices was 0.19 all being significant at .01 level.

Dunakhe (1978) studied the reading interests and habits of Marathi students of the first year of the degree course. Major findings were that the majority of the students of arts, science, and commerce faculties got more than four hours of leisure on Sundays and holidays, students of Arts faculty preferred readings as a leisure time activity unlike student of other faculties. More students of commerce and science faculties were found regularly reading newspaper than students of arts faculty. On an average a commerce students spent more time on reading newspaper than Arts or science students. Science students reads extra books more regularly than Arts & Commerce students. Women preferred reading as a leisure time activity more then men. Sex had no influence on periodicity of reading news papers. An urban student spent more time on reading weeklies than a rural student. But a rural student spent more time on reading newspapers.

Rawat D. S. (1978) made a study to determine the impact of reading on the achievement of pupil in different school subjects. The study was financed by NCERT, New Delhi. The study aimed at determining the impact of reading on the achievement of pupils in different school subjects. The main findings of the study were
that there was positive correlation between reading ability and achievement of pupil in different school subjects and general academic achievement.

Rao (1981) developed reading comprehension tests for standards III, IV, V, VI, and VII, VIII in Telugu and found significant differences in comprehension and vocabulary scores between rural & urban samples. The performance of children of schools located in deprived areas was found to be poor as compared to the achievement of children belonging to other areas.

Subrahmanyam (1981) studied the correlates of reading achievement of primary school children and found that reading achievement in Telugu was positively related to the general mental ability, visual ability and speech habits of children.

Rajagopal (1981) studied the relationships of selected variables to reading comprehension in English and found that pupils experienced greater difficulty in recognizing the meanings of words than in dealing with sentence forms and continuous pieces of writing.

Rao (1982) made a diagnostic study of reading disability among children studying Telugu in standards V, VI & VII. The general performance of children in subjects of word meaning with prefixes and suffixes and word meaning with their roots was found to be rather slow.

Gaur P. K. (1982) made a psychological study of reading ability in relation to achievement. It was found out that intelligence was significantly related to speed of reading comprehension and vocabulary of students, and economic status and age of the pupil was not related to it.
Dass, P. A. (1984) studied reading comprehension in English of X Std. students of English medium school and of central Gujarat. A test was constructed and standardized for measuring the various components of reading comprehension. It was found that there were sex differences with regard to reading comprehension in English. The performance of girls was better than that of boys. Students having a high degree of radicalism and high anxiety level were found superior in reading comprehension to those with a low degree of radicalism and low anxiety level.

Shelat, M. H. (1985) studied the impact of Reading Improvement Programme in Gujarati on reading comprehension of pupils of Class VI. The programme was found to be effective for improving reading comprehension of pupils of Class VI, who belonged to high as well as low socio-economic status.

Patel, L. P. (1985) studied the impact of Reading Improvement Programme in Gujarati on Reading Comprehension of pupils of Class VII. It was found that the reading improvement programme was effective for increasing the reading speed of students with high as well as low reading skills.

Dholakia, B. J. (1986) studied effectiveness of various strategies for improving reading comprehension in English of pupils of class IX. It was found that a guided reading programme and the Read, Encode, Annotate, and Ponder technique (REAP technique) proved superior to the Re-Quest strategy for improving reading comprehension.

Kachhia, M. J. (1986) made an investigation of the effect of Reading improvement programme in Gujarati for pupils of Class V. It was concluded that reading improvement programme could be used to improve reading comprehension in Gujarati.
Rao, Srinivasan, R. (1983) studied Nature and Incidence of Reading Disability among school children. The study was financed by NCERT. It was found that reading disability was found in about 20 percent of students in the primary schools. The reading disability was closely related to language deficiency in school children. Low reading achievement was not due to low reading potential and the reading deficiency of children and it could be improved by remedial teaching and constant practice.

Skanthakumari, S K (1987) studied the development of strategies for improvement of reading skills in English at middle school level. It was found that there was a significantly higher reading ability score for boys. In addition, the international strategy helped to improve the reading ability of the students. Percentage of increase in the achievement of reading ability of the students and mental ability score of the students were significantly related.

3.2 JUSTIFICATION FOR CONDUCTING PRESENT INVESTIGATION

On the bases of the above review of the work done in the past on reading skills, the investigator decided to emphasis the following points to be highlighted in the present investigation.

1. Among the studies so far done in reading skills there are very few studies made on reading skills of primary school children. Among above discussed studies on reading, Krishnamurthi (1971) has made study on pre-school children.

Deshpandey (1973) has attempted improvement of teaching to beginners through improvement in the preparation of reading material.

Rao (1981) has made study for St. III, IV, V, VI, VII and VIII, but in Telugu language.
Subrahmanyam (1981) has studied the correlates of reading achievement of primary school children but it is in Telugu.

Shelat, M. H. (1984) has studied the impact of a Reading improvement programme in Gujarati on Reading Comprehension of pupils of Class VI.

Patel L. P. (1985) has made study on Reading Comprehension of Std. VII children in Gujarati. Only one study of Mr. Rao (1981) has been done on primary school children that too in Telugu, whereas as we all agree that primary school years are at the base of learning. Above quoted studies are with the young children but are not in Gujarati and also not with lower primary class children. It is necessary to build the strong base. Therefore, it was decided to study Reading Skills of lower primary class children.

2. It is also very clear and prominent from the above quoted studies that investigation has been done in English and other languages. Our constitution provides for mother tongue education at the primary stage. Illiteracy, ignorance, poverty, dropouts and stagnation are the result if primary education in mother tongue is neglected. Therefore attempt should be made to improve primary education. Hence the present study has been taken up to study the reading skills in Gujarati of the pupils of Gujarati medium primary school. With a view to improving the primary school education, the use of mother tongue for primary education and adult literacy must receive urgent attention. Neglect of the mother tongue has not only resulted in intellectual dwarfism and emotional sterility for a large majority of pupils but also has created a westward orientation leading to National
disintegration, so the present investigation pertaining to the reading abilities in Gujarati language of Gujarati medium primary school pupils are very much imperative.

3. Thirdly several tools and testing materials are available in English to measure the reading skills like reading readiness, reading speed, comprehension, word recognition and other language skills. Iowa Test of Basic skills, Nelson Silent Reading Tests, Watts - Vernon Reading Test, Schonell’s Graded Reading Vocabulary Test and Visual Word Discrimination Test are some of the well known tools in English. But there is a real dearth of such tests and in various Indian languages for measuring student's proficiency in the first language viz. his mother tongue. Therefore it is decided to prepare a standardised tool to measure the reading comprehension of Gujarati medium pupils of Class III in Gujarati language, their mother tongue.

4. The fourth point arises, as has been seen from the review of the related literature that several of the past studies aimed at studying sex differences. Now the question arises that in this new phase of education where all the facilities are equal for boys and girls to acquire knowledge in the field of education. Girls education is free also the societal values for the education of girls has been changed and also the percentage of girls getting education is increasing. Then question arise. Is there any difference in the performance of boys and girls ? It is very much necessary to find out that within the last seven eight years the situation has been changed or not.? Is there any difference in the performance / achievement of boys and girls ? It is to be studied and therefore in the present investigation, the same issue is taken up.
5. It is also felt necessary in the present investigation to study the school management differences on the performance of the pupils in the reading skill. There are very few researches reporting the achievement of students of Corporation Primary schools in relation to achievement of pupils of privately managed primary schools. To study this issue is necessary because, an early implementation of educational strategies based on such research findings would go a long way in bringing to reality the equality of educational opportunity, an idea which has been accepted as one of our national goals. All the studies discussed above highlight the importance of environment provided by the schools in the promotion of better achievement. But the question still remains as to which type of institutional characteristics is to be sought, which type of school climate affects the achievement, and to what extent, and so on. Further question can be raised as to the optimal achievement that could be expected by the interaction affected of student back grounds with different type of institutional or classroom climates. Therefore in the present study the institutional differences in the performance of primary school children in reading skills.

6. Lastly, but not least, one of the points that arise from the above review of literature on reading skill is that a number of variables either independently or jointly have been found to influence academic achievement. Attempts were made by a few researchers to consider a number of sub-variables. It is felt that a greater emphasis should be laid on undertaking in-depth studies to analyses the relationship of academic achievement with their interactive effects.
The influence of reading comprehension on achievement was the concern of Jain (1981). For this purpose the investigator developed and standardized a silent Reading Comprehension Test for pupils of Standard VII. Boswami (1982) also showed a significant relationship between academic achievement and reading comprehension of primary class children. A considerable number of students from schools go to colleges and institutions of higher learning. It is very important to ensure that such students acquire the requisite competence so as to benefit most out of higher education. Setting the stage for the achievement of the youth is thus a fundamental obligation of the educational system at the primary school stage.

For reasons stated in the immediately preceding section, the investigator has undertaken the present investigation to fill in the gap in the researches so far carried out and to suggest ways to raise the academic achievement of pupils of primary children which is of paramount importance particularly in the present socio-economic and cultural contexts.