CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

CONTENTS

1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY
1.2 DEFINITIONS OF IMPORTANT TERMS
1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY
1.5 SCHEME OF CHAPTERIZATION
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

With the attainment of independence, the development of a system of education that would reflect the national ethos engaged the minds of educationists in India. A good deal of interest and enthusiasm for educational reconstruction as comprehensive and as revolutionary as possible was shown. This is well reflected in the speech of the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru at the Educational Conference, which was conveyed by the Ministry of Education in 1948. He said,

"Whenever conference was called in the past to form a plan for education in India, the tendency, as a rule, was to maintain the existing system with slight modifications. This must not happen now great changes have taken place in the country and the educational system must keep pace with them. The entire basis of education must be revolutionised".1

As a result, number of commissions and committees were appointed at a state and national level resulting reports and recommendations. National goals are yet to

be achieved. The educational policy should be based on the following principles: (1) Democracy (2) Secularism (3) Economic-development (4) Adoption of Science and Technology (5) National integration (6) Socialism (7) Equality of educational opportunity (8) Pursuit of excellence.

Efforts are being made on the above guiding principles to reconstruct educational policy but for the unknown reasons the policies are failing and the standards are deteriorating.

The Secondary Education Commission also says, "As the standards of interest and general knowledge is so deplorably poor in secondary school, it has become a matter of highest priority to promote the desire and the habit of general reading amongst the students".

This also points out that reading is an important factor in the teaching learning process.

It is one of the factors which has created number of problems and polluted the atmosphere of education. The important problems are enumerated below:

1. Wastage in Education
2. Falling Standards and
3. Students' Unrest
Wastage in Education

One can generalize from the results of the public examination of Xth, XIIth class and from other university examinations that the students failure is generally 50%. The 50% criteria has not been accepted as a normal occurrence. The Department Education, Gujarat State has also maintained its policy by allowing 65% failure as there is no cut in grants to be given to the secondary schools. It can be said that people have accepted the 50% wastage in man power. How can a developing country like ours afford to have this much wastage?

Falling Standards

This problem is at dispute. Palsane (1971) has studied the educational achievements across a decade. He has inquired into rise or fall in educational standards through comparison of scholastic achievements of pupils in different school subjects at the various grades of secondary schools, where in observed,

"In all subjects (except English) there is a significant loss in the performance standards in all the grades studied".  

Commenting upon the falling standards - V.V. John (1968] sarcastically points out a new direction.

"Until a short while ago, an earnest type of public man used to lament the gulf that developed between the educated and the uneducated in this country. The lament could now cease, for we have eliminated the gulf and it may now be difficult to tell the educated man from the uneducated by the quality of their thinking or behaviour.... the really serious wastage in education is not the large number of failure. Those who pass examinations represent a graver form of wastage than those who fail. This happens as the proficiencies and skills they have acquired are of no great value".3

Students' Unrest

Moreover students' unrest is very common at all the levels in each and every corner of the country. They are agitating for lowering the standards of examination.

Over and above, it is the common observation of the parents, guardians, teachers, educationists and the social workers that pupils do not read, they depend upon annotations and guides, they don't visit library, they read only at the time of examinations, they do not read even text books and other reading material, as a result of this our pupils lack in the reading habits.

Besides this, to-day all nations are striving for full participation by all citizens in the democratic processes. This could be achieved only if due weightage, importance is given to reading - learning. Although lectures and oratory may be momentarily instructional or inspiring. It is through the written thoughts of mankind that skills, facts, beliefs, attitudes, concepts and aspirations are transmitted from one generation to the next generation.

It is the feeling of all that changes are confronted with several problems. But the solution of problems lies in the right and optimistic attitude of the learner. In the structure of education the student occupies a central position. If we want to build up the cognitive capital of the country and if we want to transmit the beliefs, attitudes etc., from one generation to the next, the learner must have a positive reading attitude. The reading attitude could therefore be considered as one of the chief factor in learning process.

It is also a common observation that pupils with unfavourable attitudes towards certain material or method of teaching or evaluation procedure find it difficult to adjust than those whose attitudes are favourable.
From this discussion, it becomes clear that favourable attitudes towards reading among pupils will help a lot in simplifying and solving some of the vital problems of education such as wastage and stagnation. It is the teacher and the school who can help pupils to develop healthy attitudes toward reading by way of providing proper environment in the school and motivating the pupils for better study. In order to plan some programmes for inculcating attitudes, it is necessary to know the prevailing attitudes among students.

It is, therefore, in this context that the present problem has been taken up for investigation.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF IMPORTANT TERMS

Before a beginning is made, it is essential for the investigator to make clear, a few important terms called key words used in wording the problem.

They are:
(i) Investigation (ii) Reading (iii) Attitude (iv) High School (v) District.

(i) Investigation

Investigation means (i) The act or process of investigating or the condition of being investigated (ii) a searching inquiry for ascertaining facts, a detailed or
(ii) **Reading**

Reading has been defined by different persons in different ways. **There is no one good definition of reading.** Some of the definitions are given below with a view to making the meaning clear to the reader.

1. **Study of books; literary scholarship.**
2. **Written or printed matter intended to be read.**
3. **Manner of rendering something written, as, an actor's reading of a part, also interpretation as reading his character.**

These are general definitions. Besides this, some definitions of reading are also given below which show that reading is a highly complicated process.

Reading is a process of communication by which a message is transmitted graphically between individuals.

- Albert J. Kingston.

---


Reading is an active process of reading and searching for meaning.
- Than J. Deboer

Reading is a process of thinking.
- Belts.

Reading is a process of comprehension.

The study of the various definitions reveal that reading is much more complex process. Effective reading involves all of the high mental processes. It involves recall, reasoning, evaluation, imagining, organizing, applying and problem solving. Good reading requires good thinking.

For the present study reading has been considered a process involving much higher mental process used in getting meaning from the printed matter whether it be text book, magazine, newspaper and other such reading material available to the pupils from the school or from the library other than the school.

(iii) Attitude

The term attitude is defined by various psychologists. "Behaviour or conduct regarding some matters".

Another definition is
"Attitudes may be defined as feelings for or against
something".7

This definition can be taken along with the defini-
tions given by a few writers. This term can be splitted
up as:
1. "Feelings" for emotional processes
2. "For or Against" likes and dislikes and
3. "Something" for some specific or general object.

Feeling is an emotional process. It is overt or
covert. Mental process means 'rational intellectual and
cognitive'. There are emotions in man. They may be
pleasant or unpleasant. So emotions are the associations
of fear, love, rage and all the learned variations in a
man that play a vital role in the attitudes.

H.H. Rammers explains 'for or against' this
phrase as ... "attitudes are characterized by approaches
or withdrawls, likes or dislikes, avoidant or adient
tendencies favourable or unfavourable reactions, loves
or hates, or responses to stimuli.8

7. H.H. Rammers and others. A Critical Introduction
to Measurement and Evaluation (2nd Ed.): 1967,
Universal Book Stall, Delhi, Kanpur, p. 307.
8. Ibid., p. 310.
'Something' is concerned with the relation to some specific or general object, situation or stimuli.

Attitudes have been defined as ideas with emotional content, important beliefs, prejudices, biases, predispositions, appreciations and as states of readiness or set.

Allport has defined an attitude as "Mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects with which it is related".9

Brown has defined attitude as "An attitude is acquired and relatively fixed tendency to react in a given way in relation to other persons or things".10

According to Skinner an attitude is defined as "Generalized disposition towards group of people and is emotionally tended".11

Guilford says, "An attitude is a disposition a person has to favour or not to favour a type of social object or social action".12

Thurstone defines: "Attitudes as the sum total of man's inclination and feelings, prejudices or bias, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions about any specific topic."13

Stephens explained, "Attitudes means something that is learnt without any intension whatever it is."14

Marris presents, "Attitudes are associated with likes, dislikes and consequently have an emotional content".15

According to Hewcomb, "An attitude is a state of readiness for motive arousal".16

13. Ibid., p. 449.
Another definitions as per Sindzey, "An individual's special attitude is a (enduring) syndrome of response consistency with regard to (a set of) social objects". 17

Still another definition given by Akolkar, "An attitude towards an object or a person is a state of readiness to think of, to feel about and to act towards that object or person in a certain way". 18

Thurstone defines an attitude, "as the degree of positive or negative affect associated with some psychological objects". 19

The examination of various definitions reveals that attitude is by and large concerned with the feeling aspect. Therefore reading attitude could be defined as the degree of positive or negative affect associated with reading.

(iv) High Schools

The term high schools is commonly used everywhere prior to the introduction of new pattern of education.


that is 10-2+3. High schools were generally defined as secondary schools imparting instruction from Stds. VIII to XI.

Besides this there are types of secondary schools. They are defined as under:

1. Private secondary school means secondary school which is neither owned nor controlled by state government.

2. 'Recognized school' means a secondary school or a post basic school recognised by the Director of Education, Gujarat State or an officer authorised by him in this behalf or a high school registered by any university.

3. 'Registered school' means a secondary school or a post basic school registered by the Board under Section 32.

4. 'Secondary Education' means education including post basic education in such subjects from eight standard upto such standard as may, by government or special order from time to time be determined by the State Government. 20

------------------
A school is defined along with its role by the NCERT as under:

Schools are places of learning where work conforms to the wishes of the society. The scope of their work and the role of schools has unfortunately not been spelt out in clear terms. The twin functions of the school are to keep society in proper shape for change and to equip the individual with useful skills. The first seeks to acquaint children with their national traditions and to make them look a head in order to enrich them. This may be the by-product of good education but it may be advantageous to make a conscious effort in this direction at the school stage. 21

After the introduction of 10+2+3 pattern in the Gujarat State the secondary school unit includes standards from Stds. VIII to X. Therefore the investigator has included the students of standards VIII, IX and X in this study. Hence the term secondary school students is strictly restricted to the students studying in Stds. VIII, IX and X of the secondary schools of Kaira District.

District

The specific geographical area for which a school inspector and supervisors is responsible. Investigator has taken Kaira district as a field of study.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The chief objectives of the present investigation are:

1. To provide secondary schools with a valid and reliable verbal attitude scale towards reading.

2. To study the reading attitudes of the students of secondary schools.

3. To study the reading attitude of the students coming from different socio-economic stratum of the society.

4. To study whether there are any sex differences with regard to reading attitude.

5. To study the relationship between the reading attitude of the students and the achievement in Gujarati.

6. To study the relationship between reading attitude and the age.

7. To study the relationship between the reading attitude and the size of the family.

8. To study the reading attitude of the students coming from rural and urban areas.

9. To study whether reading habits has any relation to reading attitude.

10. To study the relationship between reading attitude and birth order.

1.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has following limitations:

1. The study is limited to pupils of classes VIII, IX and X of Kaira district only.

2. The reading attitude scale is limited to Gujarati-speaking pupils.

3. The size of the family as shown by the subjects were considered true.

4. No study can be a population study. All are parametric studies. A parametric study inevitably involves a few limitations about sampling. The present investigation is a parametric study.

1.5 SCHEME OF CHROMIZATION

A brief description of the chapters to follow is given here under so that the reader may, at the outset,
have a bird's eye view of the treatment of the subject and the point of view expressed.

The second chapter deals with an attempt to describe and discuss the developing concept of attitude, measurement of attitudes, different methods of measuring attitudes and selection of method. Definitions of attitudes given by Thurstone, Edwards, Nunnelly, etc. are discussed. Different methods of measuring attitudes like Thurstone type scales, paired comparison and Likert-type scales are described in brief. Limitations and advantages of each and every method are described and discussed with a view to selecting the method to be adopted for measuring attitude.

The study of the various methods of measuring attitudes and definition of the term has helped the investigator in selecting the right type of method. For the present study the Thurstone method has been adopted.

The third chapter deals with the review of a few related studies with a view to finding out the techniques employed for measuring attitude scale. The review has also helped the investigator in deciding the size of the sample judges and methods to be employed for constructing the scale.
In the fourth chapter, the preparation and justification of items included in the test have been described in detail. Twenty two statements were selected keeping the following criteria:

- Median value
- Value of the quartile deviation
- The scale values of the statements relatively equally spaced from most unfavourable to most favourable.

Two forms A and B are prepared and in each form there are 22 statements.

The fifth chapter deals with the concept of reliability and validity and methods adopted to establish the reliability of the present reading attitude scale. It also describes the different methods to estimate validity of the scale. It also deals with the computations to prove the validity of the scale constructed.

The sixth chapter describes the studies pertaining to reading attitude.

The last chapter deals with several observations and noteworthy conclusions.

Besides this, the body of the thesis contains a large
number of tables and graphs whenever necessary. A list of exhaustive bibliography is given at the end. Besides these, appendices containing different forms of the scale and its directions are attached at the end.