CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS:

The first chapter deals with the concept of 'Parent Education' and the need for 'Parent Education Programs'.

The traditional belief that parenting is a natural instinct or function that comes with 'Parenthood' as mentioned in the first chapter has become outdated. Parent Education has become an indispensable part of modern life. Today's children encounter multifarious problems at home, school and society, which have a tremendous impact on them, affecting and altering their behaviour and personality. Hence 'Parent Education' becomes the need of the hour to create a healthier environment for the children to grow in.

The second chapter is a report on the related research studies on the problems of the children, the factors that cause them and the educational programs offered to parents.
Glen Franklin (1990) has studied the relationship between family environment and school discipline problems. His study has indicated that home environment is significant in determining whether or not a student would exhibit behaviour problems in school. Bisnoure Lse M.Firestone, Philip and Rynard David, (1990) have studied various factors associated with academic achievement, development of fear psychosis and insecurity in children following parental separation. 30% of the 77 children taken for study have experienced a marked decrease in their academic performance following parental separation.

A case study of parents' involvement in the education of their child made by Gibron, Roy Brad, Fordham University (1991) has shown that parent involvement greatly influence the academic progress of their child. Drazen, Shelley M. Haust Mary (1993) have attempted to evaluate the effectiveness of a parent education program, in increasing school readiness in children of poor and high needs. The parent educators have provided information about child development and parenting and have referred parents to other agencies when needed. The findings of most of the researchers indicate that parents value Parent Education Programs and many parents report that they are helped and guided by these programs in the upbringing of their children.
Though several parent education programs have been organized, many have served to disseminate information on successful parenting and have provided advice on the handling of the children only in specific situations and have lacked efficacy, as there is no feedback from the parents. While there is a growing body of research finding on the effects of different parent education programs, more systematic study is necessary to answer questions about the programs. Hence the present study, 'Parent education for the well-being of their children' is attempted to provide the basic tenets for a curriculum for parent education programs.

Chapter III is a report of the methodology followed for the research study. In order to find out the existing problems of the children and the parental factors that affect them, a questionnaire is prepared and distributed to three groups of people – parents, teachers and the general public. Then the data given in the questionnaire are analysed using appropriate statistical tools and reported in chapter IV

5.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

i. To study the perception of parents, teachers and general public regarding the problems faced by the children studying in standard VI to X
To diagnose the problems experienced by the children studying in standard VI to X.

To classify the problems on the basis of physical, emotional, social and academic dimensions.

To find out to what extent the parents themselves are the causes for the problems experienced by their children.

To find out the problems which are common or exclusive among the children studying in standard VI to X.

To find out the increase or decrease, if any, of any particular problem existing among the children studying in standard VI to X.

To find out the relationship, if any, between the intensity of the problems and the

* age of the children

* sex of the children

* type of the school in which the children study.
To find out the relationship, if any, between the intensity of the problems and the

* size of the family

* socio economic status of the family

* educational background of the family

To find out the relationship, if any, between the causes for the problems as stated by the parents and their

* educational background

* family background

* socio - economic background

To find out the difference, if any, between parents, teachers and general public in their perceptions of problems among children studying from standard VI to X.

To find out the difference, if any, between parents, teachers and general public in their perception of the parents being the causes for the problems experienced by the children studying in standard VI to X

To identify the thrust areas where parents need guidance.

To suggest the basic tenets for a curriculum for parent education program.
5.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

Listed below are the findings arrived at after the analysis of the data.

5.3.1 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE PROBLEMS OF THE CHILDREN AS PERCEIVED BY THE PARENTS:

1. Comparing the perception of the parents, teachers and the general public in all the four aspects of the problems namely emotional, social, academic and physical, the perception level of the parents is the lowest and the general public is the highest. The perception of the teachers is higher than the parents but lower than the general public.

2. Children studying in standard VI to VIII experience more academic problems and children studying in standard IX and X experience more emotional and social problems.

3. Emotional and social problems increase as the classes go higher and academic problems decrease as the classes go higher.

4. Among physical problems, physical impairment and poor hygiene are lesser than sickness problems.
5. Boys studying in standard VI to X experience more emotional, social, academic and physical problems when compared to girls of the same age group.

6. Children studying in government schools experience more emotional, social, academic and physical problems than children studying in aided or matriculation schools according to the perception of the parents.

7. Children studying in matriculation schools experience the least level of emotional, social, academic and physical problems.

8. Children studying in aided schools experience more problems than those of matriculation schools but lesser than those studying in government schools.

9. Children hailing from single child families experience the highest level of emotional, social, academic and physical problems.

10. Children hailing from small families experience the least level of problems in all the areas.
11. Children hailing from large families experience lesser problems than single-child families but more problems than small families.

12. Children belonging to the lower socio-economic group experience the lowest level of emotional, social and academic problems and the highest level of physical problems.

13. Children from the upper socio-economic group experience the highest level of emotional, social and academic problems and the lowest level of physical problems.

14. The children of non-graduate parents experience the lowest level of emotional, social, academic and physical problems.

15. The children of professional parents experience the highest level of problems in all the four areas.

16. The children of graduates experience lesser problems than the children of professionals and more problems than the children of non-graduates.
5.3.2 FINDINGS RELATED TO THE PARENTAL CAUSES OF THE PROBLEMS OF THE CHILDREN AS PERCEIVED BY THE PARENTS:

1. In perceiving the parental factors as the causes of the problems of children, the teachers score the lowest when compared to the parents and the general public.

2. The perception level of the general public is the highest when compared to parents and teachers.

3. The perception level of the parents is higher than the teachers but lower than the general public.

4. The non-graduate parents perceive more problems caused by parental causes like lack of awareness, lack of communication, lack of knowledge and training etc than the graduate and professional parents. They also perceive home atmosphere not conducive, lack of opportunities and absence of counselling.

5. The graduate parents perceive more problems caused by time constraints, wrong role model, parental pressure etc. than the non-graduate group.
6. The professionals perceive more problems caused by time constraints, wrong role model and parental pressure than the graduate and non-graduate groups.

7. Single-parents perceive the highest level of problems in all the dimensions.

8. Parents from nuclear families perceive lesser problems than those of single-parents and more problems than those of Joint families.

9. Parents from lower middle class families perceive the highest level of problems caused by lack of awareness, lack of communication and contact, lack of knowledge and training etc. They also perceive home atmosphere not conducive, lack of opportunities and absence of counselling in a slightly lesser degree.

10. Middle class parents perceive more problems caused by time constraints, wrong role model of parents and parental pressure and lesser problems caused by lack of awareness, lack of communication and contact, lack of knowledge and training etc. when compared to the lower middle class.

11. Upper middle class parents perceive problems caused by time constraints, wrong role model of parents and home environment not conducive, which are slightly lesser in the
upper classes. Problems caused by lack of awareness, lack of communication and contact, lack of knowledge and training, lack of opportunities and absence of counselling are perceived to be very less in this group.

12. Upper class parents perceive the highest level of problems caused by time constraints, wrong role model and parental pressure etc. that seem to be decreasing as the socio economic status goes lower.

It has been found that children experience more academic problems, when they are in the lower classes and they experience more emotional and social problems as the classes go higher. Boys are perceived to have more problems than girls. Children from single-child families and children brought up by single-parents are perceived to experience comparatively more problems than others. When we analyse the parental causes that create problems for the children, it is perceived that time constraint of parents, parents' lack of awareness, lack of communication, lack of knowledge and training, wrong role model of parents, parental pressure, non conducive home atmosphere, lack of opportunities and absence of counselling trigger problems for the children. Of these the following causes are more dominant;
1. Home environment not conducive
2. Wrong role model of parents
3. Time constraint of parents
4. Lack of knowledge and training
5. Absence of counselling

5.3.2.1 HOME ATMOSPHERE NOT CONducive:

It is noted that non-conducive home atmosphere has been a major factor causing problems for children. When parents fail to appreciate the children and indulge in meting out thoughtless punishments like humiliating them or fail to provide freedom to make their own decisions, children suffer. Lack of physical facilities and lack of parental control and guidance affect the performance of children. Children from poor or illiterate families lack intellectual stimulation or motivation to study. Such children remain dull and unresponsive in the class. But children from middle class families have to depend on securing good jobs and value education highly. Middle class parents naturally demand and expect more from their children. Parental ambition of acquiring status and upward mobility sometimes force the children to rebel against their authority. At times, unable to cope with the pressure for excellence, children may show a passive resistance and may be excessively slow about things at home. Factors like traumatic events at home, such as separation or death can also precipitate learning problems in children.
5.3.2.2 Wrong Role Model of Parents:

Most of the problems that are experienced by the children are caused by the behaviour of the parents. Children hailing from families where there is disorganization or discord evince inattentiveness, difficulty in concentrating etc. Most of the working mothers who experience marital discord are not only physically absent from their children but also emotionally absent. Such children will be preoccupied and inattentive in the classes. Constant exposure to quarrels, anger, anxiety or unhealthy habits disturb the children and even the personality and performance of the children suffer due to this.

5.3.2.3 Time Constraint:

Time constraint of parents is a contributing factor, causing problem to the children. It is seen that parents from upper middle class and upper class perceive more of this factor as causing problems to the children. Graduates and Professionals also perceive this as a major contributor to the problems of their children. It may be safely assumed that most of the parents' perception is based on their personal experience or exposure. When both the parents are working, naturally, they do not find sufficient time to spend with their children.
5.3.2.4 **LACK OF KNOWLEDGE AND TRAINING:**

Most of the non-graduate parents and parents from lower economic groups have perceived 'Lack of Knowledge and Training' as a cause for the problems of their children. When parents are not adequately educated they tend to neglect the intellectual and emotional needs of the children. The current day children face a tough competition and only the fittest can survive. In such a set up, children need all the help they can get to succeed in the world. Parents should take time to supervise the study schedule of their children, monitor their activities, and provide emotional and academic guidance to their children.

5.3.2.5 **ABSENCE OF COUNSELLING:**

Absence of counselling has been perceived by many of the lower class parents and non-graduates as a major contributor to the problems of children. Assuming that their observation has been influenced by their own experience and exposure, we can visualize the kind of home environment those children might have. When children enter early adolescence, they experience various emotional, physical, social and academic problems due to the developmental process, as it has been perceived. It is in this period children desperately need the support of parents. The counselling and guidance of parents and elders who are concerned about their
welfare and understand their emotions and needs prove to be of
great value to them. Parents need to be knowledgeable and mature
enough to handle the situation.

5.3.2.6 OTHER CONTRIBUTING CAUSES:

Parents' lack of awareness, lack of communication, parental
pressure and lack of opportunities cause problems for their
children. When parents fail to understand needs, desires and
feelings of their children, the children naturally become unhappy
and frustrated. When parents spend adequate time with their
children and interact with them, they will have a better rapport
with their children. They will know their children's potential and
will not pressurize them to achieve beyond their capacity. Parental
pressure can render children nervous, fearful, anxious and
frustrated. Parents should provide ample opportunities for their
children to develop their talents and potentials.

5.4 NEED FOR PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

The present study presumes to equip the parents suitably in
the need areas, so that they will be able to handle the problems of
their children on their own. It will also throw light on the problems
and their causes and this knowledge will lead to more awareness
on the part of the parents. When parents have the awareness and
have more insight into the parental behaviour, which triggers
problems, naturally it will result in modification of their behaviour pattern. A thorough knowledge of the fundamental concepts related to family as a social system, the recent changes in the society that alter the individual's role and interpersonal relationships, the physical and psychological process of development, theories of learning, the importance of health and nutrition, developing communication skill, inculcating values in children and providing guidance and counselling will enable the parents to acquire better understanding and skill not only to handle the problem situation but also to reduce the problems by altering their behaviour suitably. Knowledge of the policies on parent education also will help create awareness of the importance of parent education programs.

5.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM:

1. To create awareness among the parents about the concept of 'Parent Education'.

2. To help parents understand the theoretical perspectives of 'Parent Education' and parenting styles.
3. To help parents understand the psychology of growth and development of children from birth to adulthood and the psychology of their learning.

4. To help parents understand the changes in the social system world over and the consequential changes in family relationships.

5. To empower parents with parenting skills like skills for communication, stress management, conflict management, health management, guidance and counselling.

6. To enable parents to meet the special needs of children.

7. To educate parents to inculcate human values and life skills in their children.

The following are the broad topics to be included in the 'Parent Education Curriculum'. Such a curriculum will teach the parents how to handle the problems of their children and help them overcome the parental causes like time constraint, lack of awareness, lack of communication, lack of knowledge and training, wrong role model of parents, non-conducive home atmosphere, lack of opportunities and absence of counselling.
5.5.1 DEVELOPING AWARENESS FOR PARENT EDUCATION:

"Love is instinctive but the skills are not" says a mother of five children. Parents of today do realize and know that parenting is no longer an easy task. Many of the parents feel that they are ineffective or ill equipped to meet the challenges of parenting.

Parents of children in the age group of 10 to 15, that is early adolescence, experience a stress filled period. It is in this period that important physical, emotional and social changes occur and children grow away from their parents, viewing their friends as their counselors and advisors. It is also a stressful period for the children because, besides coping with the developmental changes, they have to bear the increasing load of schoolwork. These pressures often combine to create friction and sometimes aberration between adolescents and their parents. In the past, parents had the support of the extended family members in raising the children. But even if this is available parents find that the advice of the grand-parents, uncles or aunts is no longer relevant and suit their needs. High rates of mobility, maternal employment, marital separation and divorce have left many parents on their own and wondering how they can succeed with their difficult role. (Funsten Burg and Cherlin, 1991). As children are brought up with more freedom nowadays, they are taught that they have the
right to think and express their thoughts and opinions. The educated parents realize the importance of having a gentler approach seasoned with intuitive understanding of their offspring's feelings. Sometimes parents themselves cause problems by their behaviour and are sadly ignorant of the consequences of such behaviour. In such cases parents need to be made aware of their behaviour, which create problems and the need to modify or alter their behaviour. 'Parent Education Programs' attempt to educate the parents on these vital issues, related to the bringing up of modern youngsters. The increasing awareness that a complete 'Parent Education Program' helping the parent to feel more confident is essential has been felt by the larger part of the society. At this juncture it may serve the purpose to understand the theoretical perspective of 'Parent Education' and what parenting stands for in the modern context.

5.5.2 INTRODUCTION TO THEORIES OF PARENT EDUCATION:

There have been various theories on 'Parent Education'. Educationists endeavour to frame programs for parents' involvement and guidance based on different theories. Though most of the objectives remain the same, the approaches vary depending on the educationists concerned and the need areas. In
the earlier chapters the following five major theoretical approaches to 'Parent Education Programs' have been analysed. (V.K. Rao and R.S. Reddy, 1997)

1. Dreikurs' Democratic approach based on Adlerian Psychology

2. Eric Bernes' Transactional Analysis Approach

3. Behaviour modification approach based on Skinnerian learning theory.

4. Ginott's Humanistic approach based on Rogerian theory.

5. Gordon's Parent Effectiveness approach.

5.5.2.1 EFFECTIVE PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM:

Parent Education does not focus on the negative aspects of parenting. It provides new options to parents and encourages them to respect their own rights as well as their children's. Parent Education is an investment on personal growth for the welfare of the child and future generation. Parents should consider it as their contribution to make this world a better place for everyone's children.
5.5.2.2 PARENTING AND PARENTING STYLES

Parents naturally evince keen interest in the psychological, social, academic and physical well being of their children. When children experience physical problems like ill health, weakness or physical impairments due consideration, love and attention on the part of the parents ensure speedy recovery and improvement in the children's health. It is found that often adolescents experience many psychological and emotional disturbances. It requires expertise and guidance on the part of the parents to handle such situations. Children learn the etiquette of social living that is the art of getting along with their peer group and others at an early age in a conducive home atmosphere. A greater responsibility lies on parents in the social upbringing of their children. The academic well being of the children lies to a greater extent on the interest and motivation shown by the parents. Children hailing from such families, where parents bestow proper care and attention generally do well in their studies.

In the upbringing of the children, two aspects of parenting are more crucial, namely parental warmth and parental control.

Parental Warmth refers to the amount of responsiveness and affection that a parent displays. Warm and responsive parents are the ones who take time and care to appreciate their children, bestow great deal of love and affection, often smile and encourage
their children, understand their problems and show due sympathy, even though they tend to be stern and correct their children when they misbehave. By contrast hostile parents often tend to criticize, punish or ignore their children. They fail to show due empathy and consideration.

Parental control refers to the amount of regulation or supervision that parents undertake with their children. Controlling parents limit their children’s freedom of expression by imposing many demands and actively surveying their children’s behaviour 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, to express their opinions and emotions, and to make decisions about their own activities. These aspects of parenting play a predominant role in the social, emotional and intellectual development of a child.

5.5.3 GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT AND PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

An awareness of the Theories of Growth and Development and Psychology of Learning will provide the parents deeper understanding, while dealing with the problems of their children.
5.5.3.1 THEORIES OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL:

The growth and development of the new life begins soon after fertilization of the ovum of the mother by the sperm cell of the father. The fertilized egg or the zygote then develops inside the mother’s womb. The process by which a conceived organism is turned a full-fledged being is termed, as growth and development. During this process an individual experiences two distinctive changes in his personality namely quantitative and qualitative. Growth refers to the quantitative changes that is, increase in size, length, height and weight and expansion of vocabulary etc. The term “development” denotes the overall changes occurring in both the quantitative as well as the qualitative aspects. Therefore the term development implies a wider meaning than the term ‘growth’.

Growth of an organism begins with conception in the womb of its mother. Pre-natal period is the period spent in mother’s womb which is approximately about nine months period, the post-natal period begins at the moment the child emerges from its mother’s womb and comes into contact with the external environment. This stage is to be followed by the period of infancy (from birth to two years of age). The phase of childhood then follows and lasts for about 10 to 12 years. This is followed by the period of adolescence when one attains puberty and is capable of
reproduction. Adulthood refers to the stage when one attains maturity in all aspects that is physical, mental, emotional and social. This lasts for a long period before one becomes senescent or begins to show signs of ageing. During all these developmental stages, human beings exhibit typical behavioural characteristics, which are specific to each stage. However there are individual variations, and no one is similar to others in all aspects of behaviour and dimensions of personality.

Various theories have been put forth to trace the developmental processes in one or the other dimensions of one's personality at definite developmental stages. Some of the well known theories are: (Dorothy Rogers, 1962)

1. Freud's theory of psycho-sexual development.
2. Jean Piaget's theory of cognitive development.
3. Erickson's theory of psycho-social development.

According to Freud's theory of psycho-sexual development there are five distinct stages of development that is oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital. Failure to be appropriately gratified at a particular stage may result in a fixation at that stage.
Piaget's theory identifies four distinct stages of intellectual development of the child namely, sensor-motor, pre-operational, concrete operational and formal operational. A child's cognitive abilities develop as he progresses from stage to stage.

Erickson's theory highlights eight stages during the whole span of human life. These are trust versus mistrust (birth to 1 year), autonomy versus shame and doubt (1 to 3 years), initiative versus guilt (3 to 6 years) industry versus inferiority (6 to 12 years), identity versus role confusion (12 to 19 years) intimacy versus isolation (20 to 45 years). Generativity versus, stagnation (45 to 65 years) and ego integrity versus despair (65 years onwards). Each of these stages is associated with a distinctive crisis of life faced by the individual at that particular stage.

Kohlberg's theory relates to an individual's moral development to his cognitive development. Kohlberg has identified three levels of moral development. Pre-moral (4 to 10 years), conventional moral (10 to 13 years) and self-accepted moral principles (age 13 or sometime afterwards). Each of these levels is described to consist of two stages. In this way he has tried to explain moral development as a function of the development of one's sense of justice evolving progressively.
5.5.3.2 KNOWLEDGE OF THE PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING:

Henry P. Smith (1962) observes, "Learning is the acquisition of new behaviour or the strengthening or weakening of old behaviour as the result of experience". Based on the definitions and observations of various educationists and psychologists, learning can be classified as verbal learning, motor learning, concept learning, problem solving, serial learning and paired – associate learning etc. Learning brings about the required changes and the learning process depends on three elements: (ES-103 Guiding children’s learning, Indira Gandhi National Open University School of Education - 1999)

a. The learner whose behaviour is to be changed or modified.

b. The type of experience or training required for modification in the learner's behaviour

There are several theories of learning that might help to arrive at a proper understanding of the learning process in the adolescence. Some of the theories that are widely approved and implemented have been useful to the educationists in developing a suitable approach to bring in the desired changes among the students.
Skinner's operant conditioning refers to a kind of learning process where a response is made more probable or more frequent by reinforcement. It helps in the learning of operant behaviour, the behaviour that is not necessarily associated with a known stimulus. The theory of operant conditioning may be successfully applied in behaviour modification. As punishment proves ineffective in the long run positive reinforcement can be used effectively in the learning process.

Factors that affect learning have been broadly classified as physiological, psychological, socio-emotional and educational.

Physiological factors include genetics, brain injury, biochemical imbalances, infectious diseases, drug intoxication, malnutrition and congenital defects. Psychological factors are intelligence, personality, attitude, interest and aptitude. Apart from these motivation, self-concept, readiness and attention also have influence on the nature and extent to which a child learns. Socio-Emotional factors like child-rearing practices, reward and punishment procedure, scope for freedom and independence in activities, play and study facilities, ambition of parents, disorganization and discord among members, maturity level of the child, birth position such as eldest, youngest or single child also influence learning. Educational factors are the factors related with school and teachers.
5.5.4 Family as a Social System:

Family is always considered as the smallest social unit and is the primary socializing agent for the child. It is a holistic structure consisting of inter-related parts, each of which affects and is affected by every other part and each of which contributes to the functioning of the whole.

The family is a natural, integral whole, an organized totality of individuals, parents and children primarily bound together by personal, intimate ties that govern every phase of conduct and personality development. The family is made up of different parts, which are remarkably well ordered with each other.

The family and the relationships within it bear a strong influence upon the children and shape their attitudes and behaviour. It also substantially affects the educational performance of the children throughout the school years.

5.5.4.1 Family Relationship – Parent – Child and Others:

The family has its own peculiar constellation, its own internal organization that differs from every other group with which it might be compared. The relationships that exist among the members of the family organization is so unique that it has no
parallel in other social or cultural units. And it is out of these relationships that the family emerges as an organized totality that governs and regulates the behaviour and personality development, the social expressions and need gratifications of each individual member. This fact is vital for the children's growth and development. Considering the structural organization of the family there are certain relationships, which appear to be very important. First, the nature of relationships between the parents; secondly the relationships between the parents and the children where lies the primary sources of the child's characteristics, attitudes, emotional stability or personality disintegration. Thirdly, within the structure of the family, there are the numerous sibling relationships to consider, including factors like the number of children in the family, the spacing of the children, the number of boys and girls, sibling rivalry and jealousy and relationships of comradeship or affection. The parts of the family, like that of any organized unit, are related to each other in such a dynamic manner that each part is affected by every other part and all parts by the whole. The family exercises strong psychological effect on the children besides playing a dominant role in the process of socialization. It also provides an inexhaustible reservoir of experiences that lead to expansive personality development for the child. These experiences may assume many forms from simple emotional relationships in early infancy to the most complex, moral, social and religious experiences of adolescence.
5.5.4.2 FACTORS THAT AFFECT THE RELATIONSHIPS EXISTING IN THE FAMILY:

There are various factors that affect the relationships existing among the family members.

5.5.4.2.1 ATTITUDES OF THE PARENTS:

Very often it is noted that parental expectations regarding children affect the different growth patterns of the children. The tendency towards discrimination against the female sex particularly can lead to rebellion, identification with the parent of the opposite sex, or to crippling feelings of inadequacy and inferiority. These in turn generate hostility, regression tendencies or egocentrism.

5.5.4.2.2 PROCESS OF DISCIPLINING:

The relationship between parents and children is affected very strongly through the process of discipline. Though authority and discipline on the part of parents do not necessarily lead to aggression, insecurity or hostility, evidence suggests very strongly that a firm consistent mode of discipline, when intermingled with affections, lead to a high degree of security and adequacy in the child. Hence it is not discipline or the exercise of authority that leads to difficulties, but rather the failure to exercise these privileges intelligently and in a wholesome manner. Excessive
authority and emotionally determined discipline prove to be detrimental to the personality development of the child.

5.5.4.2.3 INTER-PARENTAL RELATIONSHIP:

Mutual respect, cooperation and enjoyment between father and mother have a positive influence on the child. Conversely a relationship that involves mutual dislike or hate, suspicion, mistrust or petty wrangling, will affect the child adversely. Whenever relationships of any kind within the family are disturbed or completely disrupted, the personality of the children gets affected.

5.5.4.3 CHANGING FAMILY SYSTEM IN A CHANGING WORLD:

There was a time when families knew the security founded on love. Families worked and played together. Most of the needs of the family were fulfilled within the confines of the family and each member contributed to the whole. Each child was an asset, welcomed on arrival and given his proper place in the family structure. The mother remained in the home as bearer, rearer and educator of the children. From their mothers, girls acquired a sense of security in their future role as potential mothers and learned the art of “mothering”.
The world today witnesses several dramatic changes in the makeup of the typical family and the character of family life. The onset of industrialisation and modernisation has had a great impact on the structure of the family and has changed the rural culture to one of urban individualism. Mothers have to take up work outside the confines of the family leaving their children in creches and day care centers. Nuclear-family and single-parent family gradually have replaced the joint family system leaving little room for individual care and attention. Initially when families were large there were ample chances to provide experiences and develop social relationships among the siblings. With the gradual change to the small family pattern the art of companionship has declined leaving little room for caring and sharing. A companionship of sharing has become difficult between parents and children.

In such a situation children may merely grow from childhood into adulthood, not from immaturity to maturity. It is also seen that divorce rate has been increasing over the past several decades resulting in single-parent families. Unfortunately, the increase in the number of single-parent families has contributed to an increase in the proportion of children experiencing emotional and psychological problems.
5.5.5  PARENTAL EMPOWERMENT:

Parental Empowerment has been generally understood as equipping the parents with the skills essential to make them more effective as parents. It is nothing but helping parents to bring up their children properly. Hence the following concepts may be included in the 'Parent Education Curriculum'.

5.5.5.1  COMMUNICATION SKILL:

Lack of communication has been identified as one of major causes for the problems experienced by children. In the rapid pace of modern living, we find that people generally do not have much time for talking. In families where both the parents are busy pursuing their career, they do not have the time or energy to communicate with each other or with their children. This sort of absence of communication proves to be the root cause of problems in many families. Parents should be taught the art of communicating with each other, expressing their needs, concern, ideas or advice. When they begin to communicate, children will begin to confide their problems and that will lead to better awareness, understanding, guidance and counselling.
5.5.5.2 STRESS AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT:

The study about the development of children suggests that parents exert the most powerful influence on their children in the early years. As mentioned earlier, parenting is thus a complex series of skills, part common sense, part intuition and part empathy (Marjorie Bank, 1976) has proved that, family environment is strongly associated with performance measures.

Psychologists like Dorothy Rogers (1962) suggest that children absorb the attitudes of their parents. Personality traits like anger, temper tantrums, emotional outbursts are learnt and copied by the children. Positive traits like poise or a mature outlook also can be inculcated easily in children. It is essential to create an awareness of this among the parents. Children watch how their parents react to conflicts or problem situations and quietly observe their reactions. As 'father is the hero' to every child, parents can do no wrong in the sight of the children. Parents set the standard for their children against which they value everything in the world. Not only does charity begin at home, but everything from character to values of life are also shaped at home. The formative years when parents teach the basic values become crucial to the development of personality. Parents need to be extremely careful in what they speak, what they do and how they behave in front of their children.
5.5.5.3 TIME MANAGEMENT:

Parents can be educated on the various aspects of 'Time Management', which generally comprises of diagnostic measures, tactics and strategies enabling a person to use the resource of time more effectively. Adolescents are often confronted with various time wasters like lack of setting up priorities, long telephonic conversations, lack of organization in their work and study, failure to listen, interruptions, personal and outside activities etc. This prevents them from pursuing their goal in life and leaves them frustrated and unhappy leading to nervous and psychological problems. If parents could be educated and guided to identify the various time wasters they would enable their children to pursue a disciplined way of working and become achievers in life. They can also be taught to be 'role models' in effective time management.

5.5.5.4 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING:

Growing up in the highly competitive world, the modern youth in their entire vulnerability clamour for empathy and more specific guidance and counselling to deal with their problems and the choices they have to make in the course of their life. It is parents who can provide them the sense of security and confidence essential to face the challenges of the world. Hence parents need to be equipped, in such a way that they are sensitive to this need of the adolescents and guide and counsel them as and when they turn to them.
5.5.5 HEALTH AND NUTRITION:

Good health depends not only on the intake of good food and nutrition but also on good personal health practices such as the care of body, teeth, habits regarding eating, diet and exercise. Negligence of this personal hygiene leads to ill health and makes one susceptible to infections and diseases. Hence it is essential to impart the knowledge of "Health code" to the children right from an early age.

The findings reveal that many parents of Government school children perceive physical problems caused by lack of personal hygiene, healthy food and healthy habits. Parents need to be made aware of the importance of healthy habits and nutritious diet.

5.5.6 MANAGING CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES:

E.W. Griffin (1994) in his article "The Angel" says, "Every child is a gift, complete and whole with its place in the great scheme of the universe, as well as in the family". Even children who are disabled mentally or physically have a right to lead their life with dignity. First of all the parents should learn to accept the disability of their child. It is essential for the parents to accept the strengths and weaknesses of their children. Parents are the first teachers of their children. Psychologists agree that parents and family are the most important teachers in all stages of the child's development. It is the parents' responsibility to help the children
develop morally, intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. The home lays the foundation upon which the school must continue to build.

5.5.6.1 CHILDREN WITH MENTAL DISABILITY:

The children whose intellectual functioning is markedly below the average that is below 85% Intelligence Quotient for their age group are considered to be mentally retarded (ES-102 facilitating growth and development – Indira Gandhi National Open University School of Education – 1997). Slow learners, mildly retarded, moderately retarded, severely retarded and profoundly subnormal children are included in this category. Slow learners are in the Intelligence Quotient range 70/75 to 85/90. These children can study in schools like normal children and experience moderate academic success provided parents and teachers are supportive by being sensitive and understanding to their special needs. Parents have to be taught to handle such children with patience, love and acceptance, so that they can become personally adequate, socially competent and develop good work habits. When slow learners become frustrated due to the constant pressure put on them by their parents to achieve beyond their capacity, it may lead to severe emotional problems.
5.5.6.2 CHILDREN WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITY:

Children with physical handicaps such as blindness, deafness or deformed limbs due to polio or such illness will be extremely sensitive to their deformity and will have to be treated with love and sensitiveness. Parents have to be equipped suitably to cater to their needs.

5.5.6.3 CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIOUR PROBLEMS:

Behaviour problems may stem from biological, psychological or environmental factors, which influence the emotional reactions. Anxiety, fear and phobia in children can cause aggression, depression, defiance, cheating, stealing, lying etc. The causes of these problems experienced by the children can be categorised as physiological, socio-emotional, and environmental.

5.5.6.4 CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS AND PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS:

Some physical illness like asthma, wheezing and epilepsy are strongly associated with emotional problems. An attack of asthma may start when the child is emotionally disturbed, or anxious about examinations, school or being separated from parents. Neglected and abused children may also exhibit symptoms like bed wetting, being withdrawn or depressed. Parents of such children also have to be given special training programs to cope with the needs and demands of their children.
5.5.6.5 CHILDREN WITH SOCIO-EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS:

Lack of love and warmth, sense of insecurity, lack of proper recognition, rejection by parents and others deeply affect children.

5.5.6.6 CHILDREN WITH PHYSIOLOGICAL PROBLEMS:

Deprivation of physiological needs such as hunger, lack of proper sleep and rest, discomfort etc. can lead to ill health impeding their general well being.

5.5.6.7 CHILDREN WITH ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS:

Environment prevalent at home and outside – parents' attitude towards the child, parental favouritism, too strict or permissive handling, comparison between siblings affect children. Mass media is also an important aspect of the environment that has great impact on children's behaviour. Watching television, movies, and video films which show violence breed negative emotions.

Parents and teachers have tremendous responsibility in correcting and controlling unacceptable behaviour patterns. Parents have to realize their part in triggering such behaviour in children. They should be helped to develop an insight to perceive their needs and feelings. Modifying their own behaviour towards these children, being a good role model and counselling will go a long way in bringing the desirable changes in their children.
5.5.7 INSTILLING MORAL VALUES AND LIFE SKILLS:

Today the society looks for people with strong inbuilt values and principles. It is true that such values are taught first in the mother's arms, which are later, reinforced at school. However with the changing life style children do not experience a conducive atmosphere at home. More than nurturing moral values in their young minds, parents place them constantly under pressure to prove their academic excellence. Incompatibility between the parents, indifference of the self-centred parents and pressures from over ambitious parents make them highly discontented and cynical. They lose faith and confidence in themselves and in the society where they live. Unable to cope with the stress and strain they are easily misguided by their peer group and take recourse to wrong deeds. Exposure to violence and sex offered by media like television leads them astray. The younger generations of today are slowly moving away from the 'right track' due to the absence of proper guidance and lack of education in moral values.

Hence it becomes imperative for the parents to lay a strong foundation for the character building of their children right from an early age by instilling moral values and humane attitudes.
5.6 METHODOLOGY OF CONDUCTING PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

Parent Education Programs can be conducted in four phases

5.6.1 PHASE I: CREATING AWARENESS:

Parents will be made aware of the problems and the need to have programs that will enable them to understand their children and improve their parenting skills through parent teacher meetings, lectures, orientation programs, formal and informal gatherings etc. This will act as the first step towards a positive interaction paving way for parent education program.

5.6.2 PHASE II: UNDERGOING PARENT EDUCATION COURSE:

Parents will be taught the skills and techniques essential to bring up their children. Theories on the growth and development of children will be taught. They will also be made aware of the need to inculcate personal hygiene and health habits in their children.

5.6.3 PHASE III: PRACTICE:

At this phase, parents will be implementing at home the skills and techniques they have learnt.
5.6.4 PHASE IV: EVALUATION AND FEED BACK:

Parent Education Program will be evaluated on the basis of the continuous feedback the educators receive from

i. the parents regarding the behavioural changes of their children

ii. the teachers regarding the changes and improvement found in the students

iii. the experts and professionals regarding the attitudinal and behavioural changes of parents.

iv. an assessment of the school's development through the involvement of trained parents.

This feedback will enable the educators to assess the effectiveness of the training. Follow up programs for further development and improvement will also be planned subsequently.

5.7 PROGRAM DESIGN:

The following courses may be designed for the 'Parent Education Program'

5.7.1 36 HRS CAPSULE COURSES:

The course can be stretched over 12 Saturdays with 3 hours each Saturday. All the parents who are free on Saturdays may be asked to attend them.
5.7.2 **REFRESHER COURSES:**

The courses can be conducted periodically at different stages for parents whose children study in different classes, for example standard VI, IX and XI.

5.7.3 **SPECIALLY DESIGNED COURSES FOR THE PARENTS OF DISABLED CHILDREN:**

The course can be specially conducted for the parents of slow learners, children suffering from dyslexia and physical deformities.

5.7.4 **SPECIAL COURSES FOR THE PARENTS OF FIRST GENERATION LEARNERS:**

"Education For All" being a policy of the Government in our country has resulted in the emergence of a new section of population, the first generation learners. The illiterate parents of these children in their anxiety to compete with others pressurize their children to achieve beyond their capacity. Frustrated with their inability to cope with the parental pressure and their failure to fulfill their parents' expectations and aspirations, the children resort to various methods of escapism like running away or dropping out. In some cases they may be driven even to the extent of committing suicide. This is evident from an incident that happened recently in a reputed institution.
The illiterate parents have been exerting unbearable pressure on their daughter, to achieve beyond her capacity. Reaching her tether's end, the child has decided to walk out of the situation. Such incident caused by the ignorance of the parents has made the researcher feel the need for special courses for the parents of first generation learners.

The course should focus on creating more awareness and understanding about the consequences of parental pressure. Emphasis should be laid on providing them with more psychological inputs.

5.7.5 **NEED BASED COURSES:**

The course can be conducted for the parents whose children suffer from specific emotional, behavioral or social problems.

- Parents of bereaved children
- Parents of sick children
- Parents of children with emotional or behavioral difficulties
- Parents of teenagers
- Parent with step children
- Single-parents

can be catered to through these need based programs.
5.7.6 FOLLOW UP COURSES:

The course can be conducted periodically to get the feedback from parents.

5.8 TEACHING STRATEGIES:

Parents who are responsible, independent and self-directed resent being treated as children. A wide variety of teaching methods can be used, making the parent education activities a balance of small and large group activities, school and home based meetings, formal and non-formal formats and working and playing situations. Forums can be meetings, small group discussions, readings, projects, guided observation workshops, lectures, field trips, demonstrations etc. Books, pamphlets, records, videos and films can be used effectively to stimulate the interest of the parents.

In short teaching strategies for parent education curriculum may include

1. Lectures
2. Seminars
3. Workshops
4. Discussions
5. Parent-child interface
Video presentations, role-play and screening of films may be adopted for presenting and illustrating the contents. Parents may also be briefed through handouts, home visits and telephonic communication. Personal counselling and guidance will also help in effectively implementing the parent education concepts.

5.9 FEATURES TO REMEMBER WHILE IMPLEMENTING PROGRAMS.

i The duration and intensity of the program should be scheduled according to the literacy and educational level of parents.

ii It is always best for both the father and mother to attend the classes.

iii Training is best done in a group

iv Parents should be made to feel free to express their views and clear their doubts without fear of evaluation or criticism.

v Parent education program must be given wide publicity, so that all parents can participate.

vi Program should be organized as per the convenience of the participants.
vii Parents' suggestions and opinions should be considered.

viii There should be periodical updating of the activities.

ix Care should be taken to publicize the meetings, provide adequate advance notice, reminders, have handouts available in different languages, provide incentives like prizes, arrange transportation and provide refreshments.

5.10 RESOURCE PERSONS:

Experts like educationists, psychologists, medicos, authorities or successful parents can be invited to address the parents. Parents can offer their scientific, artistic and human relations talent to share. Their strengths in problem solving, building consensus and teaming can provide valuable insight to future educators.

5.11 MODULES FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES:

The following are few 'Parent Education Modules' suggested for meeting the specific needs of children.
5.11.1 MODULE FOR THE PARENTS OF ADOLESCENTS:

This type of module can be prepared specially for the parents of adolescents of age group 10 to 14 years. It is usually observed that adolescents tend to alienate themselves from their parents as they feel their lessons require higher level of thinking, burden of homework becomes more and find themselves in the midst of a highly competitive world. Such feelings draw them away from their parents resulting in the creation of friction in families. To add to this, high rates of mobility, maternal employment, marital separation and divorce increase the complexity of the situation.

The module of this type will focus mainly on improving the "Communication skills" needed to improve family relationships. The training should center around the development of child from birth through adolescence. An elaborate view of parental role to meet this challenging demand should be taught to the parents systematically.

Since the program is aimed at helping the parents of adolescents to cope with their problems, innovative schemes can be drawn which may include the following topics
1. A knowledge of the educational needs of the parents included in the program.

2. Identifying topics and concerns that parents and adolescents consider relevant.

3. Offering guidance program to handle crises such as deviant behaviour, dyslexia, drug abuse, delinquent behaviour.

5.11.2 MODULE FOR THE PARENTS OF NURSERY AND PRIMARY CHILDREN:

This type of Parent Education Program involves one morning a week, which the parents have to spare for assisting the teacher-in-charge. During this session they get opportunities to learn and understand the behaviour of the children. They also share their expertise in helping children develop their abilities and comprehension through manipulation, experiment and cooperation.

Programs of this kind provide the group of parents a supportive environment in which parents could learn new skills and gain confidence through talking with other parents sailing in the same boat. This feeling of oneness is therapeutic, as they feel free to express their fears and emotions regarding their children
and discover that others have similar feelings, which helps them to accept their plight and come to terms with it. Generally parents will be supportive of each other and this enables them to be more confident and hopeful. The group also provides them opportunities to develop their communication skill and they also learn how to tackle problems when they face similar situations. Brain storm sessions or open forums provide the parents with better ideas and skills and generally these sessions boost up their morale and help become better equipped to cope with the problems which are part of life. Access to expert guidance through phone, correspondence and face to face chat have also been valuable to parents facing critical situations.

Teachers are exposed to a variety of problem situation and this enhances their knowledge and understanding of children and their parents. Observing the improvement in children brings a kind of satisfaction and contentment that cannot be experienced anywhere else. They also learn new skills and techniques to handle children with special needs. Guidance of psychologists, experts and eminent educators enable them to view the problems with new insight and consequently the school is benefitted by their refined approach.
Individuals make the society. Albert Einstein once observed, "In the children lies the hope of the world".

Parents Education cannot be spurned now as an unwanted addition, since it has become an indispensable part of the modern life, it has become as natural as adding manure to the tired soil, so that its vitality can be restored and the young sapling can flourish and thrive well. In ensuring that our children grow healthily, we guarantee our society a healthy generation for the future and in short 'Parent Education' is our investment for the future.

5.12 SUGGESTIONS FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAMS:

The realization that Parent Education Programs are indispensable for effective parenting and are here to stay as part of our day to day living lead to the following suggestions.

5.12.1 PARENT EDUCATION CELLS:

Government and Private sectors can install 'Parent Education Cells' in every school and provisions should be made for all the parents to undergo at least one orientation program, during the course of their children's study.
5.12.2 PARENT EDUCATION BUREAU:

A 'Parent Education Bureau' can be established with few permanent staff members. The Bureau can have a group of expert educationists and psychologists who can periodically visit the schools to give expert guidance. Special programs can be organized as and when the need arises. Training Programs for institutions can be organized, by the experts, so that adequate staff are provided for the school cells.

5.12.3 GRANTS AND FUNDS:

The Government and Private Sectors can meet the financial needs if separate facilities for financing the program can be made. Self-financing programs can also be organized by charging a reasonable course fee from parents who can afford to pay. A mandatory change in the attitude of the individual, will inevitably bring about a total change in the society and then in the world.

5.12.4 PARENT TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS:

Parent teacher associations functioning effectively in schools can be revitalized to take up the responsibility of organizing Parent Education Programs. The members of the association, with their first hand knowledge of problem situations can arrange for the courses as per the specific needs. The school authorities may help in organizing the programs.
5.13 NEED FOR LEGISLATION POLICIES:

It is common knowledge that any newly inducted program needs the support of the government and local bodies for succeeding in the long run. We find that in the USA and England where there is legislation and supportive policy, parent involvement programs thrive and come out with the best results. (Garry Hornby 2002). School policies are equally important for effective functioning of the programs. Clear policies and well established procedures make the going easy. It has been seen that school policies are influenced by national and regional policies but they vary from school to school depending on the views of teachers and in particular the Head Teachers and Board of Governors. When schools do not have such an overt or even a consistent covert policy on parent involvement, the programs fail to be effective.

5.14 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

1. An in depth study of the problems faced by boys and girls from 5 to 17 years may be attempted both in the context of home and school.
2. The reasons for the differences found among the perceptions of parents, teachers and general public in terms of problems of children and the causes for their problems may also be attempted.

3. Special 'Parent Education' Programs for parents of children experiencing emotional problems may be devised.

4. Special 'Parent Education' programs for parents of mentally / physically handicapped children may be initiated.

5. A study on the changing social systems and its impact on adolescents and their parents may be taken up.

6. A study on the reasons for deteriorating moral values and increasing juvenile delinquency and the accountability of parents may be ventured.

7. Framing a special curriculum for educating single parents may also be taken up.
5.15 CONCLUSION:

The dynamic nature of the modern world, in which our youngsters grow, renders parenting a highly complicated skill, which needs professional expertise. Responding to the silent cry of the hapless victims of ignorance - the parents and children, the present study has proposed the basic tenets and principles on which effective Parent Education Programs can be constructed. Besides easing the path of growing up, Parent Education Programs make parenting a pleasurable experience, meaningful in its objective of moulding and shaping worthy human beings.