CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The educational scenario in India is meretricious. We speak of education for all; but in reality a majority of the students remain academically backward. Their number is alarmingly high at all stages of education. In higher education, especially in professional courses, where there is much competition, the low performing students are pushed out. Education is, thus, the monopoly of a handful of able students. The low performing students labelled as the learning disadvantaged or learning disabled become ossified. Learning disability affects reading, listening, arithmetic, oral language and social skills.

1.1 Learning Disability
1.1.1 Concept

Some children have normal intelligence but they are unable to achieve the basic skills at an expected normal rate. This characteristic of such children may be called as ‘Learning Disability.’ It refers to specific retardation or disorder in one or more of the processes of speech, language, perception, reading, spelling, and arithmetic (Kirk, 1968). This does not include learning problems, which are due to sensory handicap, motor problems, mental retardation, emotional disturbance or adverse environmental factors.

Children with learning disabilities find seemingly natural, everyday skills such as dressing, buttoning, tying, labelling objects, noticing things in the environment, difficult to learn, even with good stimulation. They often need additional training in basic skills such as reading, spelling, language and arithmetic, but the regular curriculum focuses more on various content areas that demand the application of basic academic skills rather than their acquisition. There is evidence that students with learning disabilities experience significant problems in social adjustment, social perception, self-concept and motivation. Russell (1974) states that adolescents with learning disability may suffer an identity crisis after repeated failures because the feelings of inadequacy that are generated cause them to question their place in the world.
The learning disabled do not profit from the experiences and guidance provided by parents, pre-school teachers and others because they have difficulty in processing certain types of information. Yet, children with learning disabilities are not delayed in all aspects of development. In fact, many do as well as or better than their peers in certain areas.

The term, ‘Learning Disabilities’ has been used to describe a group of children who have disorder in development of language, speech, reading and associated communication skills needed for social interaction. Children who had difficulty in copying material from the blackboard, who frequently reversed letters, numbers and words, who could not reproduce a geometric design, were believed to demonstrate perceptual-motor problems. Children would be described as learning disabled based on incorrect usage of various rules of grammar, inappropriate understanding of pronoun reference. In this group, children who have sensory handicaps such as blindness or deafness, generalized mental retardation are not included because there are different methods of managing and training the deaf and blind (Kirk, 1963).

Learning disability is a hidden handicap. Learning disability impede a person’s ability to store, process or recall information. These can affect a child’s ability to read, write, speak or compute and often impact the students’ ability to acquire socialization skills.

Learning disabilities manifest differently in different people and at different periods in a person’s life. The learning disabled are of at least average intelligence whose academic performance is impaired by a developmental lag in the ability to sustain selective attention. These children require specialized instruction in order to permit the use of his or her full intellectual potential. Generally, parents realize that their children are learning disabled at a stage when it is late, if not too late. Individuals, both children and young adults are frequently seen as lazy or unmotivated when they are not able to learn easily in their environment, often such difficulties could be due to learning disability.

The disability is an inability to make use of the unspecialized instructions usually found in the typical classroom. Most children with learning disability are bright and
possess average or above average intelligence. But they seem to face difficulties in sorting incoming information received by eye, ear and/or skin and in expressing it.

The learning disabled show a discrepancy between the school performance expected of them on the basis of their potential and the performance they actually produce (Ross, 1977).

A learning disability doesn’t disfigure or leave visible signs that would invite others to be understanding or offer support. It is a disorder that affects people’s ability to either interpret what they see and hear or to link information from different parts of the brain. These limitations can show up in many ways—as specific difficulties with spoken and written language, co-ordination, self-control and/or attention. Such difficulties extend to school work and can impede learning to read or write, or to do mathematics.

Learning disabilities can be lifelong conditions that, in some cases, affect many parts of a person’s life, school or work, daily routines, family size & sometimes even friendships and play. In some people, many overlapping learning disabilities may be apparent. Other people may have a single, isolated learning problem that has little impact on other areas of their lives.

All students learn from experience. Those with learning disabilities need to exercise their judgment, make mistakes, self-identity them and correct them. Learning new information in a new setting, such as a college classroom or dormitory, can be frustrating. Set-backs are an inevitable part of the learning process, but these can impair self-esteem, which is essential to take responsibility for one’s life. Self-esteem is built slowly. Students need explicit strategies to monitor and restore their self-esteem.

Some students have difficulty in understanding or making themselves understood by their peers, families and instructors e.g. some learning disabilities may affect timing in conversations or decisions about when to study and when to socialize. Students need to really think about how motivated they are.

Learning disabled are children who might have troubles with skills such as listening, reading, writing, spelling or speaking. These skill impairments have little to do with a child’s intelligence - in fact, most learning disabled children have normal or higher intelligence and some are gifted also.
Children with learning disability are the children with special needs. Once a learning disability is identified, three categories of assistance such as psycho-social, technological and educational are to be provided (Sandra, 1998).

Learning disability (LD) is a term that denotes a group of disorders manifested as difficulties in the acquisition and use of abilities such as listening, reading, writing, reasoning, spelling, arithmetic or of social skills (Gerber and Reiff, 1994). These difficulties arise from inadequate development of miniscule, brain areas and are called – 'specific delay in development.'

Learning disabilities are of various types such as Oral-language disabilities (Dysphasia, Aphasia), Reading disabilities (Dyslexia and Alexia), Writing disabilities (Dysgraphia, Agraphia, Revisualization problem, Formulation and Syntax disorder and Spelling problem) and Arithmetic disabilities (Dyscalculia and Acalculia). Learning disability may have association of other disabilities like visual impairment, hearing impairment, epilepsy etc. Children with mild learning disabilities cannot be identified easily. Boys are affected by learning disability three times more than girls because of genetic reasons (Narayan, 1997).

‘Learning disability’ is not a diagnosis in the same sense as “chickenpox” or “mumps”. Chickenpox and mumps imply a single, known cause with a predictable set of symptoms. Learning Disability is a term that covers a pool of possible causes, symptoms, treatments and outcomes. Partly because learning disabilities can show up in so many forms, it is difficult to diagnose or to pinpoint the causes. And no one knows of a pill or remedy that will cure them.

The term learning disability (LD) is used to refer to a range of neurological conditions that affect one or more of the ways that a person takes in, stores, or uses information. Learning disabilities are specific, not global, impairments. For example, a person could have a learning problem which inhibits her ability to understand written information though the same information when delivered orally, might present no problem.

A specific learning disability is a disorder in one or more of the central nervous system processes involved in perceiving, understanding and/or using concepts through verbal (spoken or written) language or nonverbal means. This disorder manifests itself
with a deficit in one or more of the following areas: attention, reasoning, processing, memory, communication, reading, writing, spelling, calculation, coordination, social competence and emotional maturity (Rehabilitation Services Administration, 1985).

Numerous definitions and conceptualizations of the phrase, learning disability, have been offered. Some definitions of learning disability are as follows:

Acc. to Myers and Hammill (1969), “LD is used to describe a specific type of exceptional child. It is not a generic term for all children who have learning problems in school. They explain various terms associated with it:

- Learning disability refers to one or more significant deficits in essential reading process requiring special education techniques for remediation.
- Children with learning disability generally a discrepancy between expected and actual achievement in one or more areas such as spoken, read or written language, mathematics and spatial orientation.
- The learning disability referred to is not primarily the result of sensory, motor, intellectual or emotional handicap or lack of opportunity to learn.
- Significant deficits are defined in terms of accepted diagnostic procedures in education & psychology.
- Essential learning processes are those currently referred to in behavioural science as involving perception, integration and expression either verbal or non-verbal.
- Special educational techniques for remediation refer to the educational planning based on the diagnostic procedures and results.

Ross (1976) has given the following definition of learning disability.

“A learning disability is present when a child does not manifest general mental subnormality, does not show an impairment of visual or auditory functions, is not prevented from pursuing educational tasks by unrelated psychological disorders and hence the less, manifests an important impairment in academic achievement.”
According to United States Congress (1977), "Those children who have a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or to do mathematical calculations. The term includes such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include a learning problem which is primarily the result of visual, hearing or motor handicaps, of mental retardation, of emotional disturbance or of environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage."

From the point of view of education, the phrase learning disability can be defined as a kind of behavioural deficit almost always associated with academic performance that can be remedied by precise individual instructional programming. Educationally a learning disabled is one whose achievement is less than his expected level of achievement.

According to Hammill et. al. (1981), "Learning disability is a generic term that refers to a heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. Those disorders are intrinsic to the individual and presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may occur concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g. Sensory impairment, mental retardation, social and emotional disturbance) or environmental influences (e.g. cultural differences insufficient / inappropriate instruction, psychogenic factors) it is not the direct result of those conditions or influences."

Public Law 94-142 (Federal Register, 1977), "The education for all handicapped children act defines learning disabilities (LD) as a "disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell or do mathematical calculations. The term includes perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia and developmental aphasia. The term does not include learning problems that are primarily the result of visual, hearing or
motor handicaps, mental retardation or environmental, cultural or economic disadvantage."

Although the term learning disability is confusing and the definitions are variable (Stanovich, 1999) yet, there are a number of generally agreed upon parameters when the question of identification of a learning disabled is raised. These define a student who has an average or above average IQ for his / her grade level but whose academic achievement in any key area like reading, writing or mathematics is significantly below the level expected of him / her at the same grade. In lay terms it defines a relatively bright student who cannot grasp one or more of the fundamental skills of academic learning. Learning disabilities are characterized by intra-individual differences, usually in the form of a discrepancy between a student’s ability and his / her achievement in areas such as reading, writing or mathematics. Intra-individual differences are differences within a student across academic area. For example, a learning disabled student may be quite successful in math computation and listening comprehension but may read poorly.

Factors to rule out learning disorder are considered to be low intelligence, physical difficulties such as poor vision or hearing problems, Insufficient knowledge of a language, as in the case of an individual whose native language is not English, inadequate development of pre-reading skills (e.g. letter knowledge, letter sound correspondences) prior to entering school.

1.1.2 Characteristics of Children with Learning Disability

Children with learning disabilities might exhibit one or more of the following characteristics:
Reading: Confusion of similar words, difficulty in using phonics, slow-rate of learning
Writing: Difficulty with sentence structure, poor grammer, omitted words, frequent spelling errors, letter reversals and difficulty in copying from chalkboard.
Listening: Difficulty in paying attention when listening to a lecture and taking notes.
Oral Language: Difficulty in expressing ideas orally that the student seems to understand, difficulty in describing events or stories in a proper sequence.
Mathematics: Difficulty in memorizing basic facts, transposes number sequence and confuses with arithmetic signs (+, -, *, /, =).

Social Skills: Difficulty in reading facial expressions, body language, display excessive anxiety, anger and depression because of the inability to cope with school and social situation.

Teachers are often the first to notice that "something doesn't seem right." Most parents will, from time to time, see one or more of these warning signs in their children. However, if you see several of the below mentioned characteristics over a significantly long period of time, then your child is possibly at the risk of having a learning disability.

Age 5-9

- Slow to learn the connection between letters and sounds
- Confuses basic words (run, eat, want)
- Makes consistent reading and spelling errors including letter reversals (b/d), inversions (m/w), transpositions (felt /left), and substitutions (house / home)
- Transposes number sequences and confuses arithmetic signs (+, -, x, /, =)
- Slow to remember facts
- Slow to learn new skills, relies heavily on memorization
- Impulsive, difficulty in planning
- Unstable pencil grip
- Trouble learning about time
- Poor coordination, unaware of physical surroundings, prone to accidents

Age 10-12

- Reverses letter sequences (soiled/solid, left/felt)
- Slow to learn prefixes, suffixes, root words, and other spelling strategies
- Avoids reading aloud
- Trouble with word problems
- Difficulty with handwriting
- Awkward, fist-like, or tight pencil grip
- Avoids writing assignments

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- Slow or poor recall of facts
- Difficulty making friends
- Trouble understanding body language and facial expressions

1.1.3 Categories:

1.1.3.1 Dyslexia

The term ‘dyslexia’ was originated by Rudolf Berlin in 1887. A language-based disability in which a person has trouble in understanding written words is called dyslexia. It may also be referred to as reading disability or reading disorder.

Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that is neurological in origin. It is characterized by difficulty in learning to read in spite of average or above average intelligence and regular exposure to reading instruction. Often children with dyslexia show accompanying difficulties in areas of speed of processing, short term memory, organization, sequencing, and spoken language and motor skills. They typically have trouble making the connection between the sound and the corresponding letter and difficulty blending those sounds to form words. If it takes too long to sound out the word, then the child will have a hard time reading through sentences and understanding them.

A child with dyslexia often forgets the word and its meaning in the larger context of the sentence or paragraph.

http://www.childsupport.in/html/home_disabling_learning_disabilities.html

1.1.3.2 Dyscalculia

A mathematical disability in which a person has a difficulty in solving arithmetic problems and grasping Math concepts. Dyscalculia has a mixed form characterized by having difficulties both with reading and with Math. Children with dyscalculia often require a long time to carry out even simple arithmetic tasks. They might count on their fingers until far into the upper grades. Such difficulties are termed as automatization difficulties. Another problem area is linguistic difficulties which can manifest as difficulties in understanding numbers as concepts. Although often of high intelligence, such a child may have only a limited understanding of either numbers or even numerical
symbols. Another form is planning difficulties that lead to the child's failure to carry out computations effectively. This child may have difficulties in following even an obvious strategy in solving arithmetic problems, losing track of where he/she is at, use complicated/time-taking strategies. Dyscalculia may also be based on problems in visual perception that lead to difficulties at tasks involving logical thinking as well as in carrying out computations. This is often encountered in children who have difficulties in learning to read an ordinary clock and understand how the position of the hands is to be interpreted.  

http://www.childsupport.in/html/home_disabling_learning_disabilities.html

1.1.3.3 Dysgraphia

Dysgraphia is a writing disability in which a person finds it hard to form letters or write within a defined space. These children usually will have extremely poor handwriting. Children with dysgraphia often have sequencing problems. What usually appears to be a perceptual problem (reversing letters/numbers, writing words backwards, writing letters out of order, and very sloppy handwriting) is often directly related to sequential/rational information processing difficulty present. These children have difficulty with the sequence of letters and words as they write. As a result, they either need to slow down in order to write accurately, or experience difficulty with writing (spelling, punctuation etc). And when they do slow down they often tend to lose the thoughts that they are trying to write about.  

http://www.childsupport.in/html/home_disabling_learning_disabilities.html

1.1.3.4 Non-verbal Learning Disabilities (NVLD)

Children with this disorder are unable to recognize and translate nonverbal cues, such as facial expressions or tone of voice, into meaningful information. This causes the children to be mislabeled as emotionally disturbed because of their inappropriate responses to nonverbal stimuli. It is a neurological disorder, which originates in the right hemisphere of the brain, causing problems with visual-spatial, intuitive, organizational, evaluative, and holistic processing functions. Nonverbal learning disabilities can be tricky to recognize and diagnose. The neuropsychological characteristics of individuals
with the non-verbal learning disabilities profile include deficits in tactile perception, psychomotor coordination, visual-spatial organization, nonverbal problem solving, and appreciation of incongruities and humor. Children with non-verbal learning disabilities also exhibit well-developed rote verbal capacities and verbal memory skills. They however face difficulty in adapting to novel and complex situations, and over reliance on rote behaviors in such situations, relative deficits in mechanical arithmetic as compared to proficiencies in single word reading, poor pragmatics and prosody in speech, and significant deficits in social perception, social judgment, and social interaction skills. There are marked deficits in the appreciation of subtle and even fairly obvious nonverbal aspects of communication, that often result in other person's social disdain and rejection. As a result, individuals with non-verbal learning disabilities show a marked tendency toward social withdrawal and are at risk for development of serious mood disorders.

http://www.childsupport.in/html/home_disabling_learning_disabilities.html

1.2 Learned Helplessness

Learned Helplessness was recognized by Seligman, et. al. (1993). Incidentally, in the mid 1960's, during their attempts to test prediction of two process learning theory, they had discovered this disorder. Their learned helplessness research lasted from 1967 to 1975 and concentrated on the clash between the explanation they had offered and the traditional theories. They did most of their research in experiments with animals. They recognized Russell Leaf's and Bruce Overmeir's experiment with dogs who were experienced with an unavoidable and avoidable shock method (Peterson, et. al. 1993).

In a controlled study, they used electric shocks when dogs tried to leave their cage. Later, the dogs were provided a way out, but they made no effort to escape. Apparently, they had learned that they were helpless. The fact that learning disabled children may learn helplessness in academic settings has been supported by numerous studies. Continual exposure to academic failure has been shown to contribute to learned helplessness, withdrawal, unwillingness to approach new tasks and a lack of persistence. Like the dogs in the study, they may apply this maladaptive behaviour to
new situations where they are capable of academic success, but think their efforts are useless.

Other factors have been shown to contribute to this learned academic helplessness. Grouping students with a variety of disabilities under the tutelage of one teacher with generic training, excessive use of external reinforcement, lack of early identification of learning disabilities, a belief in a fixed static intelligence and a lack of reward for individual effort versus achievement are all important issues to consider.

Learned helplessness is caused by parents and or the children’s teacher(s). They both might indicate that the child’s failure are caused by their lack of competence rather than suggesting that they are not trying hard enough (Cullen & Boersma, 1982).

Learned helplessness is irrational, neurotic, panic stricken behaviour, a wild over-reaction to a tiny uncontrollable risk. It is a severe problem and needs to be fixed. The causes are how parents and/or teachers respond to children’s failures and successes. If humans feel as though they cannot control their environment, this lack of control will impair learning in certain situations. The effects of learned helplessness are a lack of self-confidence, poor problem solving, wandering attention and feeling hopeless. This might set children behind in academic subjects and damper social skills.

Another issue is that learned helpless children are extrinsically motivated and not so much intrinsically motivated because of their failures. A child suffering from learned helplessness will ultimately give up gaining respect through academic performance turn to other domains for solace.

Learned Helplessness has detrimental effects on children.

They develop a lack of self-confidence in challenging tasks which result in deterioration of performances (Dweck, et. al. 1978).

There is more to understanding of learned helplessness than its definition and characteristics. Intrinsic motivation (Stipek, 1988) is innate, a natural propensity to engage one’s interest and exercise one’s capacities. Intrinsic motivation affects the developing child’s experiences in three ways: competence, autonomy and relatedness.

Children with learned helplessness, competence is almost entirely destroyed. They lose confidence within themselves because they experience failures, leading them
to believe they are failures. They might feel competent about something, at first but if they fail in that activity, they won’t bother to try it again for fear of failure.

Autonomy is also faint in a student with learned helplessness. They feel as though they have no control over their environment because no matter how hard they tried in the past, they never succeeded.

As for relatedness, students with learned helplessness feel as though they don’t belong because they believe that they don’t relate to the environment. This is why they become the class clown, bully or tease in order to get their recognition. These results may include becoming an anti-social individual during their adolescent years or earlier.

These three factors are all detrimental to an individual’s growth and development in our social world today.

People may feel powerless and ineffective in certain circumstances. If this feeling is generalized to new circumstances, then people may exhibit learned helplessness (McInerney & McInerney, 1998). Learned helplessness leads to shame and self-doubt, with the eventual effect that people can give up without even trying. Repeated failure at a task can lead to learned helplessness. One solution is to design environments that provide people with opportunities for success. Another solution is to explicitly instruct people about the causes for success and failure, such as that effort and persistence, rather than natural ability, lead to success.

Seligman (1975) defined learned helplessness as a technical term in animal psychology and related human psychology, means a condition of a human being or an animal in which it has learned to behave helplessly, even when the opportunity is restored for it to help itself by avoiding an unpleasant or harmful circumstance to which it has been subjected. Learned helplessness theory is the view that clinical depression and related mental illnesses result from a perceived absence of control over the outcome of a situation.

According to Stipek (1988), “learned helplessness is a motivational problem where one might have failed in a task or two in the past which have made that individuals believe that they are incapable to do anything in order to improve their performance in that task(s).”
Ramirez et al. (1992) stated that learned helplessness is detrimental to children’s development throughout life if it is not fixed appropriately. If humans feel as though they cannot control their environment, this lack of control will impair learning in certain situations.

According to Eggen & Kauchak (1999), “Learned helplessness refers to the feeling that no amount of effort can lead to success.”

Smith (2001) defined learned helplessness as a phenomenon in which individuals gradually, usually as a result of repeated failure or control by others, become less willing to attempt tasks.

Myers (2002) defined learned helplessness as “the hopelessness and resignation learned when a human or animal perceives no control over repeated bad events.”

Comer (2004) defined learned helplessness as “the perception, based on past experiences that one has no control over one’s reinforcements.”

1.2.1 Theoretical Framework: Following is an account of some of the explanations available for learned helplessness

1.2.1.1 Seligman’s Learned Helplessness Theory (1960)

Martin Seligman developed this theory of depression in the mid 1960s. In this research, he placed dogs into hammocks and gave them periodic shocks which they could not escape. The next day, he placed the dogs into a box divided by a barrier that the dogs could easily jump over, and shocked the side that the dogs were on, expecting that the dogs would escape by jumping the barrier. However, most of the dogs made no attempt to escape and simply accepted the shocks. This caused Seligman to theorize that the dogs had learned that they had no control over the shocks because of the inescapable hammock shocks the day before, and because of this, when they were placed in a situation where they could control the situation, they believed that they were still helpless. Seligman thought the animals’ responses might be a model of human depression and suggested parallels between helplessness and depression (Seligman, 1975). According to Comer (2004), the theory has two main points: people become depressed when they think that they no longer have control over the reinforcements (the
rewards and punishments) in their lives and that they themselves are responsible for this helpless state”?

1.2.1.2 Weiner’s Attribution Theory (1935)

Weiner developed a theoretical framework that has become very influential in social psychology today. Attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do, that is, interpret causes to an event or behavior. A three-stage process underlies an attribution:

- behavior must be observed/perceived
- behavior must be determined to be intentional
- behavior attributed to internal or external causes

Weiner’s attribution theory is mainly about achievement. According to him, the most important factors affecting attributions are ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. Attributions are classified along three causal dimensions:

- locus of control (two poles: internal vs. external)
- stability (do causes change over time or not?)
- controllability (causes one can control such as skills vs. causes one cannot control such as luck, others’ actions, etc.)

When one succeeds, one attributes successes internally (my own skill). When a rival succeeds, one tends to credit external (e.g. luck). When one fails or makes mistakes, we will more likely use external attribution, attributing causes to situational factors rather than blaming ourselves. When others fail or make mistakes, internal attribution is often used, saying it is due to their internal personality factors.

Attribution is a three stage process:
behavior is observed, behavior is determined to be deliberate and behavior is attributed to internal or external causes.
Achievement can be attributed to:
a) effort  b) ability  c) level of task difficulty  d) luck.
Causal dimensions of behavior are:
a) locus of control  b) stability  c) controllability.

1.2.1.3 Covington’s Self-worth Theory (1992)

This theory assumes that the search for self-acceptance is the highest human priority, and that in schools self-acceptance comes to depend on one’s ability to achieve competitively. Perceptions of ability are critical to this self-protective process, since for many students the mere possession of high ability signifies worthiness and success. Simply put, Covington’s self-worth theory stresses that individuals are thought to be only as worthy as their achievements.

Many individuals equate their personal worth with their accomplishments and ability becomes critical to one’s self-definition (Covington, 1992). Individuals may score high on both measures of approaching success and avoiding failure. Such individuals are referred to by Covington as overstrivers. For overstrivers, fear of failure leads them to strive very hard to succeed academically. Essentially, these students avoid failure by succeeding. They work extra hard and have good study skills.

In middle elementary years, Covington (1992) argues that effort begins to prevail as the most salient cause of success. Academically speaking, youngsters begin to assume one on one correspondence between effort and outcome - the harder one tries the better one’s performance is likely to be.

Students who lack effort are broadly characterized by Covington as failure accepters. Such individuals are not particularly attracted to success, but neither are they concerned about failure. Failure accepters have a history of failing, have a low self-worth and are not very confident of their ability to succeed academically. They do not try very hard and are not really interested in academics. Covington argues that failure accepters may give up entirely on the academic enterprise.
1.2.1.4 The Theory of Attribution (Heider, 1958)

Attribution theory contains the underlying principles by which a person decides the causes of another person’s behaviour. These perceived causes can be dispositional and internal or situational and external. People often determine whether a behaviour is dispositional or situational by using three key factors: Consensus, Consistency and Distinctiveness. (Kelley, 1967)

Consensus refers to how most people act in a given situation. When consensus is low, behaviour is high attributed to dispositional or internal factors. When consensus is high, behaviour is attributed to situational factors. Consistency refers to the degree to which people act in the same way on different occasions. Highly consistent behaviour is attributed to dispositional factors. Distinctiveness refers to the extent to which people respond differently in different situations. If distinctiveness is low and people act similarly in different situations, behaviour is attributed to dispositional factors. In general, if a behaviour is unusual, it is attributed to the situation. If it is not unusual, it is attributed to the disposition. While this may hold true in a laboratory, people in real life are subject to many variables, so assigning attribution to any one factor is impossible.

1.2.2 Intrinsic Motivation and Learned Helplessness

Intrinsic motivation is when one does something because they want to and not because they have to. When one is suffering from learned helplessness, they feel as if they have to do the task because it is out of their control; they have no choice. Students with learned helplessness might be intrinsically motivated at first, but if they fail at the task, then, they become uninterested and are intimidated in subjecting themselves to do the task again in the future. Their curiosity dissolves as well. The optimal challenge is lost and it seems to this type of person as if it is not available in the environment for them, they will not try to seek out solutions. They lose their desire to challenge the task they’ve failed in the past, therefore, denying themselves success.

Most humans have an intrinsic need to be competent and to explore behaviours. If they fail, their competence diminishes and they feel no need to explore. This is when one becomes helpless. Intrinsic motivation deals a lot with learning and achievement which tends to be associated with creativity, increased cognitive flexibility, positive
emotional tone, and a development of high self-esteem. If one is pushed away from the intrinsic motivation to learn or to achieve something, they will most likely lose all of the characteristics that make a happy person. In other words, learned helpless students are depressed because they feel as if they have no creativity, that they are not cognitively flexible, they have little positive emotional tone and that they have a low self-esteem (Milkulincer, 1994).

Learned helpless students do not fit under the intrinsic motivational characteristic. They fit more in the area of extrinsic motivation (Stipek, 1988). This motivation is based on external rewards, the avoidance of threats or punishments, gaining recognition and conforming to socially accepted behaviour. Learned helpless students try to avoid failure and punishment from their teachers. They try to bully and they only work for external rewards because they have no interest to do a task but to get a grade, a sticker, a candy, a token etc. Learned helpless students feel the need to respond to socially prescribed demands, limits and patterns of behaviour. Extrinsic motivation is also oriented towards separable goals, rewards, contingencies and values upon individual's satisfaction of the task. Learned helpless students feel as if they have no choices because no matter what they do they will fail.

1.2.3 Attribution for academic success and failure of the Learning Disabled (Arnold, 1996)

It has been suggested that learning disabled students tend to exhibit less motivation and persistence in academic tasks. One school of thought is that academic failure is based on difficulties in the regulation of stability, locus and controllability. Self-bias also appears to play an important part in this attribution model. This model can easily be applied to children in school. The student who receives an 'A' on a test may perceive himself to be bright and intelligent. The egocentric bias kicks in. He feels he was more central than may actually have been the case and is likely to be motivated to work hard for that "A" the next time. The student who receives an "F" on a test, following the same thought process of his "A" counterpart, might assume that he was central to his failure and see himself as stupid, the consequence being a decrease in motivation to study for the next test. The "F" student might, how ever, say things like 'the teacher was
biased,' I was unlucky, or “I didn’t study,” in order to avoid making a dispositional 
attribute of “I am stupid,” He could then view his behaviour as controllable and unstable 
and be motivated for the next test.

Research has repeatedly shown that children with learning disabilities make 
different attributions of success and failure than their normal achieving peers and that 
these attributions may interfere with their classroom performance. Studies have 
suggested the following about academic achievement and self-concept attributions of 
learning disabled students:

Students with learning disabilities are more likely to make external attributions for 
both success and failure than their non-disabled peers. Specifically, they are less likely to 
attribute success to ability or internal, controllable and stable factors and are more likely 
to attribute success to luck or external, uncontrollable and unstable factors.

Students with learning disabilities have lower global self-concepts than non-disabled 
peers. This lowered self-concept was reported as early as grade three and was found to 
remain stable through high school students with learning disabilities who were neither 
identified nor given special placement experience. The latter had lower academic self-
concepts than those who were identified and specifically placed. Severely learning 
disabled students who received full-time special placement, experienced increased 
academic self-concept, especially in reading.

Students with learning disabilities must be placed in situations where it is possible to 
experience academic success. The fact that 60% of illiterate adults are learning disabled 
is evidence of our present failure to educate this population. Early intervention is critical.

1.3 Yoga

It is an ancient system of Indian philosophy incorporated into ayurvedic system of 
medicine and well being whose goal is the attainment of ultimate balance of mind and 
body or self realization. The different systems of yoga share certain basic principles, 
control of the body through correct posture and breathing control of the emotions and 
mines and meditation. In the West, yoga is often used for healing and well being without 
attention to the larger philosophy.
Yoga is a very ancient practice that originated in India; the term refers to union or communication. For many, yoga is viewed as a physical, mental, and spiritual discipline that confers a sound body and a sound mind (Mohan, 2002).

Yoga is not an ancient myth buried in oblivion. It is the most valuable inheritance of the present. It is the essential need of today and the culture of tomorrow (Swami Satyananda Saraswati, 1998).

It is an Indian spiritual path aimed at achieving the union with the Supreme Consciousness. Some yogas go beyond it and aim at the spiritual transformation of the entire human nature and obtaining immortality even for the physical body. A practitioner of Yoga is called a Yogi (male) or Yogini (female). Outside India, yoga is mostly associated with the practice of asanas (postures) of Hatha Yoga or as a form of exercise.

Many Hindu texts discuss aspects of yoga, including the Vedas, Upanishads, the Bhagavad Gita, the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, the Hatha Yoga Pradipika, the Shiva Samhita and various Tantras.

Classified by the type of practices, the major branches of yoga include: Hatha Yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, and Raja Yoga. Raja Yoga, established by the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali, and known simply as yoga in the context of Hindu philosophy, is one of the six orthodox (astika) schools of thought.

The Sanskrit term yoga has many meanings. It is derived from the Sanskrit root yuj, "to control", "to yoke", or "to unite". Common meanings include "joining" or "uniting", and related ideas such as "union" and "conjunction." Another conceptual definition is that of "mode, manner, means" or "expedient, means in general."

The word ‘Yoga’ is a noun derived from the root ‘Yujir’ means ‘to unite’ or ‘to connect.’ The root-‘yuj’ is supposed to mean at least two things - to control (yuj-somyamanage) and to contemplate (yug -Samadhav). Therefore, yoga implies joining or union with all one’s potentials - mental, physical and spiritual. Yoga accordingly includes union with the Divine, with God, with as much of the cosmos as one is prepared to recognize, assimilate and integrate into the process of self-development. Ultimately, "Yoga is the union of that which has become separated in the play of the universe from its own true self, origin and universality." It may be said that yoga is an integrated
holistic system of self-culture which aims at the harmonious development and health of
the body-mind complex. Yoga considered the human being as a whole body, mind and
spirit together and not in separate compartments.

1.3.1 Yoga Therapy

Yoga therapy is a combination of supported yoga poses and embodyment
transcendental meditation. Because the session is customized to your needs, deeper
adjustments can be made not ordinarily used in class. Some of the common conditions,
yoga therapy can help to heal are: anxiety, arthritis, asthma, back pain, carpal tunnel
syndrome, depression, difficulty with balance, ankle or foot problems, digestive
problems, fibromyalgia, headaches, insomnia, jaw problems, knee problems, mental
fatigue, neck and shoulder problems, sciatica, Parkinson’s disease, scoliosis and relief
from stress. Overall, there is a deep calming effect on the mind and a deep sense of
healing and relaxation in the body.

Yoga therapy is the application of yoga postures: asanas pranayamas and
meditation techniques to help alleviate certain conditions which could be mechanical,
physiological or psychological in nature.

Therapeutically, yoga practices and postures are suitable for those who have
been suffering from many types of chronic or recurrent conditions. It helps to eliminate
the aggravated ama (toxins) from the system, balance the doshas and stimulate the
essential biochemical substances in the affected organs or system.

Yoga therapy is instruction in yogic practices and teachings to prevent, reduce or
alleviate structural, physiological, emotional and spiritual pain, suffering or limitations.
Usually this is taught one-on-one for the specific conditions and purpose of individuals
by specially trained yoga teachers or therapists.

Yoga therapy is typically conducted one-on-one or in small groups. Often, a
session more closely resembles an appointment with a physical therapist or
rehabilitation specialist than it does a typical yoga class.

“Yoga therapy occurs when a yoga therapist sees a student or group with the
primary aim of addressing a health issue, be that physical, mental or emotional, specific
to that student or group, based on the principles of yoga practice.”
Yoga therapy is both a preventive and a curative process. Frequent practice can restore your natural balance and harmony, bringing positive good health to all parts of your life - physical, mental and spiritual.

Yoga classes exist for a wide range of conditions including: pregnancy, arthritis, asthma, back pain, cancer, diabetes, depression, digestive problems, fatigue, hypertension, heart disease, HIV AIDS, MS, ME, menstrual problems, respiratory problems and stress.

Yoga should be taken as a method to obtain perfect health and maintain the physiological harmony of the body as well as to achieve a state of mental perfection by progressing spiritually as a result of complete self-control.

Yoga is universal: it is a path on which all those who have determination may start, whatever their age, social status can be practiced anywhere and at any time. Awareness of the breath is central to all forms of yoga and promotes calmness, helping to focus the mind and relieving stress and mental fatigue.

Yoga is beneficial for the health in ways that modern science is just beginning to understand. Even though it has been applied with therapeutic intention for thousand of years, yoga therapy is only just now emerging as a discipline in itself. More health care practitioners are starting to include yogic techniques in their approach to healing and more yoga teachers give a therapeutic intention to their teaching. People who have never tried yoga before are starting to consider including yoga in their treatment plan.

Yogic practices produce balance, harmony and integration in physical and mental processes. Yogic practices can play a vital role in directing the mind towards creativity and constrictive goals. These provide the individual with refreshing positive thinking, self-confidence, analytical approach, smooth and calm mental stability, emotional maturity and strong will power (Iyengar, 1998).

As science begins to document the importance of understanding the interrelation of all existing things, it looks to yoga with an intrigued eye, for yoga speaks Unity in every word. As yoga techniques are researched and new data is gathered, it becomes easier for science and the medical establishment to understand and accept the benefits of Yoga Therapy.
Yet there is still not one consensual definition of the discipline. In order to arrive to an adequate definition and to come up with proper standards for yoga therapy, it is crucial at this early stage to properly address some delicate professional and ethical issues. At the same time, it is important to educate the general.

It is widely known that yoga can enhance your physical and emotional well-being but when yoga is practiced with a therapeutic intention in the form of Yoga Therapy, it can help prevent and aid recovery from physical and mental ailments, Yoga has long been practiced with therapeutic intentions as way of transforming both the body and the mind.

Desai (1992) says, “Yoga means the yoking of all the powers of the body, mind and soul to God; It means disciplining of the intellect, the mind, the emotions, the will. It means a poise of the soil which enables one to look at life in all its aspects evenly.”

Hatha Yoga Pradeepika (Muktibodhananda, 1985) Mastery of the body and breath are an indoubted aid to those concerned with their spiritual evolution. For by having full control over the physical condition, the body becomes calm, allowing the mind to be directed inwardly more easily in perfect tranquillity, to achieve a higher spiritual level.

Hatha Yoga is a particular system of Yoga described by Yogi Swatmarama, a yogic sage of the 15th century in India, and compiler of the Hatha Yoga Pradipika. Hatha Yoga is a development of but also differs substantially from-the Raja Yoga of Patanjali, in that it focuses on shatkarma, the purification of the physical as leading to the purification of the mind (ha), and prana or vital energy (tha).

Hatha Yoga in its many modern variations is the style that most people actually associate with the word "Yoga" today. Because its emphasis is on the body through asana and pranayama practice, many western students are satisfied with the physical health and vitality it develops and are not interested in the other six limbs of the complete Hatha yoga teaching, or with the even older Raja Yoga tradition it is based on.

Udupa (1989) Yoga is defined as science of mental control. It not only helps to control one’s mental state but also helps to improve one’s personality and behaviour, if it is practiced regularly from childhood. In middle and old age groups if yogic practices are continued, it may delay the aging and degenerating process, with the result that a
person may remain active and energetic for considerably longer period of life. Daily practice of yoga could help a person to maintain a perfect homeostasis of the body and mind throughout his life.

According to Swami Vivekanand (1994) The power of concentration is the greatest strength to awaken the mind and animate the body. When properly directed, it illuminates facts for us and brings the desired results. There is no limit to the power of the human mind. The more concentrated, it is the more power is brought to bear on one point. The powers of the mind are like rays of light dissipated; when they are concentrated they illumine.

According to Yogendra (1966), Upnishads say, yoga is the science of keeping the mind calm and steady and the body strong and healthy for meditation and self realization.

Swami Sivananda (1978) explained yoga as "an integration and harmony between thought, word and deed or integration between head, heart and mind."

At another place, yoga is explained as a state equipoise (Samatva) where in one looks equally upon success and failure.

1.3.2 Types of Yoga

**Ashtanga Yoga:** A physically demanding style based in Hatha Yoga in which breathing is synchronized with movement between asana. It encourages profuse sweating to purify and detoxify and it produces strength, flexibility and stamina.

**Hatha Yoga:** A path of yoga based on physical and strengthening as a means of self-transformation. It encompasses a system of asanas (postures), designed to promote mental and physical well-being and to allow the mind to focus and become free from distraction for long periods of meditation, along with pranayama (breath control).

**Lyengar Yoga:** A style based in Hatha yoga that emphasizes correct body alignment in the asanas (postures) and holding the asanas for extended periods of time, using props to help achieve and support them.

**Kundalini yoga:** A style based in Hatha yoga whose purpose is controlled release of latent kindling energy.

**Classic yogas** - Bhakti yoga, Karma Yoga, Jnana Yoga, Raja Yoga
Other Yogas - Agni Yoga, Anahata Yoga, Ashtanga Vinyasa Yoga, Dream Yoga, Hatha yoga, Integral yoga, Kriya yoga, Kundalini yoga, Natya Yoga, Six Yogas of Naropa (Tummo), Sahaja Yoga, Surat Shabd Yoga, Viniyoga, Yantra Yoga, Yoga Nidra.


Raja Yoga limbs - Yama, Niyama, Asana, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Dharana, Dhyana, Samadhi.

1.3.3 Yoga Sutras of Patanjali (2001)

In Indian philosophy, Yoga is the name of one of the six orthodox philosophical schools. The Yoga philosophical system is closely allied with the Samkhya school. The Yoga school as expounded by Patanjali accepts the Samkhya psychology and metaphysics, but is more theistic than the Samkhya, as evidenced by the addition of a divine entity to the Samkhya's twenty-five elements of reality. The parallels between Yoga and Samkhya were so close that Muller (1899) says that "the two philosophies were in popular parlance distinguished from each other as Samkhya with and Samkhya without a Lord." The intimate relationship between Samkhya and Yoga is explained by Zimmer (1951).

These two are regarded in India as twins, the two aspects of a single discipline. Sankhya provides a basic theoretical exposition of human nature, enumerating and defining its elements, analyzing their manner of co-operation in a state of bondage(bandha), and describing their state of disentanglement or separation in release(moksa), while Yoga treats specifically of the dynamics of the process for the disentanglement and outlines practical techniques for the gaining of release, or 'isolation-integration'(kaivalya).

The sage Patanjali is widely regarded as the founder of the formal Yoga philosophy. The Yoga Sutras of Patanjali are ascribed to Patanjali, who, as Max Muller explains, may have been "the author or representative of the Yoga-philosophy without being necessarily the author of the Sutras." Indologist Michaels (2004) is dismissive of claims that the work was written by Patanjali, characterizing it instead as a collection of fragments and traditions of texts stemming from the second or third century.

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Patanjali's yoga is known as Raja yoga, which is a system for control of the mind. Patanjali defines the word "yoga" in his second sutra (Yoga Sutras 1.2).

Patanjali's writing also became the basis for a system referred to it as "Ashtanga Yoga" (Eight-Limbed Yoga). This eight-limbed concept derived from the 29th Sutra of the 2nd book became a feature of Raja yoga, and is a core characteristic of practically every Raja yoga variation taught today. The Eight Limbs of yoga practice are:

- **Yama** (The five abstentions): nonviolence, truth, non-covetousness, chastity, and abstain from attachment to possessions.
- **Niyama** (The five observances): purity, contentment, austerities, study, and surrender to God.
- **Asana** Literally means seat and in Patanjali's Sutras refers to seated positions used for meditation. Later, with the rise of Hatha yoga, asana came to refer to all the postures.
- **Pranayama** (Lengthening Prana): Prana, life force, or vital energy, particularly, the breath, ayama, to lengthen or extend.
- **Pratyhara** (Abstraction): Withdrawal of the sense organs from external objects.
- **Dharana** (Concentration): Fixing the attention on a single object.
- **Dhyana** (Meditation): Intense contemplation of the nature of the object of meditation.
- **Samadhi** (Liberation): merging consciousness with the object of meditation.

They are sometimes divided into the lower and the upper limbs, the lower ones being parallel to the lower limbs of Hatha Yoga, while the upper ones being specific for the Raja yoga.

### 1.3.4 Relaxation methods

Learning how to relax is a central element of Yoga Therapy. Relaxation is the body's way of recharging and helps to ease physical & mental tension. Relaxation techniques encourage us to step back and look objectively at our habitual patterns of behaviour helping us to cope better with situations that put our body and mind under strain.
In modern times, the value of yoga is being increasingly recognized for general and its preventive and curative effects. The function of yoga asanas helps to relax body and mind together. Yoga is the scientific process of establishing harmony among body, mind and soul. Yogic practices can play a vital role in directing the mind towards creativity & constructive goals. The aim of practising yoga is to control the mind, i.e. the ability to marshal our thoughts to direct them at will. Yoga enhances our work efficiently as a result of soundness of our health. If we are sincerely anxious to attain what is attainable in this life, we should start the practice of yoga sooner than late. By regular practice of yoga, many problems of learning disabled children can be solved, their learned helplessness can be reduced and academic performance can be increased. They can do better in their studies.

Yoga is a system built on three main structures: exercise, breathing and meditation. When yoga is practiced regularly, these systems are designed to work in unison and produce a clear mind and a strong body. Yoga should not be considered a therapy in itself – it provides an emotional and mental discipline that helps to lead a healthy life.

All forms of yoga should be thought of as a process rather than a type of exercise. Hatha yoga is the form of yoga which focuses on postures (asanas) and breathing (pranayama). With yoga, the focus is on what you are doing and how you feel while you are doing them.

Yoga is not a struggle but a surrender. You don’t win by punishing your body. You convince it, reduce it, talk it down from the ledge of ambition and anxiety.

Research proves that regular practice of yoga postures, meditation and breathing techniques profoundly affect the body and mind. The physical effects include lowering of the resting heart rate and blood pressure, an increase in the vital capacity of the lungs, muscle relaxation, weight loss and increased stamina. The mental effects depend on the way it affects neurochemistry, particularly brain levels of stress hormones, neurotransmitters, relaxation and monoamines.

In the present study, forward bending poses, backward bending poses, salutation to the sun and various asanas i.e. Bhujangasana, Padmasana, Shavasana, Sidhasana,
Vajarasana, Gorakhasana, Tadasana and Ardhchandrasana were used for the remediation of learning disabled children.

Forward bending poses help to elongate the spinal column by stretching the muscles and ligaments attached to the vertebra. It gives an excellent stretch to all the posterior muscles. This asana benefits the entire body, especially the central nervous system. It tones the organs of the abdomen and helps to relieve tension in the lower back.

Backward bending poses reverse the stretch of the forward-bending poses; a left twist reverses the stretch of a right twist, and so on. These complementary poses fortify the central nervous system, strengthen and elongate all the muscles of the torso, and benefit all the internal organs.

Salutation to the Sun is a general tonic for the nervous system. It increases flexibility and lung capacity, alleviates digestive problems and strengthens all the muscles of the body.

Asana is a particular posture of the body, which is both steady and comfortable. The complete set of yoga asanas covers the entire human anatomy, quite literally from the top of the head to the tips of the toes. Regular practice helps to correct postural and systematic irregularities and maintains the entire physiology in peak condition.

1.4 Academic Performance

Academic performance means the attained level at which the student is functioning in school marks or grades earned. In trade and occupations, it means the change in the level of skills attained as measured by marks or grades. Performance means all those behavioural changes, which take place in the individual as a result of learning experience of various kinds.

Students who are the most indisciplined oftentimes are within the group of poor academic achievers i.e failure at examinations. Performance is the application of a learning product that at the end of the process provides mastery.

Academic performance is a delightful, but painful duty imposed upon the scholars. Man loves to laze and let the time fleet in pleasant pursuits. Study is an uphill task. Students and scholars are the sages and savants of today. Our intellect should be
allowed to go its own way. A scholar should have the liberty to delve deep into the infinite depths of knowledge. Yet, there is an intense need for preparing the scholar to undertake free enquiry into the vast & unexplored universe of knowledge. Academic performance must be assessed most sincerely. Good academic performance lays the foundation on which the scholar can build an intellectual edifice. Then and only then can he serve his fellow men.

Academic performance means the achievements of a scholar in the field of study or research. Performance is synonym of accomplishment or proficiency. There is acknowledgement of a scholar's attainments in a specific field. Performance also denotes the range and depth that a scholar attains in a designated area of learning. In short, performance and achievement are co-extensive synonyms. Academic Performance is naturally a complex and multi-dimensional phenomenon. In our culture, students' performance is the most anxious concern of the parents and the teachers. Performance measures the scholar's level of skill or range. It denotes the performance in a designated area of learning.

An evaluation based on data collected by Healthy Start Collaboratives in 1997 found that students' academic achievement increased significantly. Test scores for schools in the lowest quartile improved substantially, with reading scores for the lowest performing elementary schools increasing by 25% and math scores increasing by 50%. Students in the lowest quartile showed similar improvements. Middle and high school students who were most in need improved their grade point averages by 50% adding 0.8 and 1.2 to their GPA.

The academic performance is also an indicator of intelligence and the effectiveness of any institution. The world has become more and more competitive and quality of performance has become key factor for personal progress. Parents desire that their children climb the ladder of performance as high as possible. The desire for high level of achievement shapes their attitude towards the educational system.

The whole system of education revolves round the academic performance of student because it is one of the important goals of education. Thus, a lot of time and efforts, different play activities like physical as well as mental and yoga therapy should be used for helping students in attaining better achievements.
The Journal of Education (1981) posited that performance might be seen as an index of the candidates' ability and motivation. In that, the success of teaching is in engaging in giving direction, as that fact is observed as affecting performance.

On the point of academic performance, Tuckman (1975) posited that, "performance is used to label the observable manifestation of knowledge, skills, concepts, and understanding and ideas". If performance is the accomplishment of set tasks in a course objective in order to meet the requirement of examination syllabus, what explains the difference between the high performance in O' Level and A' Level. Thereby, performance is the application of a learning product that at the end of the process, provides mastery. The acquisition of particular grades on examinations indicate candidates' ability, mastery of the content, skills in applying learned knowledge to particular situations. A student's success is generally judged on examination performance. Success on examinations is a crucial indicator that a student has benefited from a course of study (Wiseman, 1961). Fishman (1962) states that, "all British studies have relied on examination performance". This reality provides the basis on which performance is measured by western civilization. http://able2know.org/The Journal of Education (1981)

The researcher believes that authentic academic performance should involve an examination of the total person, meaning thereby the examination should cover individual's academic ability and skills in applying practical abilities. Different authors define academic performance differently -

Good (1945), "The performance of pupils in the so-called academic subjects, such as reading, arithmetic and history, as contrasted with skills developed in such areas as industrial arts and physical education.

Trow (1967), "Academic achievement is the achieved ability or degree of competence in school tasks usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in percentage or grade units based on norms derived from a wide sampling of pupil performance."

Biswas and Aggarwal (1971), "Knowledge attained or skills developed by people usually in the school subjects, measured by test scores or by marks assigned by teacher or by both."
MacDonald (1972), “Academic performance is the level of individual’s educational achievement as determined by comparing his score in a test with the average score of others of the same age.”

Terry and Thomas (1979), “Performance in school or college is a standardized series of educational tests. The term is used more generally to describe performance in the subjects of the curriculum.”

Sharma (1998), “The ratio of achievement age as measured by actual performance in school or on standardized test and the level of performance expected.”

1.4.1 Factors affecting Academic Performance

Research has come to our aid by looking into what variables (Personal, home, school, teacher) promote performance and what are deterrents. It indicated that a good number of variables, scholastic and personality characteristics of learner, socio-economic status, original climate of school, curriculum, planning etc. influence achievement in different degrees. These variables are generally referred to as correlates of performance.

The complex phenomenon of academic performance of children are influenced by a set of multi-various factors. Broadly, we can divide these factors in two types:

1.4.1.1 Individual Factors:

These factors are related to child himself, his cognitive abilities, study habits, interests, personality and motivation.

1.4.1.2 Environmental Factors:

These factors can be further sub-divided into two types:

a) Factors related to home like the size of the family, income, education and occupation of the different members of the family, modern facilities available at home, parental attitude towards education and child etc.

b) Factors related to school are the size of the class, the personality of the teacher and his teaching, library facility, co-curricular activities, teacher-taught relationship etc.
Family plays an important role in the development of children. Mother is the most influencing factor because she has to take adequate care of her child, his academic performance.

Academic performance is the measure of knowledge, understanding, skill in specified subject or group of subjects. The academic performance refers to performance in one subject or a total score of several subjects combined. Hence, the academic performance is concerned with the quantity as well as the quality of learning attained in a subject or group of subjects after a period of instructions. Academic success in achievement scores in the middle grades can be attributed to a myriad of individual, family, school and community level factors. These mitigating factors may either promote or inhibit academic success, and often begin much earlier in life. For example, research has found that students with high levels of support and expectations regarding academics have a greater likelihood for academic success compared to students not receiving the support and expectations. (Felner, et. al., 1997).

It will become increasingly critical that educators understand these mitigating factors to attain high levels of academic success. This understanding does not suggest there is only one pathway to academic success, but in fact, there are likely to be multiple ways of meeting high academic standards. Standardized achievement tests are relatively easy to understand and interpret.

There is much less known, however, about how students' backgrounds, motivation, interests, instruction, school climate and numerous other factors influence academic achievement (Alexander, 2000).

For many students, test performance will over time with the implementation of new standards, assessments, curriculum and the introduction of better trained teachers and new teaching techniques. For other students, performance may be lower than expected because they are not prepared to learn when they arrive at school. Policymakers need to focus on eliminating barriers that affect these low - performing students' readiness to learn. Among these barriers are physical and mental health conditions that impact students’ school attendance and their ability to pay attention in class, control their anger and restrain from self-destructive impulses.
Academic knowledge gets you ahead in a competitive world. Academic performance really means three things: the ability to study and remember facts, being able to study effectively and see how facts fit together and form larger patterns of knowledge and being able to think for yourself in relation to facts and thirdly being able to communicate your knowledge verbally or down on paper.

Good academic performance is also linked having good organizational skills such as a tidy place to work and good time management. When you relax, then your mind becomes more absorbent and able to learn.

Avinashilingam et. al. (2005) conducted his study to find out the factors influencing the students’ academic performance. The factors motivating students’ academic performance were classified as classroom factors, environmental factors, hostel factors, developmental factors, extracurricular factors and library factors. These factors were ranked on the basis of their influenciveness and the result shows that classroom factors are considered to be as most important among all the factors. Students from different backgrounds also considered classroom factors to be most important one. This factor was subsequently followed by the environmental factors inside the classroom i.e. light arrangement/fan acoustics and general appearance of the classroom which plays a role in deciding the academic performance. Apart from the above two factors, the developmental factor, which ranks third followed by library factors. Lastly, the hostel factors and extracurricular factors also had their influence over academic performance.

1.5 Play

Play is a physical or mental leisure activity that is undertaken purely for enjoyment or amusement and has no other objective. There are other areas of human activity that may also be defined in this way hence the need for contextual elaboration.

For purposes of research, play may assist learning and self-development. It can be undertaken by individuals or groups of children spontaneously or as part of a planned activity. There isn’t any intervention so there is no need for clinical supervision, quality management, code of ethics or adult training. The only concern is that there is a physically safe environment. A question often raised today is whether children know
how to play. This is probably a philosophical question since children's play is a natural activity essential for their healthy development. It may be that children play differently from their forebears.

Neuroscience research confirms the importance of play for infants in developing children's brains and minds. It has also been shown that exposure to metaphor and symbols, as used in play, has a beneficial effect upon the development of the brain that children play differently from their forebears.

Play is amusing interaction with people, animals or toys often in the context of learning or recreation. Some play has clearly defined goals and is called a game, some play has no such goal and is unrestrained. Play is the work of children. It consists of those activities performed for self-amusement that have behavioral, social, and psychomotor rewards. It is child-directed and the play is an important part of the childhood development. Through play, children learn about shapes, colors, cause and effect, and themselves. Besides cognitive thinking, play helps the child learn social and psychomotor skills. It is a way of communicating joy, fear, sorrow, and anxiety.

Play takes different forms for different children, and its definition entails many aspects. Play is the direct opposite of work; it is frivolous. It provides freedom and invites the impulse to engage in foolishness. Yet it provides a means for ego development and a process by which social skills and physical skills develop as well.

Play with imagination and fantasy is the child's natural medium of self-expression and one that gives cues about the child's conscious and unconscious states. In play therapy, clinicians employ various techniques designed to reveal the child's psychological and social development. Clinician-directed play therapy is, therefore, not naturally self-directed play, but play designed by a professional to facilitate understanding of the child and the child's healing process.

As a theoretical concept, Play is notoriously difficult to tightly define. Rather than having a single meaning, play is best seen as description of a range of activities that can be ascribed to humans and non-humans. Unspecialized people use the word “play” as a contrast to other parts of their lives, sleep, eating, washing, work, rituals etc. Different types of specialists may also use the word “play” in different ways. e.g. “Play
therapists” use the term in connection to individuals who cannot benefit from more formal work-type therapies.

Twain (1835-1910) commented that play and work are words used to describe the same activity under different circumstances. This viewpoint is reflected in the work of anthropologists who attempt to distinguish ‘play’ and ‘non-play’ in different cultures.

Attempts have been made to identify the qualities of play, but this task is not without its ambiguities e.g. Play is defined as non-serious activity, yet when watching children at play, one is impressed at the seriousness with which they engage in it. Other criteria of play includes a relaxed pace and freedom versus compulsion.

When play is structured and goal orientated it is often done as a game. Play can also be seen as the activity of rehearsing life events e.g. young animals play fighting. These and other concepts or rhetorics of play are discussed at length by Sutton-Smith (1997) in the book, ‘The Ambiguity of Play.’

Sometimes play is dangerous, such as in extreme sports. This type of play could be considered stunt play, whether engaging in play frighting, sky-diving, or riding a device at high speed in an unusual manner.

India has adopted the United Nations conference but all its clauses could not be implemented so far, because of many problems in Indian Context. Some are being implemented in almost all states of India.

Sociologist Reisman (1953) has come to the conclusion that play is a quality (opposed to an activity) that we can only vaguely describe. Huizinga (1955) defined play as follows:

Play is a free activity standing quite consciously outside ‘ordinary’ life as being ‘not serious’ but at the same time absorbing the player intensely and utterly. It is an activity connected with no material interest, and no profit can be gained by it. It proceeds within its own proper boundaries of time and space according to fixed rules and in an orderly manner. It promotes the formation of social groupings that tend to surround themselves with secrecy and to stress the difference from the common world by disguise or other means.

This definition of play as constituting a separate and independent sphere of human activity is sometimes referred to as the "magic circle" notion of play, and
attributed to Huizinga, who does make reference to the term at some points in Homo Ludens. According to Huizinga, within play spaces, human behavior is structured by very different rules: e.g. kicking (and only kicking) a ball in one direction or another, using physical force to impede another player (in a way which might be illegal outside the context of the game).

Ellis (1973) states that "play is not just play but the expression of the individual's mental engagement with their own settings. Play is learning."

According to Nachmanovitch (1990), "play is the root and foundation of creativity in the arts and sciences as well as in daily life. Improvisation, composition, writing, painting, theater, invention, all creative acts are forms of play, the starting place of creativity in the human growth cycle, and one of the great primal life functions."

The Government's review of children's play Getting Serious About Play defines play as "what children and young people do when they follow their own ideas, in their own way and for their own reasons."

Fromberg (1998); Hughes (1999); Christie (2001). The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEF) believes that play - a dynamic, active and constructive behaviour - is an essential and integral part of all children's healthy growth, development and learning across all ages, domains and cultures.

A 2007 report from the American Academy of Pediatrics documents that play promotes not only behavioral development but brain growth as well. To conclude, play is freely chosen - children choose what they do themselves, it is, personally directed - children choose how they do something, .

It is intrinsically motivated - children choose why they do something and their play is performed for no external goal or reward.

Play is vital to every child's social, emotional, cognitive, physical, creative and language development. It helps make learning concrete for all children and young people including those for whom verbal communication may be difficult.

1.5.1 Categories of play (Gale, 2006)

Categories of play are not mutually exclusive; different forms or categories of play may overlap. Having choices is important since an action that appeals to one child
may be of no interest to another and the child's interest is likely to change throughout the play period. An understanding of play in many forms can help parents understand its importance for children of all ages. Some specific categories of play are as follows.

- **Physical Play.** When children run, jump, and play games such as chase, hide-and-seek, and tag, they engage in physical play. This play has a social nature because it involves other children. It also provides exercise, which is essential for normal development.

- **Expressive Play.** Certain forms of play give children opportunities to express feelings by engaging with materials. Materials used in expressive play include tempera paints, fingerpaints, watercolors, crayons, colored pencils and markers, and drawing paper; clay, water, and sponges; beanbags, pounding benches, punching bags and rhythm instruments; and shaving cream, pudding, and gelatin. Parents can take an active role in expressive play by using the materials alongside the child.

- **Manipulative Play.** Children control or master their environment through manipulative play. They manipulate the environment and other people as much as possible. Manipulative play starts in infancy. Infants play with their parents; for example, they drop a toy, wait for the parent to pick it up, clean it, and return it, and then they drop it again. This interaction brings the infant and parent together in a game. Children move objects such as puzzle pieces and gadgets to better understand how they work.

- **Symbolic Play.** Certain games can symbolically express a child's problems. Because there are no rules in symbolic play, the child can use this play to reinforce, learn about and imaginatively alter painful experiences. The child who is in an abusive family may pretend to be a mother who loves and cuddles her child rather than one who verbally or physically abuses her child. Or in play this same child might act out abusive experience by hitting or screaming at a doll that symbolizes the child. Parents can be surprised by their child's perception of family issues. Children mimic their parents in certain play; in other games they may pretend they are the heroes they read about in books or see on television.
At certain developmental stages, children believe they can fly or disappear. Symbolic play may be used by children to cope with fear of separation when they go to school or to the hospital.

- Dramatic Play. Children act out situations they suspect may happen to them, that they are fearful will happen, or that they have witnessed. Dramatic play can be either spontaneous or guided and may be therapeutic for children in the hospital.

- Familiarization Play. Children handle materials and explore experiences in reassuring, enjoyable ways. Familiarization prepares children for potentially fearful and painful experiences, such as surgery or parental separation.

- Games. Some video and card games are played by one child alone. Games with rules are rarely played by children younger than four years of age. Board games, card games and sports are enjoyed typically by school-age children. In these games, children learn to play by the rules and to take turns. Older children enjoy games with specific rules; however, younger children tend to like games that allow them to change the rules.

- Surrogate Play. For children who are too ill or incapacitated to play, another child or a parent may serve as surrogate. Watching the surrogate who plays on behalf of the sick child is stimulating to the sick child. When parents engage in expressive art by painting or redecorating a room while the physically challenged child watches, they stimulate the child.

Besides this, when children play with digits, alphabets & create different & meaningful ideas, it is mental play.

1.5.2 Functions of play (Gale, 2006)

Play reinforces the child’s growth and development. Some of the more common functions of play are to facilitate physical, emotional, cognitive, social and moral development.
Physical Development

Play aids in developing both fine and gross motor skills. Children repeat certain body movements purely for pleasure, and these movements develop body control. For example, an infant will first hit at a toy, then will try to grasp it, and eventually will be able to pick it up. Next, the infant will shake the rattle or perhaps bring it to the mouth. In these ways, the infant moves from simple to more complex gestures.

Emotional Development

Children who are anxious may be helped by role playing. Role playing is a way of coping with emotional conflict. Children may escape through play into a fantasy world in order to make sense out of the real one. Also, a child's self-awareness deepens as he explores an event through role-playing or symbolic play.

When a parent or sibling plays a board game with a child, shares a bike ride, plays baseball, or reads a story, the child learns self-importance. The child's self-esteem gets a boost. Parents send positive messages to their child when they communicate pleasure in providing him or her with daily care. From these early interactions, children develop a vision of the world and gain a sense of their place in it.

Cognitive Development

Children gain knowledge through their play. They exercise their abilities to think, remember and solve problems. They develop cognitively as they have a chance to test their beliefs about the world.

Children increase their problem-solving abilities through games and puzzles. Children involved in make-believe play can stimulate several types of learning. Language is strengthened as the children model others and organize their thoughts to communicate. Children playing house create elaborate narratives concerning their roles and the nature of daily living.
Children also increase their understanding of size, shape, and texture through play. They begin to understand relationships as they try to put a square object in a round opening or a large object in a small space. Books, videos, and educational toys that show pictures and matching words also increase a child's vocabulary while increasing the child's concept of the world.

Social Development

A newborn cannot distinguish itself from others and is completely self-absorbed. As the infant begins to play with others and with objects, a realization of self as separate from others begins to develop. The infant begins to experience joy from contact with others and engages in behavior that involves others. The infant discovers that when he coos or laughs, mother coos back. The child soon expects this response and repeats it for fun, playing with his mother.

As children grow, they enjoy playful interaction with other children. Children learn about boundaries, taking turns, teamwork, and competition. Children also learn to negotiate with different personalities and the feelings associated with winning and losing. They learn to share, wait, and be patient.

Moral Development

When children engage in play with their peers and families, they begin to learn some behaviors are acceptable while others are unacceptable. Parents start these lessons early in the child's life by teaching the child to control aggressive behaviour. Parents can develop morals while reading to children by stressing the moral implications in stories. Children can identify with the moral fictional characters without assuming their roles. With peers they quickly learn that taking turns is rewarding and cheating is not. Group play helps the child appreciate team work and share and respect others' feelings. The child learns how to be kind and charitable to others.
1.5.3 Age-related play (Gale, 2006)

As children develop, their play evolves, too. Certain types of play are associated with, but not restricted to, specific age groups.

- Solitary play is independent. The child plays alone with toys that are different from those chosen by other children in the area. Solitary play begins in infancy and is common in toddlers because of their limited social, cognitive, and physical skills. However, it is important for all age groups to have some time to play by themselves.
- Parallel play is usually associated with toddlers, although it happens in any age group. Children play side by side with similar toys, but there is a lack of group involvement.
- Associative play involves a group of children who have similar goals. Children in associate play do not set rules, and although they all want to be playing with the same types of toys and may even trade toys, there is no formal organization. Associative play begins during toddlerhood and extends though pre-school age.
- Cooperative play begins in the late pre-school period. The play is organized by group goals. There is at least one leader, and children are definitely in or out of the group.
- Onlooker play is present when the child watches others playing. Although the child may ask questions from the players, there is no effort to join the play. This type of play usually starts during toddler years but can take place at any age.

1.5.4 Play Activities

1.5.4.1 Physical Play Activities

All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy. Play activities add variety and spice to learning. There is a time to pore over books and there is a time to provide relaxation to the tired and weary mind, there is a very desirable relief. Nature has created its own rhythm of work and rest. Even God is represented as relaxing after
creating the various forms of existence in the universe. There is intense need for rest and relief after exhausting turns at the studies. This need is supplied by play activities.

Play activities can be planned or free. In the educational institutions, there are tight schedules, the scholar is passing through the golden period of planned learning. So, his play activities must also be well-planned, well-ordered and well-timed. It has been found that well-orchestrated play activities are the most efficient and productive. Students can have options regarding play activities, such as races, long jumps, one-leg hopping and running. There can be unlimited and countless forms of unplanned play activities. Races are the most natural form of play activity. Some athletes may make racing even an item of sports career. The most beneficial form of races is the one where almost all the scholars can participate. It is a sight to watch, when 20-30 young persons take part in the race en masse. It should be highly relaxing with laughter, greeting & gracing the glorious grounds, where races are in progress. It is indeed a boon if the educational institution has the required space, where scholars can engage in playful race.

In addition to races, other play activities have equally great potential for relaxation & rest. Long jump is as natural an activity as races. This performance can easily be classified and recorded. Some scholars will out-jump the rest of the participants. Others will try to emulate, laugh & compete at the same time. Another very delightful & pleasant play activity is one-leg hopping. In this field also, some scholars can excel the others. Again there is fun & frolic, rest and repose. To hop & jump is a balancing exercise. The true aim of such activities is to turn the busy and diligent minds away from academic work test. Human beings love to see-saw between work & play, seriousness and lightness. These play activities are perfect & supreme for this purpose.

1.5.4.2 Mental Play Activities

There is another version of play activities besides the physical ones. These activities centre around mental play activities. This is an ideal device for providing play & work at the same time. Jumbled words are like a challenge to the mental ingenuity of the scholars. “Yes” is an ordinary word but once we write it as “Sye,” it assumes the
proportions of a riddle. There would be enough room for activating & sharpening the mind. Many magazines & weekend supplements publish jumbled words as regular features. Man is a problem solving animal. Some people relish & savour racking their minds to solve baffling problems. Any jumbled word acts like a mental tonic. Hence, jumbled words are a very provocative, alluring & tantalising activity.

An anagram is yet another form of mental activity. When two or more words use the same letters of the alphabet, they are known as anagrams. An ideal, but very poor instance of an anagram is God'.

According to a dictionary of literary terms & literacy theory by Cuddon (1990) An anagram means, ‘writing back or a new.’

The letters of a word or phrase are transposed to form a new word. For instance, the word ‘Stanhope’ can be turned into the word ‘Phaetons’ which is a common feature of cross words. Butler’s title ‘Erewhon’ (1872) is an anagram of ‘no where.’

Some other anagrams are as follows:

| Love to ruin | Revolution |
| Elegant | Neat, leg |

Play activities provide healthy outlet for the dammed-up energies of the adolescents. Human mind is in love with variety and change. Nature has created a system of dots and dashes, because change is the law of nature. Tennyson (1994) the great English poet, has put this in very memorable words:

Mental play is exploring and discovering. Words, numbers, touching, tasting, and seeing are part of mental play. Children use their minds to remember what cards have been played and plan how to win a card game. A baby learns that someone picks up what the baby drops from the high chair. It becomes a “game.” Children count and read. They start collections; butterflies, stamps, insects, and coins and learn to classify them. It is fun to find a new thing to add to a collection. Children tell jokes and riddles about flowers on a nature walk, and learn colors from balloons.

The old order changeth, yielding place to new and God fulfils himself in many ways, lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

Academic activities may be the primary concern of all educators. Yet, all work and no play should not be the order of the day. Play activities provide the necessary
redistribution of emphasis. Sameness means staleness. Equal emphasis on play and work is a sign of health and well-being. In 'Birches,' a well-known poem of Frost, we notice the need and desire for play. Birches are bending permanently in one direction. The poet thinks that some play-loving cow-boy might have been bending them.

“I like to think some boy’s been swinging them”

The poet adds that he would also like to engage in the same play. I’d like to go away from earth a while and then come back to it and begin over.”

So, is work for Frost’s persona in the poem or a synonym for work, while swinging the birches is a patent play activity. We have to create those activities which provide a different direction & orientation to the scholars weary and fagged out minds. Thus, play activities serve the most useful purpose. The desire to return to work with sharpened and accentuated keenness is regenerated. The intellectual cells get the necessary relief & ease. Play activities are at least as important as academic & intellectual activities. The Greek thinkers held firmly and steadily to the maxim, “A sound mind in a sound body.” Play activities ensure and guarantee the soundness of the body, which is in no-way less relevant or significant than the soundness of the mind. There can be no sound mind without a sound body & there can be no sound body without playful activities.

Children are growing up in a rapidly changing world characterized by dramatic shifts in what all children are expected to know and be able to do. Higher and tougher standards of learning for all populations of students are focusing on a narrow view of learning. Consequently, students have less time and opportunity to play than did children of previous generations. Few would disagree that the primary goal of education is student learning and that all educators, families and policy-makers bear the responsibility of making learning accessible to all children. Decades of research has documented that play has a crucial role in the optimal growth, learning and development of children from infancy through adolescence. Yet, this need is being challenged and so children’s right to play must be defended by all adults, especially educators and parents. The time has come to advocate strongly in support of play for all children.

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) (2005) recognizes the need for children of all ages to play and affirm the essential role of play in children’s
lives. The Association for Childhood Education International believes that as today's children continue to experience pressure to succeed in all areas, the necessity for play becomes even more critical.

The Association for Childhood Education International supports all adults who respect, understand and advocate play as an essential pathway to learning for all populations of children. When working with children, adults should use their knowledge about play to guide their practice. ACEI believes that play is a dynamic, active and constructive behaviour, is an essential and integral part of all children's healthy growth, development and learning across all ages, domains and cultures. Play is a dynamic process that develops and changes as it becomes increasingly more varied and complex. It is considered a key facilitator for learning and development across domains and reflects the social and cultural contexts in which children live (Fromberg, 1998, Hughes, 1999, Christie 2001). Theorists, regardless of their orientation, concur that play occupies a central role in children's lives. They also suggest that the absence of play is an obstacle to the development of healthy and creative individuals. Psychoanalysts believe that play is necessary for mastering emotional traumas or disturbances; Psycho-socialists believe it is necessary for ego mastery and learning to live with everyday experiences; Constructivists believe it is necessary for cognitive growth; Maturationists believe it is necessary for competence building and socializing functions in all cultures of the world and Neuroscientists believe it is necessary for emotional and physical health, motivation and love of learning.

The features of play like process oriented, exploratory and active, intrinsically motivated and self-initiated make it both a process and a product. As a process, play facilitates individual's understanding of skills, concepts and dispositions and as a product, play provides the vehicle for children to demonstrate their understanding of skills, concepts and dispositions (Fromberg, 1998).

The Association for Childhood Education International (ACEI) believes that play enhances learning and development for children of all ages, cultures and domains. To best understand the relationship of play to learning and development, teachers must be knowledgeable about the research base and typical characteristics that describe how play enhances all children's learning and development. From this knowledge base,
teachers will be able to argue convincingly and make appropriate decisions about providing adequate opportunities and time for all children to play (Fromberg, 1998 and Christie, 2001).

As social organisms, humans have a basic need to belong to and feel part of a group and to learn how to live and work in groups with different compositions and for different purposes. Play serves several functions in satisfying these needs and developing these social and emotional life skills. Numerous studies indicate that play with others gives children the opportunity to match their behaviour with others and to take into account view points that differ from their own. Thus, play provides the rich experience, children need to learn social skills, become sensitive to others’ needs and values, handle exclusion and dominance, manage their emotions, learn self-control and share power, space and ideas with others.

There is also a strong relationship between play and cognitive development. Studies indicate a positive relationship between play and student learning (Lieberman, 1977; Kumar and Harizuka, 1998).

In the early 2000s, children of all ages and from every socio-economic background often preferred television, computers, and battery-operated toys to self-directed, imaginative, and creative play. This tendency leaves children developmentally deprived, because imaginative and fantasy play allows children to explore their world and express their innermost thoughts and feelings, hopes and fears, likes and dislikes. Through play, decisions are made without penalty or fear of failure.

This developmental deprivation of present day children gave the researcher rationale to include play as a treatment variable.

1.6 Rationale of the study

Well planned yoga therapy and physical & mental play activities can make children aware of their potentials as individuals are able to improve their learned helplessness and academic performance. (Ayres, 1980) suggests that motion allows an active involvement of the individual with visual experience as opposed to a passive sharing only as occurs during many activities e.g. looking at a picture. Movement, especially, self-directed movement like no other aspect of the curriculum can make
children aware of themselves as individuals able to perform acts of speed and skill, to master their own bodies, conquer space and joyfully interact with each other. Movement education can thus improve a child’s self-concept. Body awareness leads to body control, which requires concentration and self-monitoring and body control leads to greater self-mastery. (Frostig and Maslow, 1973). Motor proficiency encompasses the development of the abilities that are essential to movement and the subsequent acquisition of motor skills. Movement skills that come easily to the non-disabled may have to be carefully taught to those with a disabling condition. Evans (1977) states: “As a result of skill acquisition and efficiency of movement, it is quite possible that self-control, perseverance, courage and decision making will be enhanced.” Visual perception, as well as oculomotor co-ordination are required for motor-skill performance.

With the help of Yoga therapy and Play activities, the learning disabled can perform their work skillfully and speedily. They become active and develop better self-concept and self-esteem. Their social and behavioral problems decrease, attention span increases, their performance in difficult subject areas improves, their thinking and reasoning powers develop, their reading and writing problems get ameliorated and interpersonal skills develop. Yoga therapy and Physical play activities will help the child to achieve a developmental task rather than academic task. If different skills are developed and various non-academic problems of learning disabled are reduced by yoga therapy and play activities, their academic performance is bound to improve significantly in different disciplines of learning. Needless to say that it will positively help the learning disabled to negotiate a better deal with their learned helplessness. Mental play activities will improve the cognitive skills of learning disabled via fun which facilitates the benefits to be stable. Their academic performance, hence, should improve.

The present study assumes significance in light of above arguments. An investigation into whether yoga therapy and play activities (both physical & mental) reduce learned helplessness and enhance academic performance among the learning disabled is proposed.

Not many studies could be traced on learned helplessness and academic performance among the learning disabled while scanning literature more so in Indian context. Thus, the study of the present problem assumes importance.
1.7 Statement of the problem
The problem is stated as under:
"Effect of Yoga Therapy and Play Activities on Learned Helplessness and Academic Performance among the Learning Disabled."

1.8 Objectives
- To examine the incidence of children with learning disability in the sample.
- To examine the effect of yoga therapy on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of yoga therapy on academic performance among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of physical play activities on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of physical play activities on academic performance among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of mental play activities on learned helplessness among children with learning disability.
- To examine the effect of mental play activities on academic performance among children with learning disability.
- To compare the three experimental groups on the variable of learned helplessness.
- To compare the three experimental groups on the variable of academic performance.

1.9 Hypotheses
- Yoga therapy has significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
- Yoga therapy has significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
- Physical play activities have significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
- Physical play activities have significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
• Mental play activities have significant effect on learned helplessness in children with learning disability.
• Mental play activities have significant effect on academic performance in children with learning disability.
• The three treatments will not differ significantly among themselves on learned helplessness.
• The three treatments will not differ significantly among themselves on academic performance.

1.10 Operational definitions of the key terms

Learning Disability: The children who performed in English and Mathematics equivalent to M – 1S.D., manifested 15 points of discrepancy on Wechsler Intelligence scale for children (verbal and performance sections), were not sensorially impaired, had average intelligence, were identified as having learning disability.

Learned Helplessness: The scores on learned helplessness scale developed for this study will be a measure of learned helplessness.

Academic Performance: Academic performance refers to the aggregate of three sets of scores obtained by the subjects in the various tests and examinations conducted by the school in the academic subjects before and after treatment strategies.

Yoga Therapy: Yoga therapy refers to the practicing of a few asanas, poses and salutation to the Sun with an intention to bring balance of the mind and body to reduce learned helplessness and improve academic performance.

Physical Play: Physical play refers to those activities meant for the motor proficiency, comprised of jumping, skipping, one leg hopping, race, hitting and object balance used with an intent of reducing learned helplessness and enhancing academic performance.

Mental Play: Mental play refers to the practice of certain play activities to exercise mental faculties to reduce learned helplessness and improve academic performance.
1.11 Delimitations of the study

Due to the elaborate identification procedure, sample size was limited to 45 students only.

The study was limited to geographical area of Ferozepur district only.

The study was limited to 3rd, 4th and 5th classes only.