

CHAPTER V
FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis and interpretation presented in earlier chapter, the findings of the study are discussed in this chapter. The discussion of major findings in general according to the different statistical techniques used, is followed by the discussion of the findings relating to each variable under study.

5.1 Major Findings of the Study

5.1.1 Findings Based on Correlation Analysis

(i) All the seven selected variables viz., achievement motivation, adjustment, educational aspiration, pupils' attitude toward teachers, pupils' attitude toward school, perceived parental encouragement and socio-economic status have significant relationship with the criterion variable when each one is taken independently without partialing out the effect of other variables. This is so in both the groups viz., disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

(ii) The findings reveal differential degree of relationship of each of these variables with academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The value of 'r' ranges from 0.09 to 0.55 for the disadvantaged group and from 0.13 to 0.34 for the non-disadvantaged group.

5.1.2 Findings Based on Regression Analysis

(a) Disadvantaged group

(i) All the selected variables bear positive impact on the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

(ii) The seven selected predictor variables jointly explain 40.20 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group.

(iii) All the selected predictor variables do not predict the academic achievement of disadvantaged group to the same extent. Among the selected predictor variables, "pupils' attitude toward teachers" has contributed the most.

(iv) The following predictor variables, viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, adjustment, achievement motivation and socio-economic status are identified as significant predictors of academic achievement of disadvantaged group.

(b) Non-disadvantaged group

(i) All the predictor variables bear positive impact on the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

(ii) The seven selected predictor variables jointly explain 21.25 per cent of variance in the academic

achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

(iii) All the selected predictor variables do not predict the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group to the same extent. Among the selected predictor variables, "pupils' attitude toward teachers" has contributed the most to the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

(iv) The following predictor variables, viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, achievement motivation, perceived parental encouragement, socio-economic status, pupils' attitude toward school and educational aspiration are identified as significant predictors of academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

(c) Findings in General

(i) There are variations between the significant correlates identified through correlation analysis and regression analysis for the same achievement criteria. This might have happened due to interaction between the variables.

(ii) The same predictor variable contributes differentially to the academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

(iii) The four significant predictor variables explain 39.56 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group whereas the six significant predictor variables explain only 21.07 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

(iv) "Pupils' attitude toward teachers" has emerged as the most potential predictor of academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

(v) The following predictor variables viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, achievement motivation and socio-economic status have emerged as common significant predictors for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

5.1.3 Findings Based on 't' tests

The findings of 't' tests relating to each of the selected variables are presented separately.

(i) The high and low-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their achievement motivation.

(ii) The high and low-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group regarding their adjustment ability.

(iii) (a) There is no significant difference in the educational aspiration of high-achievers in the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

(b) The low-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from the low-achievers in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their educational aspiration.

(iv) The high and low-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their attitude toward teachers.

(v) The high and low-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their attitude toward school.

(vi) (a) The high-achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group regarding their perceived parental encouragement.

(b) There is no significant difference between the low-achievers in the disadvantaged group and those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their perceived parental encouragement.

(vii) In both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups the high-achievers differ significantly from the low-achievers with respect to their socio-economic status.

(viii) The high and low achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their academic achievement.

5.2 FINDINGS RELATING TO THE VARIABLES OF THE PRESENT STUDY

5.2.1 Achievement Motivation

The correlation analysis indicates a significant low positive relationship between achievement motivation and academic achievement of students in both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. Since the obtained correlation is not large enough, it can not be said that academic achievement is highly dependent on achievement motivation. McClelland et al. (1953) after their intensive investigation on achievement motivation have also indicated that there would be a low positive but significant correlation between n-achievement and actual achievement of the students. This must be so because a very high n-achievement may mean a mere fantasy to achieve rather than the ability to achieve. The magnitude of correlation obtained in the present study is of the order that was anticipated between the two variables.

In the regression analysis achievement motivation emerged as one of the common significant predictors of

which forms the highest level of hierarchy of motives, White (1959). According to Maslow (1955), the motives lowest in the hierarchy will be aroused first and they must be satisfied otherwise they will be dominating. Disadvantaged children because of their social, cultural and economic deprivation, may not be able to satisfy even the motives at the lowest level of hierarchy. Hence it is quite natural that achievement motivation which occupies the highest level of the hierarchy of motives could not be reached by the disadvantaged children. The study of Fatmi (1986) also found that racial background, religious background and caste status influenced achievement related motivations. It was also found that non-disadvantaged children were superior in achievement related motivations. It is obvious from the above discussion that the findings of the present study regarding achievement motivation is in agreement with the findings of the previous studies.

5.2.2 Adjustment

The correlation analysis shows a significant positive association between adjustment and academic achievement for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The value of 'r' is higher for disadvantaged group (0.46) than for the non-disadvantaged group (0.22). The following may

be some of the reasons for the positive association between adjustment and academic achievement. The academic achievement of a student is partly dependent on such aspects of adjustment like, the soundness of his mental and physical health, his emotional maturity, his interpersonal relations with his friends and teachers. Hence there is a possibility that better adjusted student will achieve more in the school. The findings of Sharma (1972), Abraham (1974), Reddy (1976) and Reddy (1978) are also falling in line with the above findings.

The results of regression analysis reveal that adjustment is a significant predictor of academic achievement of disadvantaged group whereas it is not so for the non-disadvantaged group. Adjustment explains 6.64 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group whereas it explains only a negligible amount (0.18 per cent) of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group.

The 't' test also reveals that high and low achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their level of adjustment. The results indicate that the adjustment ability of disadvantaged children is lower than

that of the non-disadvantaged children. Similar findings were reported by some of the previous studies also (Aruna, 1981; Koul, 1983; Panda, 1983; Lal, 1985; Sujatha and Yeshodhara, 1986; and Roy, 1986).

The following may be the reasons for the low level of adjustment found among the disadvantaged children. Adjustment is a process of interaction between the individual and his environment for the sake of bringing harmony between them by any means. It consists of the psychological processes by means of which the individual manages or copes with various demands or pressures. An adjustment problem arises when a person confronts a demand made by his environment which he cannot fulfil or when an environmental demand comes in the way of immediate or early satisfaction of his need. It is quite natural that the disadvantaged children who are brought up in an impoverished and non-stimulating environment which develop poor self-concepts, high anxiety and emotional problems, may not be able to cope with the demands made by the school environment. Hence it is expected that the disadvantaged children will be manifested with maladjustment.

5.2.3 Educational Aspiration

The correlation analysis indicates a significant positive correlation between educational aspiration and

academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. Some of the earlier studies have also found positive relationship between these two variables (Menon, 1972; Shivappa, 1980; Phutela, 1976). But there are also some studies which found no relationship between these two variables (Sharma, 1979; Rai, 1974). A curvilinear relationship between educational aspiration and academic achievement was also reported (Hussain, 1977). This means that high educational aspiration may not always lead to high academic achievement. It is also unnatural to expect it to be so unconditionally and always.

The regression analysis reveals that educational aspiration explains 0.64 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group whereas it explains only 0.24 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group. Since a very low percentage of variance, in the criterion is explained by this variable, it can be concluded that the academic achievement of the students can not be predicted by their educational aspiration.

The 't' test reveals that the high achievers in the disadvantaged group do not differ from the high achievers in the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their educational aspiration whereas it shows that the low achievers in the

disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged group differ significantly regarding their educational aspiration. This finding indicates that among the non-disadvantaged students both high and low-achievers have higher levels of educational aspiration whereas among the disadvantaged students only the high achievers have higher level of educational aspiration.

Many of the previous researchers have reported that students from higher socio-economic classes had higher level of educational aspiration (Bisht, 1972; Thakur, 1973; Papas, 1975; and Chopra, 1982). In contrast to the above findings the present study observed higher level of educational aspiration among the high achievers of disadvantaged group.

The following may be some of the reasons for the higher level of educational aspiration found among the high achievers of disadvantaged group in the present study as against the previous researches.

i) It may be due to the growing social awareness among the under-privileged sections of the society in the modern times.

ii) It could be due to the reservation of seats in the privileged courses such as medicine, engineering and

law and relatively low percentage of marks that is considered for their admission into these privileged courses.

iii) Scholarships, free boarding and lodging that they have been enjoying in the educational institutions and the quota of reservations that they have been allotted in different jobs.

These may be some of the factors which could have opened up the avenues of hopes and higher aspirations among the disadvantaged students which are otherwise constrained by their socio-economic background.

5.2.4 Pupils' Attitude Toward Teachers

Pupils' attitude toward teachers was identified as a significant correlate of academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The value of 'r' was higher for the disadvantaged groups (0.55) than for the non-disadvantaged group (0.34). A significant positive relationship between these two variables was also reported by some of the previous studies (Frymier, 1964; Gordon, 1977; Felland, 1980 and Reddy, 1978).

In the regression analysis also pupils' attitude toward teachers emerged as a common potential predictor of

academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. It explains 30.69 percentage of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group and 11.76 percentage of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group. This finding implies that the academic achievement of disadvantaged group can best be predicted by their attitude toward teachers. The attitude of pupils toward their teachers plays a vital role in their academic achievement. Frymier (1964) conducted a study to find out what motivates young people to do good work in the school and noticed that interest in the subject matter and liking the teacher were the reasons for their motivation. So it can be concluded that if the pupils like the teachers they may be motivated to study the subjects taught by him or her. Hence it is expected that there will be positive relationship between pupils' attitude toward teachers and their academic achievement. The present study also found significant positive relationship between pupils' attitude toward teachers and academic achievement in both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

The 't' test reveals that the non-disadvantaged students are comparatively better in their attitude toward teachers than the disadvantaged students. This finding can

be explained in the light of the theoretical background. The social class background of the disadvantaged students has provided skills, attitudes, values, outlooks, and behavioural patterns, significantly different from those reflected by the major institutions of the society. As a result these children face greater disadvantage in competitive social and educational institutions where the experiences of the middle class or upper class children constitutes the norm. In addition to that their parents also adopt poor child rearing practices and no socialisation process at home. They also have class and caste consciousness which develops low self-esteem in them. All these socio-cultural deprivations inhibit the development of a healthy attitude in disadvantaged children toward their teachers who mostly belong to upper socio-economic class.

5.2.5 Pupils' Attitude Toward School

Pupils' attitude toward school was identified as a significant correlate of academic achievement of disadvantaged ($r = 0.38$) and non-disadvantaged ($r = 0.31$) groups. Similar findings were also reported by some of the previous researchers (Rao, 1965; Abraham, 1974; Zacharia, 1977; Jain, 1979 and Chopra, 1982).

But the results of regression analysis reveal that pupils' attitude toward school explains only 1.25 percentage of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group and very negligible amount of variance (0.26 per cent) in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group. The variation in the findings of correlation and regression analysis may be due to the interaction between the variables in the regression analysis.

The 't' test indicates that the high and low achievers in the disadvantaged group differ significantly from those in the non-disadvantaged group regarding their attitude toward school. The attitude of disadvantaged students toward school was lower when compared to that of the non-disadvantaged students. Similar finding was also reported by Kamila (1986).

The following reasons may be attributed to the low level of attitude towards school observed among the disadvantaged students. Disadvantaged students who have a meagre environment basis for developing cognitive skills are often unprepared to cope with the formal intellectual and learning demands of the school. They lack general

verbal ability which inhibits communication with those who do not belong to their communities. Moreover the schools provide uniform instruction to all children assuming that all learners have the basic requisites necessary for learning. But such instruction do not cater to the needs of the disadvantaged students. Most often these children undergo unsatisfactory experience in the school.

Students who undergo unsuccessful experiences feel frustrated and humiliated especially when they are compared to their peer groups who are better prepared to meet the academic and social demands of the school. Such painful experiences, year after year, accumulate to cause negative attitude toward school as it is through the school they get such experiences.

In the class room instructional situation, the background characteristics of the learners should be taken into account. Most of the disadvantaged students do not have enough of facilities at home which would enhance learning. Their homes are mostly small, over-crowded with no adequate lighting facilities, educational materials such as books, newspapers and mass media like T.V. and Radio which also form sources of gaining knowledge. Most of the children brought

up in such environment find it difficult to cope up with the classroom instruction. Such students experience less success and more failure during their school life. The experiences of failure which they meet very often in school causes a dissaatisfied feeling toward school. The schools with their middle class values, teachers, contents and methods are alien and frightening places for some disadvantaged students who finally drop out from the school.

5.2.6 Perceived Parental Encouragement

The correlation analysis shows that pupils' perceived parental encouragement is positively associated with the academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-dadvantaged groups. But the value of 'r' is very low (0.09) for the disadvantaged group when compared to that ($r = 0.29$) of the non-disadvantaged group. A large number of previous studies have also reported a significant positive relationship between these two variables (Houston, 1979 ; Felland, 1980 ; Lupton, 1983 ; Lindeman, 1983 ; Vanarase, 1970 ; Reddy, 1973 and Barki, 1976).

In the regression analysis, perceived parental encouragement was identified as a significant predictor of academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group whereas it is not so for the disadvantaged group. The 't' test also

reveals that non-disadvantaged children received more encouragement from their parents than the disadvantaged children.

The following may be some of the reasons for the less amount of parental encouragement and guidance received by the disadvantaged students.

Most of the parents of disadvantaged students are illiterates and they do not perceive the value of education. Even if some parents appreciate school education, they lack in intellectual skills and the confidence required to help their children in the specifics of schooling.

They have been living a poor quality of life characterized by ignorance and obscurant beliefs for ages. They remain isolated from the educational institutions and they do not pay heed to the progress of their children. They are oriented to the present rather than the future, to immediate needs rather than delayed gratification. They have few ambitions for their children and are indifferent to their success or failure at school.

5.2.7 Socio-Economic Status

Socio-economic status was identified as a significant correlate of academic achievement of disadvantaged as well as

non-advantaged groups. In the regression analysis also socio-economic status emerged as a common significant predictor of academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. A large number of previous studies have also reported significant positive relationship between these two variables (Chandra, 1975 ; Lalithamma, 1975 ; Reddy, 1976 ; Contractor, 1977 ; Reddy, 1981 ; Khanna, 1980 ; Aruna, 1981 ; Chopra, 1982 and Rao and Subramaniam, 1982).

Contradictory findings were also reported by the previous researchers regarding the impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement. Jha (1970) ; Sudame (1973) , Reddy (1973), Salunke (1979) and Singh and Venkatachalam (1973) found no relationship between socio-economic status and academic achievement. Most of these studies have been conducted a decade back. The contradictory findings may be due to the changing trend in the socio-economic status in modern days.

The categorization of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups was made on the basis of their socio-economic status. Hence it was not attempted to compare these two groups regarding their socio-economic status. Whereas

an intra-group comparison was made between the high and low-achievers in the disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups to find out the impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement.

The 't' test reveals that high achievers differ significantly from the low achievers in disadvantaged as well as non-disadvantaged groups with respect to their socio-economic status. The mean socio-economic status scores of high-achievers is higher than that of the low achievers in both the groups. This finding indicates the positive impact of socio-economic status on academic achievement. A large number of previous studies have also reported that SES markedly influenced over and under-achievement (Pathak, 1972 ; Menon, 1972 ; Menon, 1973 ; Agarwal, 1975 Mathew, 1976 and Chopra, 1982).

In the present study SES includes different dimensions such as parental education, occupation, income, material possession, parents' social participation, size of the family, type of the family, newspaper and magazine subscription etc. Hence a high score on SES indicates that there is a conducive environment for learning at home. Hence it is natural that the students from high socio-economic status will achieve better in the school.

5.2.8 Academic Achievement

The present study attempts to predict the academic achievement of disadvantaged and nondisadvantaged students at the terminal stage of the primary school on the basis of the scores of 994 students (494 disadvantaged + 500 non-disadvantaged) in seven predictor variables. Both psychological and environmental variables are included as predictor variables. The psychological variables considered for the present study are achievement motivation, adjustment, educational aspiration, pupils' attitude toward teachers and pupils' attitude toward school. The environmental variables included in this study are socio-economic status and parental encouragement.

It is assumed that these psychological and environmental variables are significantly associated with the academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

It is also assumed that the academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups can be predicted by these selected predictor variables

The third assumption is that the disadvantaged group differs significantly from the non-disadvantaged group with respect to their academic achievement.

In order to test these assumptions correlation analysis, regression analysis and 't' tests were used.

The correlation analysis reveals that all the seven selected predictor variables are significantly associated with academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The findings reveal differential degree of relationship of each of these variables with academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The value of 'r' ranges from 0.09 to 0.55 for the disadvantaged group whereas it ranges from 0.13 to 0.34 for the non-disadvantaged group.

The regression analysis reveals that the following variables viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, adjustment, achievement motivation and socio-economic status are the significant predictors of academic achievement of the disadvantaged group and these variables explain 39.56 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group.

The variables which are identified as significant predictors of academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group are pupils' attitude toward teachers, perceived parental encouragement, achievement motivation, socio-economic status,

pupils' attitude toward school and educational aspiration. These variables explain only 21.07 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group. The contribution of the significant predictor variables to the academic achievement of disadvantaged group is almost double the amount when compared to that of the non-disadvantaged group. However the magnitude of contribution of these psychological and environmental variables towards academic achievement varies from the findings of the study conducted by Jindal and Mishra (1984). Jindal and Mishra (1984) have analysed a number of studies conducted in the area of correlates of academic achievement and arrived at a conclusion that only 36 per cent of variance may be accounted for by cognitive factors and the rest of the variance (64 per cent) may be due to non-cognitive and environmental factors.

The regression analysis also reveals that the same predictor variable contributes differentially to the academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. It may be due to the socio-economic, cultural, environmental and psychological differences existing between these two groups.

Another striking finding is that pupils' attitude toward teachers emerged as a significant potential predictor

of academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. This variable explains 30.69 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group and 11.76 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group. This finding reveals that academic achievement of all the students in general and particularly of the disadvantaged children can be improved by developing in them positive attitude toward teachers. Pupils' attitude toward teachers plays a vital role in their academic achievement. If the pupils like the teachers, they are motivated to learn the subjects taught by them. But the findings of the present study as well as some of the earlier studies (Miller, 1961 ; Pandey, 1981 ; and Kamila, 1986) reveal that disadvantaged children do not have favourable attitude toward teachers. Hence to improve the academic achievement of disadvantaged children, it is essential to develop positive attitude in them toward their teachers.

Adjustment is another important variable emerged as a significant predictor of academic achievement of the disadvantaged group. This variable explains 6.64 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group whereas it explains a very negligible amount (0.18) of variance

in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group. This finding reveals that the academic achievement of disadvantaged children can be improved by developing the adjustment ability in them. Adjustment is a psychological process by means of which the individual manages or copes with the various demands and pressures that are put upon him. The fact that maladjustment leads to underachievement was established by many researchers (Srivastava, 1967 ; Pathak, 1972 ; Saxena, 1972 ; Aruna, 1981). The findings of the present study as well as a number of earlier studies (Aruna, 1981 ; Koul, 1983 ; Sujatha and Yeshodhara, 1986 ; Roy, 1986) reveal that disadvantaged children face greater adjustment problems in the school. It was also found that these children have poor self-concepts, high anxiety and emotional problems (Klausmeier and Ripple, 1971), they manifest high degree of insecurity and maladjustment (Misra and Tripathi, 1980). Hence it would be appropriate to identify the causative factors of adjustment problems that are faced by the disadvantaged children so that some psychological inputs could be provided to these children.

The regression analysis also identified achievement motivation as a significant predictor of academic achievement

of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. Achievement motivation explains 1.61 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged group and 2.10 per cent of variance in the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged group. Some of the earlier studies have also reported the prediction power of achievement motivation for academic achievement (McClelland et al. 1953 ; Rosen, 1956 ; Robinson, 1964 ; Rai, 1974 ; Barki, 1976). Achievement motivation is the restless driving energy aiming at achieving excellence, getting ahead, improving on past records, doing things better, faster, more efficiently and finding unique solutions to difficult problems. The goal of the motive is defined as success in competition with a standard of excellence. Hence it is desirable to develop this motive among the children which will help them to achieve better in the school.

Socio-economic status is another variable identified as a common significant predictor of academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. It is expected that the social and economic characteristics of the parents play important role in offering opportunities to children which provide them differential educational experiences. The contribution of socio-economic status of

the parents to the academic achievement of their children has been investigated by many researchers and they have reported a significant positive relationship between these two variables (Agrawal, 1982 ; Shukla, 1984 ; Singh, 1986 ; Mehrotra, 1986 ; Mishra, 1986 ; Gupta, 1987 ; Kapoor, 1987 ; Tripathi, 1987 and Chakrabarti, 1988).

It is evident from the above discussion that three predictor variables viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, achievement motivation and socio-economic status are identified as common significant predictors of academic achievement for both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. This finding reveals the greater influence of these three variables in the academic achievement of the children at the terminal stage of the primary school irrespective of their background characteristics. The following table shows the order of entry of these three variables in the regression equation and the amount of contribution made to the academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups.

Table 5.1 : Rank order and percentage of variance explained
by the common significant predictors

Variable	Disadvantaged		Non-Disadvantaged	
	Percentage of variance	RANK	Percentage of Variance	RANK
Pupils' attitude Toward Teacher	30.69	I	11.76	I
Achievement motivation	1.61	III	2.10	III
Socio-economic Status	0.62	IV	1.71	IV

The Table 5.1 reveals that the common significant predictors hold the same ranks in both the groups though the percentage of variance explained by them is different.

Regarding the academic performance, a significant difference is found between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. The mean achievement score of disadvantaged group is 135.5 and that of non-disadvantaged group is 169.2. The 't' test also reveals that these two groups differ significantly

in their academic achievement. It is natural that the academic achievement of non-disadvantaged children will be certainly better than that of disadvantaged group. Similar finding is reported by a number of previous researchers also (Pandey, 1981; Koul, 1983; Sujatha and Yeshodhara, 1986 and Roy, 1986 and Patel, 1987).

The reasons for the poor academic performance of disadvantaged children can be explained in the light of the theoretical background. Disadvantaged children right from their birth suffer from social and economic deprivations. They have poor home environment, lack of adequate facilities, lack of motivation, economic hardship, cultural deprivation and emotional conflict emanating from the practice of untouchability. The loss of adequate cultural heritage and good socio-economic conditions adversely affect the disadvantaged children in developing capacities and characteristics essential for good educational attainment. These children have a meagre environment basis for developing cognitive skills and hence they are often unprepared to cope with the formal intellectual and learning demands of the school. Such early childhood experiences in poverty environments create enduring personality formations that are inimical to effective achievement striving not only in the class room but indeed in virtually all areas of life.

5.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE FINDINGS

The effectiveness of any educational system is judged by the quality of its products i.e. students. Academic performance is a significant indicator of student's quality. Therefore, improved academic performance of pupils indicates improved quality of the educational system. Academic achievement is a function of many factors in the cognitive, affective, psychomotor and environmental domains. Many studies have been conducted to identify the correlates of academic achievement and have come out with many suggestive measures.

The present investigation attempted to identify the significant predictors of academic achievement of the students at the terminal stage of the primary school. It also attempted to compare the factors influencing the academic achievement of disadvantaged students with those influencing the academic achievement of the non-disadvantaged students.

The study identified the following three factors viz., pupils' attitude toward teachers, achievement motivation and socio-economic status as common significant predictors

of academic achievement of the students at the terminal stage of the primary school. But the contribution of these three variables to the academic achievement of disadvantaged students is more than double the amount when compared to that of the non-disadvantaged students. This finding shows the greater impact of these three variables on the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

It is also found that the attitude of disadvantaged students toward their teachers is less favourable than that of the non-disadvantaged students. This implies the need for developing more positive attitude among disadvantaged students toward their teachers. The following measures can be adopted to develop positive attitude among the students in general and disadvantaged students in particular.

More number of teachers should be recruited from among SC/ST to reduce the existing gap between the teachers and the disadvantaged children. These teachers moreover, would serve as identification figures in the classroom for the disadvantaged children and may inspire them to do better. White (1971) rightly says "children in deprived areas need hopeful adult models with whom they can identify". Identification with the teachers of the same social class is easy for the disadvantaged children as it is for others.

The teacher education programmes should be remodelled to train the prospective teachers to acquire the techniques of teaching disadvantaged students with emphasis of understanding the values, attitudes and aspirations of low socio-economic group. This asks for introducing courses in child psychology, social Psychology, Sociology and Guidance and Counselling in teacher training programmes. Teachers should be trained to plan out and implement many of the special programmes intended for the education of SC/ST children and encourage them in all possible ways to come up in the academic ladder of progress and excellence. Continuous in service training programmes should be organized to develop the techniques of teaching the disadvantaged students who are entering the portals of educational institutions with varied aspirations, norms and values taking shapes and colours year after year as per their societal needs.

Curriculum should include lessons that will create awareness among the students about the wrong notions of the casteism existing in the society. It should contain biographies of the greatmen, heroes, scholars, bureaucrats, military officers etc., born in lower social class. Such

people will serve as models for the disadvantaged children and will help them acquire better concept of themselves. The stories and articles that denigrate them as a class of people should not find place in the curriculum. Rather new literature should be created to inspire them with self-confidence.

Another factor which is found to bear greater impact on the academic achievement of disadvantaged students is adjustment ability. It is also found that these students have more adjustment problems than their non-disadvantaged counterparts. It should be considered that a child spending the most formative years in the school, must have harmonious relationship with the environment for healthy educational growth during this period. Since the disadvantaged children are suffering from strong feelings of inferiority which leads to maladjustment, they should be helped to develop self-confidence and self-esteem so that they may feel equal to their middle class peer. The following measures could be adopted to solve the adjustment problems of disadvantaged children.

Guidance and counselling units should be started in all the schools particularly in the schools located in rural

and backward areas. The emotional problems of the disadvantaged children should be identified carefully and counselling services should be provided according to the individual needs. Sensitivity training programmes should be organized periodically for solving the emotional problems of the students and thereby developing their personality.

The study also identified achievement motivation as a significant predictor of academic achievement of the children at the terminal stage of the primary school. As the goal of achievement motivation is success in competition with a standard of excellence, the academic achievement of the students can be improved by increasing their level of achievement motivation. This implies the need for providing psychological education as a part of the school curriculum. This psychological input would develop better self-concept and enhance the achievement of the children.

Socio-economic status is also identified as one of the significant predictors of academic achievement of the children at the terminal stage of the primary school. It is also evident that disadvantaged children, suffer from socio-economic deprivation. Though it may not be possible to

raise the socio-economic status of these children by the teachers they can be helped to some extent to compensate the deficits caused by their impoverished environment. Educational planners and educators must consider that cognitive development is greatly affected by socio-economic deprivation. Early retardation in perceptual development leads to many future developmental hindrances including underachievement and low language proficiency. Instructional programmes in schools should take into account the socio-economic conditions of the pupils.

The state Government should take the responsibility of helping the disadvantaged children by providing all the facilities required for their education. A beginning is already made for the talented students of rural areas which also includes disadvantaged children with establishment of Navodaya Vidyalayas. More relevant are the ashram schools where pre-dominantly the disadvantaged children study. Such and other measures to compensate for the low socio-economic status should be taken by the State Government.

The nation has accepted socialism, egalitarianism and secularism as national goals. Equality of educational opportunity has been the guiding star of the new educational policy.

These national goals and the national philosophy should guide the administrators to provide compensatory educational programmes for disadvantaged children. Resources should not be a problem. The programme of value education in the school curriculum has to be dovetailed to the compensatory curriculum inputs for the disadvantaged children.

The findings relating to the academic achievement of the disadvantaged children are in line with the conclusion drawn from the theoretical framework. As the disadvantaged children are exposed to impoverished and unstimulating environments, their cognitive development will be poor when compared to the non-disadvantaged children. This in turn will have a downward pulling effect on the academic performance of these students. Hence the evaluation of the performance of the disadvantaged students should be criterion referenced rather than norm-referenced. In the latter case there is comparison with the non-disadvantaged children which will have deleterious effects on the educational development of disadvantaged students. Moreover the evaluation should be formative rather than only summative. It should serve to find out the learning weaknesses and should also aim at motivating them to work hard.

There is a great need to provide for a specially designed compensatory programme to enrich SC/ST students'

cognitive faculty and achievement to overcome their specific learning problems and difficulties. compensatory language programmes should also be organized to bridge the gap between home language and school language which goes a long way in facilitating better achievement among disadvantaged children.

Efforts should be made to establish community education centres in the rural and backward areas with facilities of radio, TV and newspapers along with reading materials to compensate for poor home environment. It is also very much essential to involve the parents in the process of education and orient them regarding the value of education through non-formal education centres.

It can be concluded by saying that the curriculum, the philosophy and practice must be such as to give way towards supplying a rich educational environment that is consistent with peculiarities and necessities of disadvantaged children

5.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS BASED ON INDEPTH STUDIES OF DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN

Indepth studies of 100 disadvantaged children were conducted with a view to get a vivid picture of various factors

that bear greater impact on their academic achievement. Based on the performance in the achievement tests, 50 high-achievers and 50 low-achievers were selected for the indepth studies.

The findings of the indepth studies reveal that 84 per cent of high-achievers have literate parents whereas only 28 per cent of low-achievers have literate parents. It also reveals that 60 per cent of high-achievers received guidance and encouragement from their parents whereas only 6 per cent of low-achievers received such type of guidance. This shows the influence of parents' education on the academic achievement of their children. This implies the greater need for educating the adults belonging to the disadvantaged section regarding the value of education through non-formal education centres.

The indepth studies also reveal that 76 per cent of high-achievers hail from urban areas whereas 68 per cent of low-achievers hail from rural area. A higher percentage of high-achievers had moderately equipped house when compared to the low-achievers. Whereas most of the low-achievers had ill-equipped house with no adequate lighting facilities, reading materials and mass media like T.V and Radio which also form sources of gaining knowledge

This finding implies the greater need for establishing community education centres in the rural and backward areas with all educational facilities to compensate the poor home environment.

Another important finding of the indepth studies is that 56 per cent of high-achievers hailed from small families whereas a higher percentage of low-achievers had medium and large sized families. This indicates the need for creating awareness among the people of disadvantaged section about population education which can be introduced through non-formal education programmes.

Another finding of the indepth studies is that 72 per cent of low-achievers aspired to become Government officers which may be due to their unawareness of different technical and vocational courses. This implies the need for offering vocational guidance for these children and introducing different technical and vocational courses at secondary level particularly in the schools located in the rural and backward areas.

5.5 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

1. The review of related studies reveals that most

of the studies attempt to find out the correlates of academic achievement of at high school or college level. More of such studies are needed at primary level where the rate of wastage and stagnation is found to be very high. The department of elementary education of the NCERT and SCERT/SIE have a positive role to play here. Studies about the correlates of achievement of primary school children would lead to the improvement of curriculum, teacher training etc. These institutions should plan out sequential studies in the area of correlates of achievement at the primary level.

2. A few attempts have been made to find out the factors influencing the academic achievement of disadvantaged children. There is a need of conducting more studies to understand the constraints of achievement of all underprivileged sections of the society which might facilitate the administrators to utilize such strategies that might help them in achieving better.

3. In the present study, the selected variables explained only 40 percent of variance in the academic achievement of dis-advantaged children. There is a need to identify the factors responsible for the remaining 60 per cent of

variance in the academic achievement of disadvantaged children.

4. The present study identified pupils' attitude toward teachers as a potential predictor of academic achievement of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children. Further researches are needed to identify the factors which are associated with pupils' attitude toward teachers and the effective techniques through which their attitude can be developed.

5. The present study has found out the effect of educational aspiration on academic achievement. Future researchers can link educational aspiration with vocational aspiration as both are inter-related.

6. The regression analysis model has been used in this study to predict the academic achievement of disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged groups. Further attempt could be made to verify this model on different sub-samples such as boys/girls and rural/urban.

7. Researches should focus on investigating the disadvantaged children more especially during the initial stage of the primary level so as to identify the

disadvantages caused by the poor socio-economic and environmental conditions and provide the appropriate remediation at the right moment so as to reduce its cumulative effect.

8. Lastly it is suggested that specially designed intervention programme should be tried out in different blocks in the country with a view to identifying a feasible and effective intervention programme to improve the growth and performance of both disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged children in the country.