CHAPTER   I

INTRODUCING   THE   PROBLEM

C O N T E N T S

I.1 THE PRESENT SCHOOL SYSTEM

It is common knowledge that different aspects of human growth and development are interdependent. Each aspect of human growth interacts and influences other aspects resulting in the development of the individual's personality. And, it is accepted that school education should facilitate an all round development of the individual. However, the system of schooling, as it exists today, emphasises the intellectual aspect of development with a highly subject-biased curriculum (Weinstein and Fantini, 1975). As a result, the other aspects of development of the pupil, in particular the emotional aspect, are generally neglected. Many a time, one would come across instances wherein the psychological development of the pupil is neglected, resulting in emotional imbalances and thereby blocking the pupils' intellectual growth.

Psychological development of a child would involve educating him in respect of several factors such as his adjustment, emotional stability and motivation. The experiences in schools should be so organized that the child grows into an individual who is well adjusted in school as well as in society and that he is emotionally stable and properly motivated to work for achieving his goals. It is imperative, therefore, that these psychological factors are kept in proper focus while developing the school curriculum and planning the experiences to be provided both within the classroom and outside.

Generally, the schools take the negative approach of the psychotherapist trying to bring round problem children without recognizing the fact that in most cases the uncongenial psychological environment, which prevails in the school itself, nurtures emotional imbalances in the children, who would then be branded as 'problem children'. On the other hand, if these psychological aspects are taken care of at an earlier stage, such problems may not arise at all. In other words, school should evolve more efficient methods which would promote balanced psychological growth, preventing such undesirable problems from occurring.

The idea of 'Deschooling Society' given by Illich and his associates (1973) and other similar ideas frequently presented in recent literature on school education, in a way, reactions to the failure of present system of schooling to realize the non-academic goals of education, which are no less important than the academic ones from the point of view of human development. These reactions include radical suggestions for the reformation of the total system of education. They, however, do not offer any solution to the problem; nor do they point to its actiology. They, at the most, restate the problem in a more convincing way.

From the point of view of academic psychology, the problem would be one of undue emphasis on cognitive aspect and neglect of the affective domain of development. The educational

practitioners have failed also to recognize the underlying bonds of relationship between cognition and affection as they operate in classroom learning situations. As Krathwohl, et al. (1956) have pointed out the affective domain contain the forces that determine the nature of an individual's life of which his intellectual equipment is only a part. Teachers have to look upon pupils as a whole human being who has feelings - feelings which would directly influence his intellectual growth. As Weinstein and Fantini (1975) have pointed out the pervasive emphasis on cognitive domain and its separation from affective domain, poses a threat to the society in that educational institutions may produce detached individuals uncommitted to humanitarian ends.

I.2 THE NEED FOR HUMANISTIC APPROACH

Combs (1975) has suggested that the solution to the problem lies, perhaps, in bringing about a radical change in the basic approach to organization of schooling in general, and classroom instructional work in particular. The right approach would have its roots in humanism whose major tenet is to place the emphasis on the organism's self-actualizing tendencies and continuing drive towards adequacy instead of modifications of behaviour through external controls. Another pertinent feature of the humanistic philosophy is the strong conviction that each person is unique and he brings into this world a unique combination of qualities. It is in his social interaction that he grows and learns and becomes what he is potentially. The third and final feature of humanism is its recognition of the vital

role, which the emotions play in being human. Emotions are recognized as a part of the person, as much an important part as his intellect. They are a part of what it is to be alive Davis(1971) At the same time, it is clear that the emotions are not some force which is in conflict with the intellect. In fact, both the affective and the cognitive domains go together in a human personality.

I.3   INTEGRATION OF COGNITIVE AND AFFECTIVE DOMAINS

The integration of cognitive learning with affective learning would be a natural outgrowth of humanistic education. It would require a major change in the role of the teacher who at present mostly tries to shape the student according to the academic goals frequently ignoring the aspect of actualization or growth of the individual's affective domain. The role of the teacher in humanistic education, in large part, would lie in the creation of productive learning experiences. This demands the teacher to have a rich repertoire of pedagogic procedures and to be knowledgeable about the fundamental goals of human development. The teacher should respect the child as a human being considering it her privilege to assist him in unfolding his dormant potentialities through appropriate activities. Simultaneously, she should help him realize that the responsibility for the way he lives life is his own. This would presuppose great ingenuity on the part of the teacher in selecting and organizing classroom experiences.

As Combs (1975) points out from the humanistic point of view, the teacher has to take into account a broad spectrum of goals with regard to both the individual and human kind. The maximal learning of subject matter is also an objective but not the only one. Further, the teacher, in a humanistic set up, adopts a holistic inferential approach to the understanding and assessment of human behaviour and its causation. This enables the teacher to evidently develop vital understanding of the child without the necessities of atomistic approaches. The typical school goals of humanistic courses aim for long term internalization and not short term gains in mastery. If humanistic education courses are to be introduced in schools, corresponding new procedures should be made available in regular courses in order that the students practice what they have learned.

Alschuler (1975) suggests that the educators should turn to psychologists not merely for additional help in increasing the rate of knowledge-acquisition but more urgently to find out what the schools can do regarding the problems of adjustment, emotional stability and motivation. Schools as such are doing almost nothing to prepare students psychologically either for life in the school or for life after schooling. This essentially implies bringing about desirable changes in the psychological domain of the pupils' personality. This leads one to the concept of psychological education. Psychological education, here, does not mean the induction of one psychological trait

but the development of the total personality. This requires the organization of school activities in such a way as to result in the integration of the affective aspect of learning with other aspects.

This would mean that the teachers' classroom work need be restructured and new pedagogic approaches need be adopted which would integrate psychological inputs with academic work in classroom. The present study is an attempt to develop a psychological education input model and to study its effectiveness.

I.4 THE PROBLEM

The problem to be investigated in the present study may be stated in the following terms:

"EFFECTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EDUCATION INPUTS ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN".

I.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Various objectives of the study are specified as follows:

1. To develop a psychological education input model for primary school children.

2. To experimentally study the effectiveness of the psychological education inputs in bringing about changes with respect to the following major components of psychological

development:

(i)   Need Achievement

(ii)   Adjustment

(iii)   Classroom Trust

(iv)   Test Anxiety

(v)   Initiative Level

(vi)   Activity Level

(vii)   Goal Setting Behaviour

(viii) Risk-taking Behaviour

(ix)   Perception of Self Image

(x)   Perception of Goals

(xi)   Attitude Towards School

(xii)   Perception of Teachers' Role

(xiii) Perception of Role of the Self in School

(xiv)   Non-academic Interests

(xv)   Images for Emulation

(xvi)   Social Relationships

3. To study the effect of psychological education inputs on the academic performance of the pupils.

The first phase of investigation will involve the development of the model. Before experimenting to study its effectiveness, it would be necessary to tryout the same. Thus, the investigation will be carried out in three steps:

1. Development of the psychological education input model.

2. Tryout of the model.

3. Experimental study of the effectiveness of the model.

Further, the effectiveness of the model will be studied from two points of view. The first aspect, as has been specified earlier, relates to measuring its effectiveness in bringing about the psychological development in children, and the second aspect would be to measure its effect on academic performance.

I.6 SCHEME OF CHAPTERS

A brief description of the organization of content in the forthcoming chapters of the thesis has been given in the following paragraphs.

The first chapter is the present chapter and hence needs no description.

The second chapter presents a review of previous researches done in the area of psychological education. It includes studies conducted in India as well as abroad.

The third chapter begins with statements of the hypotheses to be tested under the study. It also gives details relating to the sample chosen, the methodology adopted, tools used, and techniques of analysis employed for studying the results obtained.

The fourth chapter consists of schematic presentation

of the psychological education input models developed by earlier researchers, along with, a critical discussion of all these models. It also presents a schematic as well as descriptive form/the psychological education input model develop/under the present study.

The fifth chapter presents the results and discussion of the tryout study, and the modifications made on the input model for final experiment. Then, the results of the final experiment and detailed discussion of them have been presented.

The sixth chapter gives a brief summary of the present study, the major findings, observations and suggestions for further research and development activities in area of psychological education.