

CHAPTER - II

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCHES

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to survey and review the research studies carried out in past taking into consideration the variables selected for the present study. The main focus is given on two major socio-psychological variables namely Peer Influences and Educational Aspiration.

A review of previous researches generally should not confine itself in listing the studies only rather it should help in formulating research problem, specifying objectives, developing theoretical background, designing appropriate model, selecting proper methodology and also in drawing meaningful conclusions and inferences. In the fulfilment of above mentioned functions, there lies the necessity of reviewing the previous studies.

Keeping these as guidelines an exhaustive review of the past few decades has been presented in this chapter. It has taken its shape in the form of brief abstracts of the studies conducted on variables decided earlier for the present study, highlighting their objectives, content and implementations.

1.2 CLASSIFICATION OF STUDIES

Contrary to the physical sciences there is nothing like absolute truth in the social sciences. Moreover, as it is relative to the various social contexts, without considering the context, any attempt to study social problems is not justifiable. It appears appropriate therefore to consider the societal contexts alongwith its different sources of impact for reviewing and evaluating any sociological study.

The present day is the age of space. The accelerating technological wave not only influences in the field of science and technology but also in other disciplines like education, psychology, sociology etc. But it is seen that western countries are taking lead in most of the fields. It has been presumed that due to the incidental exposure to western civilization, education system in India is more or less influenced by the aims, ideals, methods or expected educational outcomes of the western nations. Thus, by reviewing studies done in India and outside India, it is likely to get relevant clues pertaining to the present problem. Taking past studies as base, it is also expected to derive the appropriate measures for the study undertaken. The studies reviewed have been classified into two broad categories :

Studies on Peer Group.

Studies on Educational Aspiration.

Instead of having a mere chronological discussion, studies are classified into some major groups. Each group purports to focus on a particular theme of that variable.

1.3 STUDIES ON PEER GROUP

From the onset of the present century, a large number of studies have been done taking peer-group as a point of reference. The effect of peer group influences on children and adolescents has interested educators, social psychologists and sociologists for many years. In an article by Judith K. Ide et al. (1981), a research synthesis has been presented on influence of peer-groups on elementary and high school student's achievement and their educational and occupational

aspirations. In that article Walberg (1980) classified the peer group as one of the primary factors that influence school achievement. The studies reviewed here also have shown the various dimensions of peer-group as a variable.

It is clearly distinct that early studies were primarily concerned with the identification of the peer-group as a powerful factor in child's development. Campbell (1964) in a review of researches on peers, noted that in 1904, Terman conducted research on leadership and suggestibility in elementary school children. In 1909, Cooley identified "Fellowships" that boys form around 12 years of age. Puffer (1912) collected case histories of what he termed 'gangs' and concluded that the 'character of these gangs determines in no small degree what sort of men these boys will become'.

In the 1920's, interest in the peergroup continued to grow. Hurlock (1927) showed the importance of group rivalry as an incentive to win. Furfey (1927) studied friendship choices of boys and Thrasher (1927) recognized, high levels of 'group cohesiveness' and the existence of 'common codes' among peers.

The contributions made by Dorothy Thomas and J.L. Moreno in the methodology of peer research are worth mentioning. Thomas (1933) perfected observation techniques and Moreno (1934) devised sociometric procedure to measure peergroup membership. The sociometry has become so widely used tool that in most of the studies the two terms 'peergroup influence' and sociometric status' have been used as interchangeable terms.

No doubt this methodological advancement has brought new vision in the study of socialization process and its impact in the field of education.

Following second world war, a perceptible shift is observed in peer group studies. Researchers got interested in the effect of the peer-group on socialization as well as its effect on achievement and aspirations. In 1957 Rosenthal established that socio-metric position is positively related to the quality and social usefulness of spoken language.

Ausubel (1958) concluded that "peers tend to replace parents as interpreters and enforcers of the moral code".

But the book 'The adolescent society' by Coleman (1961) can be called a milestone in peer-group studies. He pointed out that several researchers have acknowledged the influence of the peer group on school achievement. Moreover, he distinguished several types of peer-groups and their effects on attitudes and values.

Probably, the Soviet Union had done more than any other nation to exploit the potential influence of the peer group on the individual. Bronfenbrenner (1962) stated on the basis of his first hand observations and study that "Collectives of youths very early surpass the family as primary agents of socialization and as soon as feasible, adults are replaced by specially trained peers in evaluating and rewarding members of the collective".

Kandal and associates (1968) also suggested that the peer group serves to reinterpret parent behaviour and standards for the adolescent, resulting in greater influence over individual behaviour.

In Indian context also a considerable number of studies have been reported on peer group. Although most of the studies concentrated on widely used sociometric technique, an increasing trend was observed specially during the past four years of the present decade for alternative methodologies. In one of the earliest studies done by Malhotra (1963), it was suggested that sociological factors are more important than psychological ones. The significant finding of the study was the awareness of some unknown factor 'X' which seems to be dominating above all the assumed factors both sociological and psychological.

Koranne (1973) studied the causes of sociability, its relationship with intelligence and school performance of adolescent pupils of Ahmedabad city and found that sociability was positively related to school performance. By using linear correlation the study also found that economic condition affects the pupil's sociability in the class.

Sharma (1974) of Meerut University, designed a study to find out both cognitive and noncognitive correlates of sociometric status. He also established that intelligence played an important role in making children accepted.

In 1975, Badami & Badami studied group status in relation to school achievement as revealed by sociometric test. Incidentally, this is the only study in India concentrating itself on the phenomenon of peer-group

influence. The study documented the fact that positive relationship appeared to exist between degree of peer-group acceptance-rejection and school achievement. The interesting finding was of course the doubtful role played by school achievement in determining the group status of an individual pupil among his peers.

Inclusion of different aspects in the review of peer group literature of course implies its vastness, but learning in social context is of comparatively recent origin. In the book 'The Social context of Instruction' (1984), Cohen illustrated how classroom peer interaction could have simultaneously positive, and negative effects on learning. Although participation in classroom and influence are often accepted as inevitable consequences of individual differences in ability, they can also be seen as a product of the status structure of the classroom.

2.3.1 Studies Focusing on Peer Influence - Parental Influence - Teacher Influence

The relative influence of parents and peers during adolescence is the subject matter of a large body of literature. Some studies also included a third variable viz., teacher influence.

In 1963, Brittain of Emory University, tried to explore the extent to which adolescents are peer conforming or parent conforming in making choices. He used the concept of reference group as one, whose perspectives constituted the frame of reference and both peers and parents might be thought of as reference groups. Taking adolescent girls as sample, the study explored the

hypothesis suggested by reference group theory by providing some hypothetical conflict situation. It was revealed that adolescents conformed either to the parents or peers according to the situations provided. The most significant contribution of the study was the use of hypothetical situations to assess the individual differences toward peer versus parent conformity.

On the same line of thought, Larson (1969), of University of Alberta also investigated the relative impact of parent and peer orientations by using the situational approach like Brittain. His study dealt with the structure and process of social influence during adolescence and specifically attempted to trace the interpenetrations and linkages among the central referents in the life space of the adolescents. He concluded with a weak relationship between the pressure of parents and peers. Ofcourse, he expressed the limited insight provided by the hypothetical situations and suggested for other methodological techniques.

In 1972, McClintock assessed the salience and nature of the socialization experience of high school adolescents and compared with their experience with adults and peers outside the high school. The researcher conceptualized high schools as a social system. Results disclosed parents as the most, peers as less and teachers as the least salient agents of socialization. The study also showed that relationships with peers were characterized by strong affective bonds.

The study done by Cotugno (1974) of Rutgers University explored the ways in which adolescents reflect the values of adults. The sociological literature on adolescence tends to focus on the concept of youth culture.

The key findings estimated through path-analysis were that measured intelligence and socio-economic status had the greatest influence on educational plans while family structure was of lesser importance. The author concluded that both parents and peers did play a role in decision making.

Gautama (1974) of Punjab University, made a sociometric study of the patterns of social interaction among principals teachers and students in higher secondary schools. The study indicated the assumptions of only two theories of social interaction, viz., exchange and power theory. Both the principals and the students pointed out positive social interactions with those teachers who had greater power of exchange with them. Tendencies of sex segregation and sex antagonism were found both among the teachers and the students. The study indicated no association between social interaction among the students and their caste and personality adjustment while high positive association between socio-economic status and positive social interaction was found.

Atwood (1979) carried out an exploratory study on correlates of student influence on teacher behaviour. The study investigated that students who had a reputation for influence with the teacher would also be perceived as powerful in the social system of the classroom or the school. The researcher suggested fruitful areas for further sociological research.

An experimental study was done by Engel-Bland (1979) of Duke University on the effects of teacher approval or disapproval on elementary school children's perceptions of peers. The study supported the theory that in a classroom setting, teacher attitude toward a

child is a dominant source of information used by peers in forming their impressions of the child as children relied on peer-groups for support and identity.

Ritchey (1981) of West Virginia University studied the effects of children's approval and compliance on peer and teacher ratings. The study suggested "different positive behaviours have different effects on ratings depending upon the nature of the rating task as well as characteristics of the rater and ratee".

Reddy (1981) of Osmania University, studied the nature of inter and intra group interactions of students, teachers and parents in the educational setting. It was found that majority of the students had intentions to continue their studies and discussed college plans with teachers, parents or others. Other two significant findings of this were : (1) top achievers consulted teachers in and out of the classroom setting to clarify their doubts more than the medium achievers and low achievers, (2) some of the major leisure time activities of students were listening to radio, going to farm, attending movies etc.

Robinson (1982) had done a longitudinal study of elementary school students peer relationships and teachers' perceptions of adjustment. By using discriminant analysis, the study showed that group membership could be predicted with 80% accuracy from sociometric scores. Overall, the research showed that sociometric measures are predictive of later perceptions of adjustment by teachers over periods upto three years. It also showed sociometric measures as stable index of peer relations.

Passuth (1984) showed through her study that children's socialization in context of the peer group and

family took place within age hierarchies. The thesis examined how age status was negotiated in interaction between children and parents.

Recently in 1985, Richmond of Macquarie University studied the relationship of grade, sex, ability and socio-economic status to parent, peer and school affiliation. The study found that home and school affiliation scores declined with age while peer affiliation scores increased. It also expressed that secondary school male students were more parent and less peer oriented than their female counterparts. The study developed an inventory to measure affiliation for each reference group. The significant finding concurring with previous studies was that social interaction processes in school might differ between the sexes and those differences needed to be taken into account when research was planned.

2.3.2 Studies Focusing on Peer Influence - Academic Achievement - Cognitive Development.

A large number of studies are found taking peer group as a reference group and its impact on achievement and development of students.

The study carried out by Cocalis (1972) evaluated the effectiveness of two separate reward procedures designed to raise the performance level of academic under achievers through experimental design. Results indicated that the peer-group reward procedure was significantly more effective ($P < .05$) than the no treatment control procedures for increasing spelling achievement levels. The study supported the notion that the involvement of the peer group rather than rewards was the critical factor in the success of earlier group reward studies.

Dhaliwal (1972) of Guru Nanak University had done a study on the relationship between popularity among peers and academic achievement and established the significant and positive relationship between popularity and intelligence as well as achievement. The study ofcourse found insignificant relationship ($r = 0.29$) between achievement and popularity when intelligence hald constant. He made a serious and thought provoking suggestion for taking popularity score as a continuous variable and using eta coefficient as the measure of relationship.

Golden (1972) of Perdue University studied on environment, peergroups and personal characterstics and assessed their impact on university students. The study advanced a contingency model relating to the level and location of environmental impact to synthesize the specific results. The study revealed the fact that individual characterstics and peergroup influences did relate highly to grade point average and participation in activities. The study also evaluated an educational environment instrument viz., College and University Environment Scale (CUES) as it was related to that university. Environment was thought to be influenced by the peergroup and academic school in addition to the overall university setting and it was supported by the result.

Lewis and John (1974) undertook a study on contribution of cross racial friendships to minority group achievement in desegregated classrooms through path analysis. Although path analysis cannot establish a causal relation, it indicates the consistency of an assumed ordering and separates the direct from the indirect effects of the variables on each other. The analysis supported the notion that acceptance by white peers facilitates the academic

In 1979, Emmerich et al. studied relationship between cognitive and social functioning in pre school children. The findings indicated that both are linked by partially overlapping process rather than by strong mutual interactions. Ofcourse, the study suggested that a fuller sampling of the child's social behaviours, both in and out of school, might yield greater evidence for the distinctive influence of social functioning on cognitive development.

In another study done by Peterson & Janicki (1979) on individual characteristics and children's learning in large group and small group approaches indicated that student's achievement and attitude could be improved by adapting instruction to the needs of the individual students.

Houston (1979) investigated the relationship among the affective, parental, social and peer influences on achievement in mathematics among black Anglo and Chicano adolescents. Multiple Regression Analysis used in the study, indicated that race was the primary source of variance. Predictor Variables as a set contributed to a significant amount of variance in mathematics achievement. Among five affective variables only mother influence and male domain were significant.

Another study done by Malowitzky (1979) of Yeshiva University, investigated the manner in which the student is perceived by significant others and by himself as related to academic achievement. Findings, however, suggested that there were significant differences between successful and under achiever student in terms of how others view them.

Sandeep (1979) of Osmania University had tried to ascertain the influence of classroom interaction on cognitive development of primary children, taking the typology of teaching styles by Bennet and Jordan. He established the fact that schools differed in their classroom interaction which affected adversely the attainment of perceptual and cognitive skills.

Richardson (1980) of the University of Michigan explored the effects of age, year and Cohort on involvement in friendships and peer relations. The study revealed highly significant relationships between status perception and psychological involvement although it stated that findings were not a function of cognitive or verbal skill. The study also attempted to contribute to theories concerned with social bonding and the formation as well as theories relating to social network, role discontinuity and ego changes in adulthood.

Based on previous studies of learning in groups, Webb (1980) analysed group interaction and mathematical errors in heterogeneous ability groups. The study revealed that high ability students did best in the individual condition, low ability did best in group and medium ability did equally well. It also established the fact that group interaction was related to achievement.

In 1981, Poteat of the University of Tennessee, investigated the behavioral correlates of the peer sociometric status of elementary students. Using discriminant analysis, the study indicated that high and low status subjects behaved differently and that behavioral differences varied between academic and non academic settings. But it also showed that measure of social interaction did not discriminate between high and low status students in either

setting. Thus the impact of the type of setting has been highlighted by the study.

Powell (1983) of Rutgers University designed a study to evaluate the effects of peer group training on student's attitudes, academic achievement and selected behaviours related to student participation with the help of a peer-led training project. The study found no significant differences, which were supposed to be due to variation in implementation of peer group objectives.

In the same year (1983), Corkery of the University of Georgia, investigated the relationship of self concept to sociometric status, anxiety and academic achievement among middle school students. The results found strong positive relationship between cognitive perceived competence scale for children (PCSC), and ITBS achievement results in mathematics and reading as well as peer rating concerning potential study partners. For both achievements, peer choices of study partners were found to be the most powerful predictors. The study also indicated positive relationship between self concept and peer acceptance and achievement. It was interesting to find out that females were rated higher by their peers as study partners. The study suggested for multi dimensional studies of achievement in academic setting.

Panda (1983) made an exploratory study to analyse the relationship between sociometric index, N-Ach and rated pupil characteristics. She found the coefficients of teacher's rating of pupils and pupils' sociometric status were not significant and all relationships were negative.

In 1984, Agrawal and Power designed their study to investigate the role played by mental health and cognitive variables in adolescent peer group acceptance (PGA). They found that adjustment was the only statistically significant correlate, being negatively related to PGA. Further the study showed non-significant correlation between intelligence and peer group acceptance. The significant finding was of course that intelligence and adjustment together accounted for more variance in adolescent peer-group acceptance.

In the University of Pennsylvania, Clifford (1984), assessed the degree of relation among the variables - sociometric status, adjustment and achievement in a public school minority group population. The research differed from others in two fundamental ways : minority pupils comprised the majority of the sample; and both normal and maladjusted groups were studied. The results of canonical variate analysis indicated the presence of significant relations between sociometric status with adjustment and achievement. But cross validation analysis uphold the relationship between adjustment and sociometric status only. Thus conclusion was drawn that sociometric status of minority pupils was seemingly not as directly related to achievement as in other populations. Another significant finding was the negative sociometric status as better predictor of adjustment than positive sociometric status. The relation of gender to negative sociometric status was of another significant interpretive value. Specifically, boys in normal classrooms received significant greater negative sociometric ratings while girls in maladjusted class rooms received significantly greater negative sociometric ratings than boys. A double standard was manifested where peers were unfavourably biased against girls who demonstrated maladjusted behaviour.

Hatch (1984) of the University of Florida had done a naturalistic investigation of child to child interaction in a kindergarten classroom on the social goals of children. By dividing social goals into three basic areas viz., affiliation, competence and status goal, the study concluded that children placed high values on social goals in relationship with peers. The study also demonstrated that strategies for accomplishing social goals revealed capacities for reasoning and perspective taking.

2.3.3. Studies Focusing on Other Aspects

From the onset of the decade of 70's a large number of studies are found taking peer group as a reference group. The studies attempted to focus on peer group from various perspectives e.g., developing different methodologies, studies on exceptional children and in settings other than school, examining the nature of peer-group etc.

Thus a considerable number of studies are found concentrating in measurement techniques of peer-group (Siman 1977; McCullah 1980; Fox 1985; Richmond 1985).

A new model of the peer group influence process was proposed and tested using questionnaire responses by Siman (1977) of City University of New York. The model utilised two group components : homogeneity of behaviour for all members of a particular clique and existence of diversity in terms of deviation of individual behaviour from the group norm. The study supported the idea that negative antisocial behaviour tend to be associated with peer-group and peer influence. It also supported that males are more susceptible to peer influence than the females.

McCullagh (1980) of Northern Illinois University developed an inventory to measure peer group assertiveness. It tried to measure young adolescents' ability to refuse unreasonable peer requests. He also ascertained significant differences between grade and sex on the scores of that inventory.

In a game playing context, Taylor (1984) supported the usefulness of self report method for assessing children's goals and suggested that popular and unpopular children had different goal orientation.

Fox (1985), used hypothetical dilemmas for measuring determinants of adolescent peer conformity. The study obtained significant relationship between conformity and self-monitoring public self-consciousness, external locus of control and low cognitive self concept.

The situational variability started long back by Brittain, Larson etc. is now a well established finding in peer group literature.

An affiliation inventory for three reference groups viz., parent, peer and school had been developed by Richmond (1985). The study supported the idea that high achieving students may be less peer oriented since high achievement was often obtained in competition with and at the expense of peers.

Among other studies depicting different dimensions of peer group, Roistacher (1972) of the university of Michigan, established the fact that members of the largest cliques in each school were distinguished by greater participation in sports, greater reported conformity to peer group norms and more concerned with gaining status from school activities than the non-members.

Iacovetta (1973) examined three dimensions of peer group involvement as : frequency of interaction with peers, dependence upon peers and autonomy of interaction with peers. The study revealed that socio-economic status retained a statistically significant independent effect with respect to first two dimensions. In addition it also demonstrated that quality of adolescent-adult interaction had a moderate independent effect upon frequency of peer interaction whereas it had a substantial independent effect upon peer dependence and peer autonomy.

Biswas (1977) studied interpersonal relationship in classroom situation as reflected on social desirability scale. The study revealed that social desirability characteristics contributed to interaction process in a group and determined social acceptability and friendship relations in a group. It also found out sociometric choice status was stable over sixteen weeks period and it was related with social desirability characteristics.

Singleton and Asher (1977) of the university of Illinois used a roster and rating scale instead of peer nomination measure. "In this method the child gives a rating on a numerical scale to all the members of a class who are listed on a class roster (Roistacher, 1974)". Results indicated positive peer effect and relative influence of both race and sex on sociometric choices. Findings had implications for the evaluation of programmes designed to improve class room social climate for assessing cross sex and cross-race relationship.

Furmon and Masters (1980) had done a study on peer interactions sociometric status and resistance to deviation in young children based on reference group theory of social influence. Findings confirmed that peers and peer interaction

may serve a reference function and this process influenced the behaviour of young children. One significant conclusion of this study was that interactional and preferential (status) aspects of peer relations appeared to be separate.

In a study done by Upamanyu & Upamanyu (1982) an attempt was made to find out the role of motives and intelligence in one's sociometric status. The notable feature of this study was to verify the same or different basis for selection of various sociometric criteria. Although Moreno (1960) stated that "by pooling information on different sociometric criteria, differentiation of social status is lost". This study confirmed that same basis existed for choices to different sociometric criteria.

Dash & Das (1984) had made a comparison in their study between sociometric nominations and peer ratings. They concluded that peer ratings confirmed sociometric findings and it could be used either independently or in conjunction with sociometry to unravel various behavioral and social competencies of children. This had confirmed the findings done by Cowen and his associates (1973). Korman (1968) concluded that "peer ratings are better predictors than psychometric procedure and better than most objective tests". Similar conclusions were also drawn by Lindzey & Bryne (1969) and Miner (1968).

Thus researchers are engaged in measuring and analysing peer group theme from various perspectives.

A substantial number of studies on peer group are found as comparative studies. In an experimental study, Bhanot (1967) of Jabalpur university examined and found out significant differences between high cohesive and low

cohesive groups regarding decision taking and other behaviours. Coan (1972) of the university of Michigan compared the effects of peer group influence on changes in personal maturity in residential and traditional college settings and findings raised possibility of greater impact of residential environment. The study found out amounts of social interaction and peer group climate as non-significant predictors to personal growth. A similar study was done by Chanda (1973) of Agra university and found that residential higher secondary schools were more cohesive, more integrated and having less social distance. One important finding was that residential schools were superior in socio-economic status and intelligence of students. He also found both the classrooms as heterogenous units.

In the study done by Vyathit (1973) a comparison was made between effective and ineffective class room groups. The sample was taken from middle school and it was found that coeducational classroom groups had better interpersonal relationships than boys or girls. Effective classroom group was also found superior in the same one. Interesting finding was of course that number of stars was smaller in girls' group while number of isolates was smaller in coeducational school.

In the year 1980, two comparative studies are found. Joshi tried to find out the difference between star and isolate girls in respect of thirty two selected variables. The study found high achievers preferred technical field in selection of future vocation. It was also found that stars preferred Mathematics and Science as favourite subjects and engaged in hobbies like debate-essay competition, science club activities etc. The another important finding was that stars belonged to higher income families and were having high achiever friends. In the other study Bahuguna found out that low achieving schools had better pupil-pupil relationship on the basis of sociometric test than high achieving schools.

Mishra (1981) analysed the behaviour patterns of stars and isolates among school going adolescents by random cluster sampling. He classified behaviours into five areas : mental, educational, social, physical and ethical. He concluded that the behaviours of 'social area' were most important in selection of stars and isolates, whereas the behaviours of 'ethical area' were more important in girls groups compared to boys. Another finding was lack of many qualities of 'mental area' was the prominent reason in rejection.

From a different perspective, Madhosh (1982) studied the personality correlates of sociometric status in different subcultures of Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. By making intra and inter subcultural comparisons, he found marked personal characteristics of populars, isolates and neglectees of these three regions.

Researchers did not confine their attempts on normal children and thus studies are found on exceptional children also.

Grenell (1983) clarified through his study that hyper-active children exhibited deficits both in their knowledge of appropriate social behaviour and ability to demonstrate such behaviour. Attentional deficit theory was used for discussion of results.

Reed (1983) found significant difference in acceptance between handicapped and non-handicapped students by using the modified version of peer rating scale. The results also asserted that sex, race and SES did not have a significant influence.

While Smith (1983) of Perdue university showed through her study lower social acceptance for handicapped by peers among main streamed students, Murphy (1983) revealed through her study that 'learning disabled' children were significantly less socially accepted than their nonlearning disabled peers (NLD) . But the study suggested that despite the social interaction difficulties LD children exhibited systematic intervention programs to improve peer relationship.

In the study done by Cowardin (1984) the results indicated that youngsters in learning handicapped (LH) groups were rated lower in social status than non handicapped (NH). The study also showed that girls as well as older students were more accepting. The findings suggested the implication of supportive peer environment. Matis (1984) indicated through a study that learning disabled (LD) adolescents are socially unacceptable in comparison with their non disabled peers.

Two studies had been reported in 1981, done in different settings other than school. Drassner of Newyork university explored the relation between a set of social climate variables and a set of interpersonal status variables within three residential units of drug free therapeutic community. The study concluded that differential social climate perception of social control may be more characteristics of drug free therapeutic communities than other communities. Supplementary analysis suggested that interpersonal attractiveness in a therapeutic community is a cross-situational dimension.

In the second study by Polemi-Todoulon was on interdependence of co-operation in family and peer group in a

Greek island community. The study revealed that the social roles the children assumed in the peer group were related to analogous roles experienced in the family.

Three studies were found taking sample from infant's and pre-school children. In the first study, Ciccone (1980) showed that high rated children interacted longer and more skilled children used greater proportion of utterances in preschool classrooms. Goldstein (1981) tested the novel stimulus hypothesis in four experimental conditions on preschool children's attitudes and behaviours toward stigmatized peers. The findings showed highly significant interaction between age and duration of eye contact. In the third study, Geismar (1984) investigated the influence of differing type of play materials on infant peer interaction. AOV revealed four conditions influenced the infant's social behaviour. The study stated that varying peer experiences laid the ground work for later childhood friendships.

A previously neglected topic sibling relationship had been high lighted by a study done by Lapidus (1983) of Newyork university. The study investigated that there was continuity of instrumental role between sibling relationship and peer group. The study was based on the theoretical framework from family system, family differentiation and group dynamics theory.

Besides the above discussed aspects in peer group studies, some other studies are found depicting the relationship between peer related factors and other psychological factors (Pathak 1971; Upamanyu 1974; Raviv 1977; Cheema 1981; Mishra 1981; Chauhan 1982; Grummon 1982; Hymal 1982; Lesko 1983; Boggiano et al. 1986). While Chauhan found sex differences in three dimensions of

of sociometric structure; Cheema found locality (rural/urban) as a significant factor in formation of cliques. Both studies were conducted among college students. Again Upamanyu found negative correlation between anxiety and sociometric status but Mishra found significant correlation between self rating and rating about friends on personality characteristics. Hymel indicated that social status of perceiver had virtually no effect on interpretations of peer behaviour which is varied with age, sex and affect. Leske established the fact that peer groups were strongly divided on the definitions of peer relations and use of the school body. But peer groupings and antagonisms were moderated by common school experiences.

Boggiano et al. (1986) examined the effects of providing different reasons for interacting with a peer by using an intrinsic motivation paradigm. The study found potential implications for social intervention techniques. The review on peer group studies has shown that peer influence is a strong, consistent determinant of a wide range of educational outcome especially for elementary and high school students. A wide range of methodologies and procedures, inconclusive conclusions, integration of different socio-psychological theories no doubt depicts the vastness of peer group literature.

2.4 STUDIES ON EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION

Human talent is the greatest natural resource to mankind. Every child born to this world carries some unique potential. The exploration, conservation and development of those potentialities is synonymous to the development of human society. Education as defined by Jarvis (1983) is "Any planned series of incidents, having a humanistic basis, directed towards the participants' learning and understanding".

But as an instrument of social change, education should be not only having a humanistic basis but also must concern itself with the maximum utilisation of human talents. In the views of Marx, aim of education is to help everyone to find his place, his function and his fulfilment in the process of history. The idea may be an utopian but in a fully rational and meritocratic society, everybody's potential should be fully recognised and developed.

Studies on Educational Aspiration can help in optimal development of human resources. An individual's achievement should be evaluated with the prior knowledge of his level of aspiration.

Educational aspiration i.e., setting up one's goal in the field of education and factors related to it has been an important problem area in educational and sociological researches (Davis 1942; Reeves et al. 1948; Berdie 1954; Educational Testing Service 1957; Herriott 1963 etc.).

In a pioneer study of the field of aspiration, Chapman and Volkman (1939) studied experimentally some

possible social determinants of level of aspiration among four groups of students. The investigators reported that the estimates made by the subjects varied as predicted with their prior knowledge of the average score of the other group.

It is stated that the level of aspiration is a function of two factors - self assessment and expectation (Herriott, 1963). This theoretical model is general one and applicable to diverse social contexts. The empirical evidences suggest that level of educational aspiration can be explained in terms of the theory that adolescents make differential self assessments of their relevant characteristics (e.g., intelligence or financial ability) and/or that they perceive differential expectations from incumbents of relevant counter positions (e.g., father, mother, friend etc.). Studies reviewed here are found to highlight both the issues.

Adolescents are said to belong to a distinct subculture and to be influenced more by their peers than by their parents (Coleman 1961). Studies are found to examine the relative influences of parents and peers on the educational plans of adolescents (Herriott 1963; Simpson 1962; McDill & Coleman 1965).

Educational aspiration is considered as a non-intellectual trait important for academic achievement. Sears (1940) reported that children with a past history of success showed very little variability in aspiration. Festinger & Sears (1944) distinguished between realistic and unrealistic levels of aspiration as determined by cognitive factor and affective factor respectively.

Gates & Jersild (1948) have pointed out that level of aspiration is closely related to success and failure in college and it may represent a goal or desire to improve the performance.

Lowell & Atkinson (1953) reported a positive but low, non-significant relationship between level of aspiration and achievement motive among high and low achievers, whereas Bryon and Locke (1967) showed that academic performance can be increased by suggesting what level a person should aspire for.

2.4.1 Studies Focusing on Educational Aspiration - Peer Influence - Parental Influence - Teacher Influence.

The hypothesis that interaction with peers influences levels of educational and occupational aspirations of adolescents, has been enunciated by Haller & Butterworth in 1960. They demonstrated the existence of peer group effects on aspirations when the boys were homogeneous with respect to socio economic background factors.

In 1961, Rosenfeld & Zander carried out a study on the influence of teachers on aspirations of students. They defined a student's level of aspiration as "that level of achievement indicated by a grade, which a pupil realistically expects to attain in a given course". The study confirmed the hypothesis that tendencies to accept a teacher's influence were aroused in students, who were subject to reward, while tendencies to ignore or oppose were subject to indiscriminate coercive influences. These tendencies affected their aspirations also.

Alexander & Campbell (1964) studied peer influences on adolescent educational aspirations and attainments. The findings suggested that communication among male high school seniors affected both college plans and attendance. The data also supported that similarity of aspirations and expectations was greater when friendship choice was reciprocal. Thus in addition to demonstrating the value of a relational sociometric approach to the study of educational aspirations, the study suggested the predictive power of the balance model in the analysis of social behaviour.

Thistlethwaite et al. (1966) of Vanderbilt university conducted a study on the effects of teacher and peer subcultures upon student aspirations. The study sorted out two paradigms from the previous studies - institution as well as student as the unit of sampling. This study following the second paradigm, attempted to control as many as eight pre-college characteristics. The results strongly suggested that atleast some of the types of college press and experiences investigated, caused men to change their motivation to seek advanced training. Ofcourse, the failure to confirm similar hypothesis for women was congruent with previous studies.

In the year 1968, Duncan et al. reanalysed the data collected earlier by Haller & Butterworth (1960) and offered additional evidence for peer influence on educational plans. The authors tried to analyse the influence of a student's best friend's educational and occupational aspirations on his own aspiration, and the reciprocal effect on the friends' aspirations through path diagrams and equation models. Using a composite model, postulating an underlying factor "ambition", the model accounted for the correlations among the observed indicators, educational and occupational aspirations.

Boyle (1971) investigated the effects of the high school on student's aspirations. The major findings of this study were - the population composition of a high school did have an important effect on the aspirations of its students especially stronger in larger cities. The study estimated the influence of peer group in terms of short range values. A sociologically appealing explanation that the variations due to different subcultures developed in different high schools was given by the study.

In another study done by Kayser (1972) on educational aspirations of rural high school students, the changes in aspirations throughout high school were examined using panel data. The study used the Markov model with changes in aspirations as the dependent variable. From thirteen independent variables the results tended to suggest several types of patterns of influence and in general a complex patterning. One significant finding of the study was that friend's support was more evident during the early adjustment to high school while teacher and parental support was during the later years.

In 1973, Thakur of the University of Wisconsin had studied to determine the relationship of social-psychological variables to educational and occupational aspirations of school going and non-school going rural youth in India. In his study, caste was considered as one of the significant variables. The results suggested conduciveness of high socio-economic status for higher aspirations. The study also discussed that peers played a key role in stimulating the aspirations of adolescents. Incidentally, this is the only study done outside India on the problems of Indian youth.

The study done by Macdonell (1974) of Boston college focussed on the social dimensions of student's educational aspiration. The two sociological perspectives - school climate and student interaction were operationalized by three analytical dimensions as performance, attitude and interaction which primarily focussed on the academic side of student life. The investigation showed that performance was a more meaningful factor for vocational plans, while interaction was more integrally related to plans for college education.

Rogers (1975) tried to ascertain the applicability of sewell model among the adolescents in Taiwan. Unlike western culture, with less interference from youth culture, the family provides the locus for social activities and transmits it to adolescents.

In the same year, Beaublossom of university of Washington, investigated the sources of educational aspirations among high school students with the help of causal model, separately for each sex. The results found differences between boys and girls regarding aspiration formation process. The study also considered the influence of the social context. Ovando (1975) of Indiana university found out through his study that structural factors were more important determinants than the psychological factors.

Following Wisconsin model, Ray (1976) of the university of Notre Dame, examined aspiration formation process in relation to sex. Educational aspirations are found to be influenced most heavily by parental expectations with similar patterns for male and female but greater maternal influence for girls.

The study done by Mims (1976) of Rutgers university stated that female had proportionately higher aspirations than males and successful students chose others as influencing persons rather than parents.

Picou and Carter (1976) assessed in their study the causal effects of significant other's influence on aspirations. The study suggested that the community origins are important for the amount and type of influence. The study also lend credence to the argument that overall the structure of the wisconsin model is comparable for youths from different residential backgrounds.

With a causal model approach, Fleming (1977) determined the effects of parental encouragement on the educational aspirations of high school seniors. The result showed the perceived parental encouragement as the most important determinant.

From a different perspective, Hurst (1978) of the university of Kentucky had studied and uphold the view that children of employed mothers had higher educational and occupational aspirations than children of non employed mothers.

Carpenter & Western (1982) examined the impact of selected structural social-psychological and group variables upon the educational aspirations of a cohort of youth in their final year of secondary schools. The study was done in three phases - 1978, 1980 and early 1982. By using a theoretical model, analysis supports strongly for crucial elements of the social-psychological theory of aspiration formation. Aspirations were positively associated with family's socio-economic status and schooling and reflected upon their academic ability in formulating plans for higher education. The study also found differences between the sexes.

In 1984, Al-thumali of the university of Houston, assessed the influence of parents, peers, teachers, principals and counselors on high school students' post secondary educational plans and choice of academic majors. The study concluded as parents having the highest influence, peers ranking second followed by teachers, principals and counselors.

Recently in 1985, Sipe of Indiana university studied the influence of reflected appraisals on the development of self concept of academic ability and educational aspiration formation. The results supported that self concept of academic ability influenced levels of educational and to a lesser extent occupational aspirations. This ability was also positively related to their perceptions of their mother's evaluations. The study suggested the need to respecify the model of formation of status aspirations to incorporate a measure of self concept.

1.4.2 Studies Focusing on Educational Aspiration - Academic Achievement.

From a comprehensive review of different studies it would be clear that a significant relationship exists between educational aspiration and academic achievement. Worrell (1959) had done a study on level of aspiration and academic success which attempted to determine the theoretical and empirical utility of the level of aspiration method in predicting college attrition. Individuals with large discrepancy scores were considered unrealistic and an attempt was made to determine whether the discriminatory power of the aspiration index was related to the academic standing of the students. In general, the results support for the fruitfulness of the level of aspiration method in

predicting academic ~~fx~~ performance and attrition among a superior group of students.

In 1962, Muthayya, in his study on level of aspiration and intelligence of high and low achievers found out lack of relationship between level of aspiration and scholastic achievement. He also reported lack of relationship between intelligence and aspiration. Different aspects of personal aspirations and its relationship to the achievement motive had been studied by Muthayya and Rajeshwari (1969). They used pictorial non verbal ladder scale as a measure of aspiration level.

Ramkumar (1972) studied the goal discrepancies of high achievers and low achievers and found it significantly low among the high achievers.

Bisht (1972) studied the level of educational aspirations in relation to socio-economic conditions and educational attainment. Positive relationship was found to exist between attainment and aspiration. The study also established significant differences between rural-urban and different medium of instructions in schools.

In the year 1974, Black of the university of Michigan studied the effect of race, sex and income on the academic performance and aspirations of black and white freshmen students. The study presented a historical perspective of the education of the black people since proclamation of emancipation of 1863. Another study done by Cox (1976) revealed strong positive relationship between changes in grades and changes in aspirations.

Hussain (1977) studied academic attainment in relation to level of aspiration and anxiety level among undergraduates and P.U. classes of Aligarh Muslim University.

The findings showed a curvilinear relationship and the interaction between anxiety and aspiration did not exercise any significant effect on the academic performance.

In 1979, the study done by Sharma found out that level of aspiration did not influence academic achievement whereas differences in academic achievement influenced the level of aspiration. Another significant result was that girls set their level of aspiration below their achievement whereas boys showed an opposite trend.

Shivappa (1980) investigated factors affecting the academic achievement of high school pupils taking educational aspiration as one of the predictors. Academic achievement being a function of total personality, the conative, cognitive and affective aspects have roles to play. In this study IQ played the major contribution while educational aspiration, n-ach etc., came to the next positions.

Arap Rono (1982) of the university of Cincinnati surveyed to identify characteristics related to expressed educational and occupational aspirations and ~~own~~ expectations of secondary school students. The study found the previous academic performance as the best indicator of educational aspirations and educational expectations.

Ferrore (1984) of Rutgers University had conducted a study, the primary concern of which was to provide educators with insight into educational aspirations and expectations of high school students related to socio-economic status, perceived parental encouragement, achievement and locus of control. Results indicated significant relationships.

2.4.3 Studies Focusing on Other Aspects.

A substantial number of studies, have been found focusing on various socio psychological factors in the field of educational aspirations.

Gilbert (1973) of Carleton university reported a multivariate analysis study on education and occupational and occupation aspirations of Ontario high school students. The study revealed that family influence, self concept of ability and programme of study were found to be having the most important divert influences upon student's educational and occupational aspirations. One significant contribution of the study was the recognition of sociological factor as an important one in the formation of aspiration.

Jain & Shah (1974) had done an interesting study on sociocultural background and educational aspirations of 236 household heads. The findings revealed differences in educational aspiration between Hindu and Muslim respondents as well as younger-older age group, joint-nuclear families etc.

Kay (1972) of Perdue university studied self concept and level of aspiration in third and fourth grade children. The whole study was divided into three parts - empirical findings, experimental procedure giving reinforcement and investigation^{of} corresponding changes in level of aspiration behaviour as a functional change in reported self concept. No significant results were obtained and the study suggested for further research in this area.

Kamat (1981) had made a comparative study between backward and nonbackward class students and found considerable differences in their educational aspiration as well as lower self concept among backward classes.

Two studies are reported on achievement motivation. Bhargava (1972) had made an attempt to find out the relationship between levels of aspirations and achievement motivation. He tried to compare Indian students with western counterparts. It appeared that the Indian students were goal oriented having realistic approach to attainment. Gupta (1979), attempted to find out psychological stress related to level of aspiration and achievement motivation. The study revealed significantly high positive relationship among the variables. Moreover, all interrelationships were linear.

Two studies attempted to focus on extracurricular activities and educational aspiration. In the year 1978, Mcelroy of the university of Maryland investigated the consequences of the sports participation on educational aspirations. Applying path analytic technique, it did not demonstrate a significant direct impact on educational aspirations. In the same line of thought, Sultan (1983) used a causal modelling approach to investigate effects of extra curricular involvement on student's academic achievement and educational aspirations. Findings revealed that extracurricular involvement has limited influences on academic achievement and educational aspirations, although the study suggested for further researches.

Pasanella (1974) of Columbia university examined the process by which college aspirations developed and shifted during the high school years with the help of panel analysis.

The study constructed an index of mutual effect. Ross (1974) of the university of Michigan, had done a 'cross cultural investigation describing the differences in attitudes, values, aspirations and reciprocal perceptions between Afro-Americans and Africans'. The study showed similarities and supported with empirical evidence to ignore the misconception about black man's inferiority.

Two comparative studies were found in 1974 by Chisman and Pangelly. In the first study, significant differences were found within groups between the two variables - educational aspiration and educational expectation of black secondary school students. In the second study, contrary to the previous findings no significant differences were found between the sexes on a measure of academic self-estimates. Another finding supported the previous researches that educational aspiration of girls declined relatively to those of boys as they move into late adolescence.

Blackburn (1974) found out the relationship of selected variables to occupational and educational aspirations and expectations of female high school seniors. The data indicated significant differences in each of the variables and ranked educational aspiration as the number one.

In the year 1980, Hillman of Newyork university performed a developmental study of sex, aspirations and the onset of formal operations. He formulated the problem on Piaget's theory of cognitive development as well as his recent stress on the role of social environment and experience in intellectual growth. Males reported significantly higher levels of aspiration although no significant relation existed between aspiration and

analogical reasoning. The unique methodological contribution of the study was however the use of structural analysis. Ortiz-Chaparro (1980) of the university of California had made a regression analysis study on attitudes, behaviour and aspiration of high school students in San Francisco. The study suggested the school as an important determinant of all the outcomes analysed over and above the background characteristics of each individual.

Chandrakumar (1981) studied the aspiration for education among the deprived community pupils of Tamil Nadu. He constructed a tool as a Prerequisite for his study where he considered aspiration as a personality trait and manifestation of aspiration oriented behaviours. The study led to the conclusion that although intelligence and scholastic aptitude were necessary, they were not very essential for one to show higher aspiration in education. Among four personality traits, three were found to be significant predictors and out of ten background factors only six were found to be significant among which socioeconomic status, peer's educational press, study habit etc. were enumerated. The conclusion was drawn in favour of the crucial role played by the background factors in structuring the level of aspiration.

A study was conducted by Porter (1982) on factors associated with change in educational aspirations in university of Kentucky Community Colleges. This is one of the very few studies done on college students. The study concluded that initial level of aspiration was affected by sex, age, ability and high school programme. It also stated that majority of graduates either maintained ~~or~~ or changed upwardly the level of aspiration.

One significant point should be considered in reviewing the studies on educational aspiration. Being the concept of setting goal in the field of education, the studies on educational aspiration have to delimit the sample within a particular range. It cannot enquire the students of lower classes in the school about future educational goal whereas there is no reasoning to enquire after graduation. That is the reason for which in most of the studies, high school students are considered as appropriate sample.

1.5 STUDIES ON SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND INTELLIGENCE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PEER INFLUENCE AND EDUCATIONAL ASPIRATION.

The term 'social stratification' describes a social system in which individuals, families or groups are ranked on certain hierarchies or dimensions according to their access to or control over valued commodities such as wealth, power and status. These three dimensions - wealth, power and prestige are involved in the mechanism of stratification system of the society. But generally researchers are inclined to take the system as given and not to explain the mechanism.

The concept of a uniform society, devoid of different stratifications, gives an idea of egalitarian society no doubt, but in reality it is very rare throughout the world. This is therefore a natural inclination for the researchers in the field of education to think of the extent to which home conditions influence the scholastic achievement of the students. Socio-economic status, the nomenclature which is generally used for home conditions, or family environment can be subdivided into variables like - father's education, mother's education, occupation-income of parents and so on.

Ample evidences also exist of relationship between intelligence and academic achievement. Eysenck (1947) reviewed 600 titles and concluded that the correlation between intelligence and achievement varies between 0.50 to 0.60 while Froehlich & Hoyt (1959) found the range between 0.30 to 0.80 in their review of 103 studies as quoted in Reddy (1973). Therefore socio-economic status and intelligence play a major role in any study relating to academic achievement.

A vast number of studies by Jordan (1923), Thurstone (1925), Edds & McCall (1933), Burt (1939), Cohler (1941), Shivaramayya (1947), McClelland (1952), Srivastava (1955), Bhargava (1957), Mishra, Dash & Padhi (1960), Verma et al. (1966), Aimsworth (1967), Rao (1968), Gupta and Kapoor (1969), Deb (1969), Reddi (1973), Sudame (1973), Rastogi (1974), Seetha (1975), Ameerjan, Girija and Bhadra (1978) and many others have found positive relationship between intelligence and academic achievement.

On the other hand, studies of Cocking & Holy (1927), O'Brien (1928), Young (1936), Muthayya (1965), Gupta (1967), Rao (1967) and others have found no relationship between intelligence and achievement.

In the area of socio-economic status while studies by Dave & Dave (1971), Menon (1973), Abraham (1974), Dewal (1974), Chandra (1975), Stokes (1976), White (1976), Wimbush (1976), Jones (1977), Tumer (1977), McGill (1978), Fruitts (1979), Halloway (1980), Khanna (1980), Al-thubaiti (1983), Bolgiani (1984), King (1983) etc. established significant positive relationship between socio-economic status and academic achievement; Reddy (1973), Sudame (1973), Salunke (1979) found no significant correlations between them.

As Indian society is also a stratified society, researchers are also inclined to include SES as one of the important variables. Mathur (1963) has studied the effect of SES on behaviour and achievement of secondary school students and he noted that SES is significantly correlated to intelligence, educational achievement and conduct of the students.

Chopra (1964) has examined the relationship between SES factors and academic achievement keeping the effect of intelligence constant. He found students belonging to higher qualitative group based on parent's education, occupation, income, type of lodging, cultural level of home, showed higher level of achievement.

Satyanandam (1969) has highlighted the subaspects of SES and found that the children of graduate parents performed far better than the children of matriculates. Chatterjee et al. (1971) investigated the effect of education-income of parents and general condition of the house upon the scholastic achievement controlling the level of intelligence. The study conclusively demonstrated parent's education as related to achievement.

Anand (1973) established the relationship between SES and academic achievement even when the influence of intelligence was partialled out. Intelligence and interest patterns of urban, rural and tribal school students are found to be culture oriented by Jai Prakash (1972). Again Gupta (1982) found that father's profession influenced the reading ability of primary school children.

Bhagrath (1978) studied the perceptions of teachers and students on correlates of academic achievement and listed in the following manner in order of importance:

intelligence, character, emotional, adjustment, school and social adjustment, creativity and punctuality, alertness and efficiency.

Studies done on peer group influence and educational aspiration also have shown a trend to include intelligence and socio-economic status either as a control variable or explanatory variable. In some of the studies it is used for both the purposes.

As early as 1960, Haller and Butterworth considered socio economic background factors for demonstrating the existence of peer group on aspirations of adolescents. Shah, Patel and Sewell in 1971, established SES as strong, influencing agent on educational aspiration of high school students in Ahmedabad.

Bisht (1972) found parental education and income to have significant influence on educational aspiration and Dhaliwal (1972) established the significant and positive relationship between popularity and intelligence as well as achievement.

Koranne (1973) found the relationship between intelligence and sociability as significant. The study also found that sociability had been affected by father's education and not by his occupation.

Pandey (1973) marked association between family background variables and educational aspiration while Thakur (1973) suggested that the high SES of the father provided a kind of environment which was responsible for higher educational and occupational aspirations of the adolescents.

Iacovetta (1973) examined the effect of socio-economic status on different dimensions of peer group involvement and found statistically significant independent effect on two dimensions : frequency of interaction and dependence. Black (1974), established relationship between income and SES while Gautama (1974) found SES was related to interaction. Lewis & John (1974) documented the fact that family SES contributed to popularity via its effect on achievement for boys, whereas for girls it had a direct effect on popularity.

In 1975, Papas suggested important relationship in educational aspiration and occupational aspiration with socio-economic status variables.

During the decade of 1980s a considerable number of studies are found concentrating on the above mentioned variable. Ortiz-Chaparro (1980) established through a regression analysis study the influence of background characteristics of each individual on attitude, behaviour and aspirations.

Through a study Reed (1983) confirmed that SES did not have a significant influence in acceptance of handicapped and non-handicapped students. In 1984, Ferrero indicated significant relationship between SES and educational aspiration while Cowardin analysed that youngsters in learning handicapped groups were rated lower in social status than non handicapped. Richmond (1985) confirmed through his findings that SES level was not related to reference group affiliation.

Being mostly a sociological construct studies on educational aspiration generally concentrate on social class and economic condition of the students. Ofcourse some of

the studies consider the role of intelligence in the assessment of aspiration. As for example, Muthayya (1962) reported lack of relationship between intelligence and aspiration while Cotugne (1974) estimated through path analysis that measured intelligence and socio-economic status had the greatest influence on educational plans. Porter (1982) studied factors associated with change in educational aspiration of college students and found that initial level of aspiration was affected by ability, age, sex and high school performance.

Shivappa (1980) stated in his study that IQ played the major contribution to Academic Achievement while educational aspiration, n-ach came to the next position as predictors. Mishra (1981) studied the role of SES and intelligence on behaviour patterns of 'stars' and isolates among school going adolescents.

Chandrakumar (1981), concluded through his study that intelligence and scholastic aptitude were necessary but not very essential to show higher aspiration in education. Conclusion was also drawn in favour of the crucial role played by background factors in structuring the level of aspiration. Marjoribanks (1982) also indicated through studies that adolescents' aspirations were strongly related to a set of family environment measures.

In the study done by Upamanyu & Upamanyu (1982), an attempt was made to find out the role of motives and intelligence in one's sociometric status and found that rejectees were less intelligent in comparison to populars. Similarly Aggrwal and Power (1984) studied the role of cognitive variables in adolescent peer group acceptance.

Chopra (1982) confirmed through his study that SES was very important determinant for continuation of education. He found 76% variance accounted ~~to~~^{for} academic achievement and variables were listed in order of magnitude as follows : attitude towards education, SES, intelligence, study habit, home adjustment and social adjustment,

2.6 A CRITICAL OVERVIEW OF REVIEWED STUDIES.

Peergroup as a socializing agent has been considered long back nodoubt, but its impact on aspiration and achievement is taken into account mostly after second world war. This trend is evident from a large number of studies reviewed here. Especially in Indian context it is more obvious. Second survey of Education also stated that although some studies were found to examine the influence of some social factors as family environment, parental socio-economic status and rural/urban residence, no study was found dealing with peergroup influences.

On the other hand, it is observed from the referred studies on educational aspiration that the construct has been considered more sociological than psychological. Most of the researchers therefore, designed their studies in consideration with a social perspective and estimated the influence of these sociological factors in the aspiration development process. The famous wisconsin model of aspiration formation serves as a guideline for many researches.

Being mostly a sociological construct, the multi-lingual, multicultured heterogeneous Indian society is the most promising ground for studying the level of educational aspiration. But in most of the Indian studies the sociological implication was explained only through familial

background. Peergroup as a significant source of aspiration formation was not observed in any of the studies conducted in India although references were made (Chandrakumar 1981; Thakur 1973).

The theoretical consideration that adolescents perceived differential expectations from significant others (father, mother, friend, teacher etc.) which have impact on their aspirations is observed as a major theme in the reviewed studies.

While Haller and Butterworth (1960) enunciated the hypothesis that interaction with peers influences levels of educational ~~aspirations~~ and occupational aspirations of adolescents, Duncan et al. (1968) reanalysed the data through path diagrams and equations and offered additional evidence for peer influence on educational plans.

Alexander & Campbell (1964) studied peer influences on adolescent educational aspirations and attainments that supported that similarity of aspirations and expectations was greater when friendship choice was reciprocal.

Rosenfeld & Zander (1961) confirmed through their study that tendency to accept a teacher's influence was aroused in students who were subject to reward only. This tendency affected student's aspiration also. The most comprehensive study was by AL-Thumali (1984), who assessed the influence of parents, peers, teachers, principals and counselors on high school student's post-secondary educational plans. The study listed the influential personnels in the following order of importance - parents, peers, teachers, principals and counselors. This finding is also supported by another study (Richmond 1985) that secondary school male students were more parent and less peer oriented than their female counterparts.

That males are more susceptible to influence has been confirmed by many studies. Thistlewaite et al. (1966) confirmed the hypothesis that some of the types of college press and ... experiences caused men to change their motivation to seek advanced training whereas in case of women it failed to confirm the same. In another study done by Cotugno (1974), it was concluded that both parents and peers did play a role in the decision making like educational plans. The influence of peer versus parent is an easily observed trend among the reviewed studies (Brittain 1963, Herriott 1963, Larson 1969, Houston 1979 etc.).

Herriott (1963) and McDill & Coleman (1965) concluded that peer influences exceeded parental influences.

The whole body of literature on peer group and aspiration is full with such contradictory findings, specially the relative influences of parents and peers.

But there exists a complex patterning of influence as suggested by Kayser (1972). His findings suggested that friends support was more evident during the early adjustment to high school while teacher and parental support during the later years. Perhaps peer's influence is applicable in short range values or decision making process instead of long range values. As for instance, whether to go for a cinema or to library may be dependent on the role played by the peers but in selecting the future educational plan, naturally more reliance is given on parent's choice.

Indeed, agreement between any two individuals does not necessarily reflect influence of one person on the other, since agreement by itself can result from the common social situation and not from the interaction itself (Hyman 1959, Frustenberg 1967).

It may be possible, through a longitudinal design in studies, to establish the source, nature and direction of influence.

The differentiation in educational aspiration due to residence factor has been discussed in a number of studies (Bisht 1972, Pandey 1973, Picou & Carter 1976). Socio-economic status of students also plays an important part in aspiration is another easily observed trend among the studies (Mathur 1970, Shah, Patel & Sewell 1971, Gilbert 1973, Pandey 1973, Thakur 1973, Cotugno 1974, Lewis & John 1974, Jain & Shah 1974, Papas 1975), Ametewee (1979), Ortiz-Chaparro, 1980)etc. but very few studies have taken intelligence as a role playing factor in the assessment of aspiration. Interestingly the results are also contradictory. While Muthayya (1962) reported lack of relationship between intelligence and aspiration, Cotugno (1974) estimated through path analysis that measured intelligence and socio-economic status had the greatest influence on educational plans.

In some other studies like Beaublossom (1975), Ovando (1975), Carpenter & Western (1982), the impact of structural factors on educational aspiration are considered. Ofcourse increasing importance is marked for longitudinal studies for a more complete understanding of this aspiration formation process (Carpenter & Western 1982, Majoribanks 1983). In short, educational aspiration is considered as a non-intellectual trait important for academic achievement and it has been investigated as among the most significant determinants of eventual educational attainment (Worrell 1959, Muthayya 1962, Sharma 1979, Cox 1976, Hussain 1977, Shivappa 1980, Ferrero, 1984 etc.).

While Muthayya (1962) and Sharma (1979) established lack of relationship between aspiration and scholastic achievement, Shivappa (1980), and Worrell (1959) found educational aspiration as significant predictors. Although contradictory relationships have been reported between educational aspiration and academic achievement but in general the results support for the fruitfulness of the level of aspiration method in predicting academic performance. On the other hand, Sharma (1979) stated in a reverse manner that level of aspiration did not influence academic achievement whereas difference in academic achievement influenced the level of aspiration. Similarly, a substantial number of studies are also found concentrating on the relationship between different dimensions of peer group and achievement of the students.

Zeichner (1976) ofcourse differentiated between acceptance and attraction dimensions of classroom peergroups and found both were significantly related to student's achievement.

The relationship between sociometric status and academic achievement had been studied in the studies of Koranne 1973, Corkery 1983, Clifford 1984, Poteat 1981, Dhaliwal (1972) established the significant and positive relationship between popularity and academic achievement. The significant contribution of his study was to consider popularity score as a continuous variable.

The relationship between peergroup influence and academic achievement had also been evaluated by some other studies e.g., Cocalis 1972, Golden 1972, Badami and Badami 1975, Houston 1979.

In the lone study done by Badami & Badami, 1975 in Indian condition an interesting finding^{was} about the doubtful role played by school achievement in determining

the group status of an individual pupil among his peers.

One easily recognizable observation of the studies on peergroup is the widespread use of different sociometric techniques. Devised by Moreno (1934) it dominates most of the studies for several decades. Robinson (1982) showed sociometric measures as stable index of peer relations.

But although both validity and reliability of the technique has been established by most of the studies, yet its limitation as a measurement of existing status was discussed by many researchers. Actually it fails to measure the change in students. Coan (1972) discussed this methodological limitation of the problem of measuring change in studying peergroup influence in different college settings viz., residential and traditional.

Long back, this tendency was observed when Brittain (1963) used some hypothetical situations to test peer versus parent conformity. Found in the same track, the study by Larson (1969) ofcourse expressed the limited insight provided by the hypothetical situations, and suggested for other methodological technique.

Another significant suggestion from the studies that although the sociometric technique was used simultaneously in measuring group status as well as interaction process, it was stated by some researchers that both the aspects of peer relationship - interactional and preferential (status) appeared to be separate (Furman and Masters 1980). Iacovetta (1973) examined and stated three dimensions of peergroup involvement - frequency of interaction with peers, dependence upon peers and autonomy of interaction with peers.

The need is therefore apparent for developing some appropriate method for measuring peer group interaction instead of those traditional methods.

Attempts were of course made for alternative methodology. Based on the extensive researches on peer group influence by Bronfenbrenner and Devereaux (1967), a new model of peer group influence was attempted to develop by Simon (1977). He conceptualised peer influence differently from the previous studies and divided into two related but distinct components.

Another significant contribution by McCullah (1980) was the development of an inventory on peer group assertiveness. It attempted to measure young adolescent's ability to ~~be~~ refuse unreasonable peer requests.

Dash & Das (1984) also distinguished between sociometric nominations and peer ratings and suggested both could be used either independently or jointly to unravel various behavioral and social competencies of children.

In 1985, Peer affiliation inventory has been developed by Richmond to measure the affiliation to peers as a reference group.

Thus researchers have started measuring and analysing peer group theme from various perspectives. As a result different methodologies are coming into existence. The divergent methodologies no doubt imply the vastness of peer group literature but it also accounts for the variations in study results. The most significant point is that, it encourages for new perspective, in the area of peer influence and new methodology accordingly.

In most of the studies done outside India, race has occupied a prominent consideration (Lewis & John 1974, Ross 1974, Dancy 1981, Reed 1983 etc.). On the other hand, caste has been considered as one of the important variables in India (Shah, Patel & Sewell 1971, Thakur 1973, Nagaraju 1977). Relatively, very few studies are found taking religion as an important factor in examining the different socio-psychological characteristics of the society (Jain & Shah 1974). It is clearly evident that studies in social sciences cultural differences play a major role.

For exploring any sociological factor, like aspiration studies due consideration should be given on contextual variable like race, caste, ethnicity etc. Again Alexander & Cook (1979) and Howell & Frese (1981) have suggested that in analysis of aspirations there is a need to differentiate between adolescent's attitudinal orientations and their motivational dispositions. Also, attitudes related to secondary school need to be examined to determine whether there is a stage when school attitudes begin to have a substantial independent influence on aspirations. Only then there will be a more enriched understanding of relationships between aspirations of adolescents and other factors.

Another significant finding from the review is that although studies have been conducted on handicapped or subnormal children (Grenell 1983, Murphy 1983, Smith 1983, Cowardin 1984, Matis 1984), no study has been found on gifted or bright children.

By virtue of the construct - educational aspirations, the researchers have to confine their studies among the upper classes of secondary schools, but in the area of peer group, all the different developmental stages have been included. Thus studies are found among preschool children to college

going students. Studies are also found in settings other than academic setting (Drassner 1981, Polemi-Todoulon 1981).

Considering the magnitude of significance of adolescence, most of the studies of course concentrate on that period of transition. The completely contradictory views on the period of adolescence, the influence of the significant persons in the life space of adolescents and the imposition of cultural norms prevalent in any society of the world, naturally make that period as the most pertinent for any socio-psychological study.

More reliance upon different socio-psychological theories is another significant trend observed in the reviewed studies. Again development of models based on different theories will open new vistas in the world of social sciences.

Prediction studies with the help of path analysis, panel analysis or simple linear regression analysis also can contribute in making studies in social sciences more precise, more concrete and having more predictive implications. Due to the expansion of computer facilities, sophisticated measurement techniques have been used by the present day researchers in order to get more precise and complete understanding about the variables used in their studies.

With a review of the previous researches it could be possible to determine different theoretical considerations to apprehend previous contradictions and to suggest the need of replication. It also helps in exploring the existing gaps in the related literature.

The world of science is always cumulative. New research should be integrated with past researches so that a more accurate picture of reality results. Perhaps efficacy of research lies therein.

2.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRESENT STUDY.

From the overview of the reviewed studies on different variables it is crystal clear that there exists some gaps in the trend observed.

In the study undertaken, an attempt has been made to fill up some of the felt gaps.

The term 'peer' although is used synonymously in all the studies but 'peer influence' has been defined, conceptualized and tried to measure in different ways through different studies. These variations no doubt enrich the literature on peer group and reveal the different dimensions of that concept. An attempt is made through this study also to conceptualize 'peer influence' from a different perspective.

In order to measure peer influence as conceptualized, an influence scale has been developed, which will be described in third chapter of this report. The theoretical background supports the notion that the influence of the peer group during early adolescence predominates over the parental influence. The extent of peer influence in an academic setting has been tried to be measured, for which, 'high school peer group' has been highlighted throughout the study.

Interesting findings exist regarding the peer-group phenomenon. The present study tries to examine it according to set up of the school. Thus the nature of peer group in accordance with the area of institution viz., rural/urban and nature of institution viz., boys/girls/coeducational has been investigated and analysed.

No Indian studies purport to include peer influence and educational aspiration in the paradigm of academic achievement. Thus to study the nature of peer influence and educational aspiration during early adolescence period and to verify its impact if any on academic achievement constitute the crux of the present investigation.

The proposed study also attempts to combine both sociological and psychological approaches of social psychology. Thus the units of study and analysis used here are both sociological and psychological - group as a unit and individual as a unit. It is assumed that, this procedure can give a synoptic view about the problem undertaken.

Although Coleman points out adolescent culture as the contraculture but the view is nodoubt extreme. Truely speaking, adolescent culture is nothing but a subset of the whole gamut of culture. By examining the adolescent culture of a particular community or society, it can be possible to have an inferential idea of the society as a whole.

The adolescent high school students from Assam constitute the sample for the study. Assam, the major component state of the North-East region of India is located at the extreme east part of this country. Due to insufficient exposure to the rest of the country because of the geographical location the cultural context may be different from the major stream of Indian culture. Very few studies

e.g., Dubey 1974, Lyngdoh 1976, Sungoh 1984, have been done on aspiration taking sample from the North-East region.

No study ~~has~~ been reported uptill now concentrating on peer group phenomenon from this region. It is therefore expected to searching of some of the unknown, unexplored feature of that particular part of this country through the present study.