

## Chapter No. IV

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### Family Background And Learning Of English (Structural, Occupational, Educational And Social)

#### 4.1 Introduction

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The family is a basic social institution in any society. One does not come across any society where there is no existence of one or the other type of family. It is true that the family institution has undergone a lot of many structural changes. Still the functions of the family are as basic as ever. It is a group of persons living under the same roof connected with each other by the kinship ties. Emotional attachment mutual obligations, responsibility toward each other etc. are some of the basic characteristics of the family as an institution. Thus basic institution has assumed various different forms in the traditional and modern society and it has always exerted an influence over the society and individual.

The family is primary in shaping the personality of the child in his early years. In the later childhood, peer groups and school are also equally important in shaping the child's personality but the impact of the family can hardly be displaced. It is deep, far reaching and it plays a vital role in the formative years of the individual. Hence the study of family background in learning of the second language becomes imperative. Attention is focused on the below mentioned dimensions of the family background to ascertain its impact on the learning of English.

1. The size of the family.
2. The location of the tenement.
3. The size of the tenement.
4. The occupational background of the family.

5. The educational background of the family.

6. The social background of the family.

#### 4.2 Size of the Family :-

The bearing of the family on the development of the child from the view point of learning of the second language is worth taking into consideration. In this chapter an attempt is made to discern the relation between the size of the family and its impact on the learning of the second language. The intimacy between the parents, children and siblings is determined and developed by the size of the family. If the family is large, the number of interactions is equally large. In such homes there is more scope for the frictions. In other words the milieu which either makes or mars the necessary motivation for learning is created by the family size. Hence the study of the relationship between the family size and learning of the second language becomes pertinent.

Iravati Karve states, "The joint family, the caste and village were the main units which form the core of the traditional Hindu Society." 1.

In joint family a group of people live under the same roof, cook the food at one hearth, hold the common property and participate in the common worship. Members living in the joint family belong to three or more generations. Needless to say that this type of family is larger in size. In this family the position of parents is more authoritarian.

With the advent of Industrialization, Urbanization and with the means of transport etc. there is a fundamental change in the structure of the family. A significant process of development in the educational and industrial fields has opened up new opportunities and new roles to the members of the family. It has caused an upset in the

traditional set up of the family. Under the impact of such new forces the joint family is disintegrating and breaking up into nuclear or individual families. Undoubtedly, the family institution is undergoing structural and functional changes.

The joint family and Nuclear family stand diametrically opposite to each other as with regard to their size. The joint family is an abode of young as well as old, abled well as disabled. Hence the strength of the joint family is undoubtedly more than the nuclear family. But one can also come across the nuclear family larger in size. Therefore for the present study to assess the bearing of the family size on the learning of English, whatever may be the type of family, its size as per the number of members living together is taken into consideration.

Indian families were classified into three types according to the number of family members residing in the household in 1951 census. According to this classification.

1. Large sized family has more than seven members. (more than 7)
2. Medium sized family has five to six members. (5 to 6)
3. Small family has one to four members. (1 to 4)

In this study it was also thought appropriate to classify the sample families in terms of the number of family members. Three distinct types of family as mentioned above are found. James Bossard states, "children of large families have more personality problems, less social mobility and greater participation in voluntary non-family activities." 2. The children of large families encounter with some difficulties in school which in turn hamper the process of learning. In a large family there is less opportunity for the undistracted school work as the disturbances in the large family are more frequent besides there are more opportunities of entertainment. This type of circumstance is definitely not conducive to language learning.

Moreover, in a large family with comparatively small accommodation the space available is definitely limited, which adds to the difficulty to the students. The children in small families get more personal attention which is not available to the children belonging to the large families. All these factors go to affect the urge required to learn particularly to learn a language.

Keeping this in mind the data was collected to get the information about the size of the family. An attempt has been made to relate it to the performance of the students in the language test.

All 43.5 % (87) students coming from the large families could not perform satisfactorily in the language test. Out of them 61.27 % (62) had miserably failed. No one could get distinction; only one student was able to get first class; 20.68 % (18) students got mere pass class and remaining 6.89 % (6) passed in the second class.

In a small family, up to four members, the story is different. In such a small family, children have no option but to interact predominantly as the siblings do not exist or are less in number. Jaon Aldous maintains, "only child and children in small families have more opportunity to interact with their parents and so more quickly learn adult vocabulary." 3. All parental attention and expectations are focused on these children. Naturally the necessary urge to achieve something is inspired. Parents are able to devote adequate time and attention to each child. Their progress in learning is immediately acknowledged. All these things go in favour of the process of learning. There is another worth noting advantage of the small family. When the number of children is limited then there is a tendency among the parents to compare the child's achievements with the other siblings. This comparison provides a necessary boost to the children. The undeclared competition encouraged by the parents contributes

towards their improvement. Because of the limited number of children, parents can very well study their natural inclination, give them proper guidance and press them to action. Consequently, children develop their own interests in the academic field in particular as they can not escape parental attention and pressure.

But the small-size family goes to create some difficulties in the child development. In such a family the children are rather forced to interact. A child gets no role to play as it is found in the large family. This is particularly true with the only child family. All the expectations are excessively focused on him which creates an excessive anxiety. The only child in the family is often overprotected and showered with excessive qualities of love and affection. Hence in many ways such child may not be able to develop an independence in thinking and studies too.

In the present study, 10 % (20) students come from the small families. Most of them have done well in the examination. It has been found that their percentage of passing is higher, 90 % , out of them 10 % (2) are in distinction, 25 % (5) are in first class, 20 % (4) student have been awarded second class while 35 % (7) student could secure only pass class. It is worth nothing that only 10 % (2) students were unsuccessful in the examination.

The medium sized family seems to be an ideal one as it is a midway house between the two extremes. K.M. Kapadia maintains, "Mental uneasiness in a joint family is sometimes inevitable as a result of its size, sometimes because economic strains and consequent bickerings." 4. They are conspicuously absent in the medium sized family. At the same time children from the medium-sized family do not encounter the difficulties and overprotection as that of the children in the small, particularly one child family. In medium sized family children develop a capacity to adjust with the group situations such as school and

growing up in a medium sized family proves more beneficial for the process of the second language learning.

In the present study the results from the medium sized family are more encouraging 46.5 % (93) students belonged to this type of family. Most of the students who achieved distinction and first class belonged to this category. The rate of passing is as high as 68.3 % (64 students). It clearly shows that the evidence of concerned achievement is related to the size of family. In the words of Rossen B.C. "The smaller the family the more achievement oriented the child is." 5. The findings of the present survey displayed in the following table, confirm the above cited observations.

TABLE No. 1.

Size of the Family and The Test Results

Large sized family more than 7 members	Medium sized family 5 to 6 members	Small sized family 1 to 4 members	Results					Percentage of passing
			above 70	60 to 70	45 to 60	35 to 45	Fail	
43.5 % (87)			Nil	1	6	18	62	28.73 %
	46.5 % (93)		10	9	21	24	29	68.81 %
		10.0 % (20)	2	5	4	7	2	90.00 %

4.3 Location of the Tenement :-

Proper understanding of the impact of family background on the learning of English is related not only to the size of the family but also to the size and location of the tenement. It exposes the locality where the house is situated and the quality of living enjoyed

by the family. Home is an abode which provides peace and security to its members. But the peace, that one aspires to get from the house depends not only on the loving and warmth relationships amongst the members but also on the location of the house. If the location of the family is suitably situated then the family members find it easy to undertake the work which demands concentration. The physical environment in and around the home is a factor of vital importance. How can one concentrate on the studies if the home ceases to be a quiet place? This is particularly seen when the home is situated near S.T. Stand, Cinema theatre a video centre. The situation becomes more inimical to studies if the house is located in the heart of the market place.

It is a proved fact that the learning of the second language is a complex process which demands a good deal of concentration on the part of the learner. The location of the house either adds to the concentration or causes distractions. Consequently it has a telling effect on the performance of the students in the Test. In the present study, the data collected shows that 59.5 % (119) students had complained about the location of their homes since it causes obstacle to their studies. Out of these 59.5 % (119) students 17 % (34) live in the factory area. They complained that the factory area causes distraction as it is full of humming and vibrating sounds of the factory operations and sirens.

The house located near the S.T. Stand is another case worth pointing out. The endless in and out of the buses, restlessness of the passengers, howling of the coolies and vendors create a situation which is not suitable for the study. 12 % (24) students admitted that the nearness of the S.T. Stand created distraction in their study. 11% (22) of the students had a similar complaint about the market

place. Near by Cinema Theatre and Video Centre also add to the agonies. Cine-dialogues and records played on the speaker attract the attention of the learner which ultimately proves harmful for the process of learning. 13.5 % (27) of the students have stated that they could not study with concentration because of the neary Cinema Theatre or Video Centre. Majority of the students in the sample belong to the agricultural family where poultry or dairy keeping are the supplementary occupations. 6 % (12) of the students stated that the poultry and dairy attached to the house created disturbance in their study.

Out of 119 students who had a location of their house filled with noise, only 2.5 % (3) and 4 % (5) students have secured distinction and first class respectively in the Test. 13 % (15) students passed in the second class whereas 25 % (30) students could get through the examination just on the border line and 55 % (66) students have failed miserably. The impact of the location of the tenement on the learning of English is clearly evident in the table No.2

Table No. 2

Location of the Tenement And the Test Results

Location of the Tenement Causing Distraction					Results						
In Factory area	In the market	Near S.T. Stand	Near Cinema or Video Centre	Near Dairy or Poultry	Total	Above 70	60 to 70	45 to 60	35 to 45	fail	% of failure
17 % (34)	11 % (22)	12 % (24)	13.5 % (27)	6 % (12)	59.5 (119)	3	5	15	30	66	55.46 %



#### 4.4 Size of the Tenement :- -----

In the area under study there are various categories of houses and residential areas. The house is either owned or rented. It ranges from a large house to a small one like a bungalow or three-room tenement in a chal, zopadpatti etc.

Importance of a family to its members irrespective of age or sex can hardly be ignored. A.R. Desai rightly states, "House is a jumping board where family members dash off to numerous social, cultural and other aspects of larger social life." 6. It is a place where the family members get utmost satisfaction and mental peace. But the size of the tenement adds to or minimizes the family pleasure and satisfaction. Extremely small tenement like one room, over-crowded with a lot many family members, proves a nuisance and causes distraction in the study. Hence it becomes a place not suitable for learning and adversely affects the process of learning. Such house provides an environment which is not cheerful.

In the present study 7 % (14) of the students live in a tenement having only one room, 26.5 % (63) of the students have accommodation having two rooms, 37 % (74) students in three room tenements whereas 24.5 % (49) live in a spacious accommodation consisting of more than 3 rooms. These 24.5 % of the students have their own study room so that they are subjected to the minimum distraction in their studies. Out of them 6 students stood in distinction, 5 in first class whereas only 17 students failed in the Test. 14 students who live in a single tenement, use it as a living room-cum-kitchen-cum-sleeping room-cum their study. Naturally they could not study with full concentration and it is reflected in their test results. No one out of them could secure 1st class with distinction and 12 students could not get even pass marks. Table No.3 throws light on the impact of the size of the

tenement on the learning of English.

Table No. 3

Size of the Tenement and the Test Results

Size of the Tenement				Results					
One room	Two rooms	Three rooms	More than three rooms	above 70	60 to 70	45 to 60	35 to 45	fail	% of failure
7 % (14)				Nil	1	1	Nil	12	82.72
	31.5 % (63)			1	1	6	13	42	66.66
		37 % (74)		5	8	13	26	22	29.73
			24.5 % (49)	6	5	11	10	17	34.69

Table 1,2,3 clearly demonstrate that size of the family and that of the tenement along with the location of it impinge on the personality formation of the children. A large size family with the small size of tenement to live in, causes enormous economic, physical, mental and emotional strains to the family members. It has undesirable effect on the learning of the child. It adversely affects learning of English which is revealed in the variety of ways in the present survey. Dr. A.R. Desai maintains, " One of the major functions which family as a sub-system is supposed to perform is to provide motivation to its members to effectively and joyously participate in a larger society."7. This is true with the school going children. How can a child living in a suffocating family background can set necessary motivation to learn a highly complex code of second language particularly English? On the

contrary the sufficiently large tenements with all amenities and limited number of family members ensure peace and happiness. Children living in such families can utilize maximum time for their study without encountering any distraction. Assurance of minimum amenities in the form of adequate housing is one of the major factor contributing in the achievement and happiness of the members of the family. It is indeed true so far the learning of English is concerned.

#### 4.5 Occupational Background :- -----

The school is the agency of socialization where a child learns cognitive skills to get along in the society. The main task of the teacher is that the students should learn the skills so as to get socially accepted. But whatever the learner learns in a school should be effectively supported by the family members. The interactions within the family members have an effect on the child's school career. In this respect the occupational differences play a role in the student's school performance in general because the occupation influences the quality which parents seek to develop in their children. In the present study this is seen with regard to the language acquisition in particular.

#### 4.5.1 Occupational Diversification :- -----

The occupation determines not only financial status of the family but also environment in which the child grows. In other words the occupational background of the family is one of the factors that either inspires the child to make educational career or handicaps the process of learning by not providing the necessary urge to learn. As the studies of Hess, Shipman and others suggest "children from families in which educational and financial resources are lacking tend to become used to limited learning since the environment in which they live allows little discretion and their parents do not provide the

necessary information to function competently. ---- they may be poorly prepared for what to expect in school and how to learn." 8.

A large array of statistical evidence shows that in general educational attainment rises from the bottom to the top of the class system. The children of the managers and the professionals usually obtain higher qualifications than those of manual workers.<sup>9</sup> Differences in nature of jobs tend to produce differences in attitude and outlook. Since the manual workers have less control over the future, less opportunity to improve their position and less income to invest, they become fatalistic and present time oriented. They are concerned with immediate gratification which emphasizes the enjoyment and pleasures of the moment than the sacrifice of the future. As such it will tend to discourage sustained efforts of the examination success. This present-time orientation further reduces the motivation for the academic achievements.

It is a recognized fact that the occupational careers of the parents influence the values of socialization and consequently school competence of the children. Parents try to mould their children according to their desires, the root of which is the occupation of the parents. A series of studies of Melvin Kohn and his associates (1969) suggest that working class parents were more concerned with honesty, cleanliness, doing well in schools obedience and neatness. But the middle class which is engaged in white collared jobs is more concerned with children's self-control, curiosity and consideration of others. These parents do not like their children to accept what others say uncritically. It is because as Kohn explains that the middle class persons pursuing white collared jobs are more often in a position that requires self direction. On the contrary people engaged in the lower occupations are not required to exercise self direction of the

job. They usually conform to the job routines set by their supervisors. 10. No doubt it influences the process of learning.

In the area under study it is found that people do not have only agricultural occupation. Because of the industrialization the diversification of occupations have opened up. There is an increasing tendency for a son to take up the different occupation from that of the father. In short various occupational categories such as artisan crafts, allied to agriculture like poultry and dairy keeping, white collar occupation of higher and lower ranks etc. are found though agriculture is the main vocation of the majority of the people. As occupation influences the learning in general, an attempt was made to elicit the information about the occupation of the parents and to find out whether there is a bearing of parental occupation on the learning of English in particular. For the sake of convenience the occupation of the respondents parents is classified in below mentioned terms.

1. White collared jobs of Higher rank :- Doctor, engineer, lawyer, officer, professor and highschool teachers.
2. White collared jobs of lower rank :- Clerk, foreman, welder, fitter etc.
3. Business :- Shop owner and other businessman.
4. Agriculture :- Either self cultivated or partially self cultivated.
5. Farm worker :- Working in a farm on wages.
6. Artisan's craft :- Carpenter, etc.
7. Manual worker :- Factory worker, sweeper, watchman etc.

It has been found that 25 % (50) parents in the sample are engaged in the white collared jobs of either higher or lower rank. 7 % (14) have their own business, 4.5 % (9) are the craftsman like carpenter etc., 23.5 % (47) are engaged in the manual work while 40 % (80) have agriculture as their business. 30 % (60) are fully or partially self

cultivators while 10 % (20) are farm workers working on daily wages. It means that though agriculture is the occupation of the majority in the sample still there is a drift from the agriculture as the sole occupation to the occupational diversification. It is indeed interesting to assess the co-relationship between the parental occupation and the performance of the students in the language Test as it is illustrated in table No. 4.

The above table demonstrates that the majority of the students 66.66 % (8) securing first class with distinction come from the homes having white collared occupation. It has considerable low rate of failure. It is interesting to note that not a single student belonging to the agricultural occupational family background secured first class with distinction in the Test. Percentage of failure of the students whose parents are self cultivators is 51.66 % and only 6.6 % (4) students got first class where as 25 % (5) students whose parents are farmworkers just got through the examination and 75 % (15) students failed miserably. Rate of failure of the students whose parents are either craftsman or manual workers is equally high as 77.77 % and 51.06 % respectively. In other words the students coming from the families engaged in non-white collared jobs did not do well in the acquisition of English. These parents, as revealed in the discussion with the teachers, being less knowledgeable and having less sympathy towards the teachers' goal did not contact the teachers. Again, the schedule indicates that the parents in this category are not interested in the educational career and they wanted their children to assist them in their jobs. Naturally the students develop indifference towards the careers which demand more education and specialized training. As a result the students did not bother much about their failure because their negligence to the school studies in general was not seriously

TABLE NO. 4

Parental Occupation and Test Results.

White colloured Jobs of higher Ranks	White Collared Jobs of lower Ranks	Business	Agricu- lture	Farm Worker man	Crafts workers	Manual workers	above 70%	60-70	45-60	35-45	Fail	Percen tage of failure	
15.5% (31)							7	2	6	9	7	22.58%	
	9.5% (19)						1	5	7	1	5	26.31%	
		7% (14)					2	2	2	4	4	28.57%	
			.30% (60)				NIL	4	8	17	31	51.66%	
				10% (20)			NIL	NIL	1	4	15	75.00%	
					4.5% (9)		1	NIL	1	NIL	7	77.77%	
							23.5% (47)	1	2	6	14	24	51.06%

looked upon. In contrast students coming from the families having white collared jobs had done well both in the Test and the Terminal Examination. All these findings can be very well put in the words of Joan Aldous- "----- Parental occupational and school careers are thus interdependent, the events in one limiting and reinforcing the events in the others." 11.

#### 4.5.2 Division of Labour within the Household :- -----

To get a complete picture of occupational environment it is also necessary to account for the supplementary occupational work done by the students at home. The sample showed wide range of the work done by the students in order to supplement the income of their parents and minimize their labour. It is particularly seen in the families having non-white collared occupations and agricultural families. Their duties include looking after the cattles and poultry, working in the farm, giving assistance in the business etc. children coming from the families having craftsmanship as their occupation are always expected to give more attention to learn that skill and help their parents. The girls in the sample also did cleaning of the house, washing, cooking, looking after the younger babies etc. in the house. They can not devote all their time on their studies.

The picture of the better-off families engaged in the white collared jobs and profitable agriculture is diametrically opposite. Students in this sample coming from such families stated that they had a little or no work in the house. Occassionally they have to help their parents but priority is given to their studies. Out of 43.5 % (87) students belonging to the better off families, 14 % (12) stood in distinction, 9 % (8) got first class, whereas 15 % (13) students passed in second class and 34 % (30) got through the examination. Only 27.58 % (24) students did not succeed in the language Test.



It is seen that the students coming from the less well-off families had to spend a lot of time in the work with a little leisure for studying or playing. 56.5 % (113) students stated that they had to perform a number of duties at their homes. Out of them 61 % (69) could not pass in the Test. 6 % (7) secured first class, 16 % (18) got second class whereas remaining 18 % (19) students got only passing marks. The glance at the following table gives an idea of the performance of the students.

Table No. 5

Students' Participation In Domestic Work And The Test Results

Students Participating in Domestic Work				Total	Result					
Looking after cattle & poultry	Looking after business	In the agriculture	Helping mother		above 70	60	45	35	F	% of
						70	60	45	i	lure
									1	
16 % (32)	10.5 % (21)	16.5 % (33)	13.5 % (27)	56.5 (113)	Nil	7	18	19	69	61%

#### 4.5.3. Working Mothers :-

Importance of a mother in the development of a child can hardly be ignored. She is a central figure in the universe of a child. It is she who looks after all the needs of her child, gives him necessary feeling of security, at the same time inspires him to achieve something. She is the person who provides the initial motivation for the scholastic activities and bright academic success. Particularly in the language learning, the rapport between the mother and child proves vital as she is the first person with whom a child can interact.

English is the foreign language and learning of English naturally demands more attention concentration and efforts on the part of the learner and the mother with proper awareness of English language and its importance to her child certainly accelerates the learning of English on the part of her child.

Participation of a woman in the economic activities of the family is almost inevitable today. She prefers to work either to maintain her family, to supplement the family income or to have enjoyment of work or status of job. But in a patriarchal family where male is the head of the family. The mother, though she too contributes in the financial activities, can not escape from her household duties like cooking, rearing of children etc. It creates a physical strain for her and it gives rise to mental weariness. Her physical absence in the home creates problems for her children as she is not available to handle their conflicts, assist them in their home work and school related activities. Very often because of her working hours it becomes impossible for her to be with her children when they start their day or receive them when they come back from the school. Carl Weinberg rightly states, " some evidence suggests that the children of working mothers are more maladjusted, more delinquent .... than the children of non working mothers." 12. Naturally a working mother has an impact on the learning of English.

Keeping this in mind the information was collected from the respondents about their mothers' participation in the financial activities of the family. Only 7 families were found where the mother has the sophisticated occupation. 5 worked as teachers either in high schools or primary schools, 1 was a trained nurse whereas the remaining worked in a co-operative credit society. Another 39 % (78) mothers in the present data, in one way or the other, shared the economic activities of the family. 5.5 % (11) mothers helped in the household

business, 12.5 % (25) worked on the farms, 9.5 % ( 19) worked on daily wages, 3.5 % (7) supplemented their income by cooking and washing for others. Only 1.5 % (3) had to look after the cattles. Whereas remaining 6.5 % (13) mothers added to the income either by sewing, knitting or rolling papads for the Lijjat Papad Centre located in Warananagar.

It is interesting to note that none of the students whose mothers had the white collared occupation, failed in the Test. 43 % (3) students out of them secured distinction in the Test. 14 % (1) stood in the second class and first class each and 29 % (2) passed on the border line. But the picture is diametrically different in the case of the studens whose mothers are engaged in the manual labour. The following table gives clear idea of the impact of the mother's contribution in the economic activities of the family on the learning of English.

The table No. 6 clearly demonstrates that a working mother has a bearing on the learning of English. When a mother is an unskilled worker, her work is exhaustive one and because of working hours she can not spare sufficient time for her children. Such students who were deprived of the necessary motivation and care provided by the mother lagged behind in language learning. The performance of the students whose mothers were either farmworkers, workers on daily wages or maid servants stands testimony to the point. The rate of failure in the language Test is as high as 80 %, 95 % and 100 % respectively, whereas occupation like sewing and knitting does not demand the absence of the mother from her family and kids. Naturally the question of overlooking does not arise. In the present data the rate of failure in such cases is as low as 15.38 % (2).

The statistics mentioned above in table No 4,5 and 6 clearly

TABLE NO. 6

WORKING MOTHERS AND THE TEST RESULTS.

White collared jobs	Non white collared jobs	Results												
		60% to 70%	70% to 75%	75% to 80%	80% to 85%	85% to 90%	Percentage of failure							
teacher other than teacher	Help in Farm workers on daily wages etc.	Above 70%	sewing 70%	knitting etc.	looking after cattles etc.	cooking washing etc.	Help in Farm workers on daily wages etc.	2	1	1	1	1	Nil	Nil
18 (2)	5 58(11)	1	Nil	3	1	Nil	1	Nil	1	Nil	7	6.3	63%	63%
12.58(25)	9.58(19)	1	Nil	3	1	20	80%							
3-58(7)	1.58(3)	1	Nil	2	Nil	Nil	Nil							
6.58(13)	6.58(13)	5	2	4	2	15	38%							

demonstrates that there is a close relationship between the occupational conditions at home and the language development. These findings are quite in tune with the observations made by D.C. Irwin who compared language development of children whose parents were engaged in professional or managerial positions with that children whose parents were employed at lower status occupations. Students from the high socio-economic status communicated in longer units with a greater variety of words. 13.

In the studies of Schulman and Havighurst it is found that the language differences persisted even after the considerable schooling. They administered a vocabulary Test to 16 year old students. The results indicated differences for the various socio-economic levels.14.

#### 4.6 Educational Background

In order to learn a language it must be used in the actual situations. One can not learn a language unless it is practiced in the actual situations. Particularly the learning of the second language is vitally influenced by the language experience. As a child gets very limited exposure to the second language he lacks the ease and fluency in it which is generally found in case of the first language. Here lies the challenge to the parents and teachers because they are the right persons to guide, coach and motivate the children to attain a competence in the second language.

Educational attainment is related to a variety of factors like student's health, his willingness to learn, quality of the school etc. Parents' interest in their children's education appears to be one of the important factors that influence educational attainment. Learning requires motivation and it can be provided only by two authoritarian agencies Viz. teacher and the parents. Educated parents are quite

aware of the importance of education and they come forward to provide their children all necessary incentives and motivation to pursue the educational activities. It is found that the educated middle class parents are deeply interested in their children's education. They pay frequent visits to the school to discuss the progress of their children. In this respect Douglas's findings appear to be apt. He found that parental interests and encouragements became increasingly important as the children grew older. He also stated that during the primary socialization middle class children receive greater attention and stimulus from their parents. This forms a basis for high achievement in the educational system. 15.

If one compares the practices of educated families and those of uneducated families in view of their children's education, one realizes why the students from the educated families have high attainment in the educational system. The educated parents always encourage their children to improve their performance in all fields of life particularly in the area of schooling. These parents reward the success of their children and instil in them the pattern of high achievement. They set a high goal in front of them to attain. In short educated parents provide a stimulating encouragement, which fosters intellectual development. Thus the practices of the educated parents lay the foundations for the high attainment in education. In contrast majority of uneducated parents are after their bread winning activities. They are more interested in their occupations, no wonder then if these parents keep a high emphasis on mastering more their occupational skills than the educational activities in general. So in the educated families the environment at home is more stimulating for the intellectual development whereas in the uneducated families environment is more oriented to the occupational skills.

The educational background of the family has to be taken into

consideration for another important reason. The background of the child affects his outlook towards society and his own aspirations. Lack of education in the family makes a person to aspire not for high educational goals but he tries to develop the occupational skills so that he will get more income. This outlook is generally found in the uneducated hardworkers and skillful artisans. This outlook makes a man oblivion of the higher aspirations, and in turn the education is overlooked.

#### 4.6.1 Parental Education :- -----

The educated parents who had very well understood the inordinate importance of education and its vital role in the all sided personality of the child provide all necessary incentives and motivation to their children. Almost all the parents tend to thrust their expectations on their children. They inspire their children to conform to the expectations of the teacher. If the expectations of the parents and the teachers are in tune with each other, no problem is faced by the children. Consequently children of the educated parents do well in their schooling. In this connection Cook and Cook maintain. " Middle class youngsters and their parents who are educated have been found in recent studies to be the best informed, best organized and the most articulate group of school supporters and critics." 16.

The parents role is equally important in building up of child's own self. "As a child grows he should become increasingly independent and should develop his interest and urge in learning which is shown by change in behaviour as a result of experience." 17. But it can not be denied that motivation is essential for the effective learning and for that the parents and teachers should join hands with each other, learning in the school can not be divorced from the learning at home and in community. So the pertinent question is who are the parents who

live up to their role and provide necessary stimulation and take necessary interest in the education of their children. In other words in order to assess the learning of English in particular the educational background of the family of the students has to be taken in to consideration.

Man is more than a mere hard worker or a skillful artisan who has a very limited aim to achieve. Education enables man to be liberal in his outlook. At the same time with education it becomes possible for him to identify what is good in his aspirations, hopes, and ways of life. Educated parents and the liberal environment at home create necessary insight in the children about the wider perspectives of education. Hence an assessment of the influence of educational background of the family on the learning of English becomes a pertinent point.

The impact of the parents' education on the students' learning of English is two fold 1) The children coming from the illiterate families had not done better in the language Test. 2) Secondly where the environment at home was not educational there was indeed no scope for an ability to write and read. The members of the family seemed to be after their occupational careers. Consequently children coming from such families are poorly prepared for the process of learning. students who had illiterate parents, hardly have shown any progress in learning.

Table No. 7 reveals this point.

From the above table it is seen that 18.5 % (37) father and 31 % (62) mothers are totally illiterate. Students having illiterate parents could not score good marks in the Test and percentage of failure is more than 60 %. In contrast the percentage of failure is nil in those students who have graduate mothers and fathers. Out of 12



TABLE NO. 7

Parental Education and Results

Fathers Education	Number	Results			Mother's Education	Number	Results				
		Above 70%	60% to 70%	Fail			Above 70%	60% to 70%	Fail		
Doctor Engineer etc. Double graduates	3.5% (7)	7	Nil	Nil	0.5% (1)	1	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Graduate	12.5% (25)	3	7	8	6% (12)	6	3	1	2	Nil	Nil
I.T.I. & similar	3% (6)	Nil	Nil	1	I.T.I. & similar	0.5% (1)	Nil	Nil	1	Nil	Nil
8th to 12th standard	33.5% (67)	1	6	11	8th to 12th standard	23.5% (47)	3	7	9	19	19.14%
5th to 7th standard	9% (18)	Nil	Nil	1	5th to 7th standard	19% (38)	Nil	2	10	1	25
1st to 4th standard	12.5% (25)	1	2	4	1st to 4th standard	11.5% (23)	Nil	Nil	3	6	14
II-literate	18.5% (37)	Nil	Nil	2	II-literate	31% (62)	1	1	4	17	39
Education not known to the children	7.5% (15)	Nil	Nil	5	Education not known to the children	8% (16)	1	2	4	3	6
Total	200	12	15	31	Total	200	12	15	31	49	93

students who achieved firstclass with distinction, 10 students have graduate fathers. 12.5 % (25) fathers and 11.5 % (23) mothers have hardly completed their primary education and only one student belonging to such a family got distinction marks in the Test. Whereas the percentage of failure is quite high. Same is the story regarding the students whose parents have not completed their secondary school education. 7.5 % (15) and 8 % (16) students did not know the education of their fathers and mothers respectively. The above statistics reveal that there is a relationship between the parents' education and the second language acquisition of the students. It has been found that higher the education of the parents higher is the achievement of their children in the Test. It is seen that the students whose parents are highly educated all of them achieved bright success in the Test. Two students were exception. Though they did not graduate parents still they achieved bright success in the Test. In case of illiterate parents, their children were unable to secure bright success in the Test.

#### 4.6.2. Educational Environment :-

With regard to the educational environment at home, it was found that students coming from the homes having educational environment had done well in the Test. Also it was seen that the absence of the educational environment had a negative bearing on the performance of the students in the Test. To collect the information about the educational environment of the family, following questions were asked to the students.

- a) Do your parents buy the news paper?
- b) Do your parents read the books?
- c) Are your parents members of a library.
- d) Do your parents like to purchase books?



e) Do you use dictionary?

f) Do you see\hear the educational programmes released by T.V.or Radio?

37 % (74) parents buy newspapers and they regularly read them. 50 % (100) like to read books but only 27 % (54) are regular members of the library. 53 % (106) parents purchase books but most of them like to purchase religious books, novels and magazines. Only 14 % (28) like to buy thought-provoking books. Only 28.5 % (57) students answered 'Yes' to (e) but they were not able to name the dictionary. 42 % (84) students stated that they did see or hear the educational programmes released either by T.V. or Radio. Table No B throws light on the impact of educational environemtn of the family on the learning of English.

From the above table it is clear that the educational environment in the family has a positive impact on the learning of English. 92 % (11) of the distinction holders had positively answered the question (a,b,c,d,e, and f). Their parents like to read books and newspapers and they prefer to buy thought-prvoking books. These 11 students also see\hear educational programmes. Table No B shows that in case of the students, who had answered positively to (a,b,c,d,e,f), percentage of failure is remerkably low. The majority of the students who topped the merit list of the language Test belonged to the same category.

Table No. 7 & 8 very well illustrate the point that the amount of parental education and the educational environment exert an influence over the student's learning of English. Higher the parental education and better is the educational environment at home, consequently better is the performance of the students in the Test.

Table No. 8

Educational Environment In The Family And Test Results.

<u>Educational</u>		<u>Environment</u>				<u>Results</u>				
<u>Parents</u>		<u>Students</u>								
Buy News Papers	Read books	Purchase books	Use of library	See/hear educational programmes	60% to 70%	45% to 60%	35% to 45%	Fail of failure		
378 (74)					11	10	17	15	21	28.37 0
508 (100)					11	11	22	21	35	35.00 0
538 (06)					11	7	19	27	42	39.62 0
278 (54)					11	10	7	8	18	33.33 0
28.58 (57)					11	11	6	8	21	36.84 0
428 (84)					11	11	12	25	25	29.76 0

#### 4.7 Social Background of the Family :- -----

Essentially man is a social animal. Though he lives for his own self still his interactions with the society, his participation in the social activities are equally important and they determine his nature and character. It is one of the basic needs of the man to be socially accepted for which he has to make social adjustments. Elizabeth Hurlock defines social adjustments as, "The success with which people adjust to other people in general and to the group with which they are identified in particular."<sup>18</sup> Those who make good social adjustment, generally develop favourable social attitudes because of which they are accepted by the society in general and their own group in particular .

Not only the adults but the children also are accepted to be socially adjusted. Socially adjusted children are always favoured by their peer group. Otherwise they are rejected or ignored by their mates. As a result such poorly adjusted children develop unfavourable traits of personality. They prefer to live alone and generally develop an inferiority complex in them. These unfavourable personality traits prove hazardous to the overall development of the child of which language learning is one aspect. No language can be learnt in isolation from the actual language experience. This is more true regarding the learning of the second language like English. In other words, for a better second language learning social interactions are of vital importance. Elizabeth Hurlock maintains, "children who are well accepted have more opportunities for participation in peer group activities."<sup>19</sup> These children have more opportunities to learn social skills like learning of a language.

Since children are the imitators of the models in front of them, they, in their early childhood, pick up the behavioural patterns and attitudes of their parents. If the poor patterns of social adjustment

are developed at home, children would find it difficult to make good social adjustments. If the parents provide a poor model to imitate, children's social adjustment will be equally handicapped. It is the duty of the parents to motivate their children for the proper social adjustments and participation in the social activities so that they will get proper language experience. In other words, the language acquisition of a child depends upon his social adjustments. And whether a child picks up the proper behavioural patterns and attitudes so as to be accepted in his peer group depends upon the social contacts of his parents.

Keeping this in mind an attempt was made to elicit the information about the social life of the respondents parents. No doubt that each and everybody has to spend the most part of the day striving for his own livelihood. But whether the person wants to establish the social contacts is determined by how he spends his leisure time. It is certain that a socially accepted man will try to spend his free time in the company of his group. He will take active part in the social activities and he will try to supplement his knowledge by reading.

On the contrary a person who tries to live in isolation from the society will try to avoid the company. He will prefer to live alone. very often the needs and burdens of the domestic life do not allow a person to be social. The daily work and routine is such that it is not possible for him to get leisure time and to utilize it for improving social interactions. In such cases a person withdraws from the society. He is not socially accepted and naturally he presents a poor model in front of his children to imitate.

To get information about the social behaviour of the parents, following questions were asked.

- a) What do your parents do in their leisure time?

- b) Are your parents members of the social associations in your village?
- c) Do your parents participate in the social meetings and gatherings?
- d) Do you have family friends?

The answers to the above mentioned questions throw light on the social background of the parents. Table No. 9 clearly shows the influence of the social background on the learning of English.

As the above table demonstrates those students who have positively answered the questions a,b,c and d had indeed done better in the language Test. Majority of the distinction holders and the high rankers belong to this category.

36.5 % (73) mothers and 60 % (120) fathers, besides looking after their children, either have some interest in developing their hobbies, reading magazines and books or visiting their friends. Almost all distinction holders and majority of high rankers belong to this category. In this case the percentage of failure in the language Test was considerably low viz 36.98 % and 35.00 %

66.5 % (113) mothers and 36.5% (73) fathers have to utilize their free time either for the other house hold duties or they have to help in the family vocations like shopkeeping, farming etc. Naturally they could not utilize their leisure time for better social interactions. Lack of the better social background is immediately reflected in the performance of their children in the language Test. Only 2 students got the top ranking in the Test. Majority of the students passed on the border line. Percentage of failure of the students whose mothers and fathers did not have better social background was comparatively high as 47.78 % and 60 % respectively.

7 % (14) mothers and 3.5 % (7) fathers in the sample did not have

TABLE NO. 9

Social Background of The Family and The Test Results.

Parents	Activities in the Leisure Time Reading, playing visiting friends etc.	Household & occupational duties	Do not get lei- sure time	Member- ship of the soci- al asso- ciations	Participa- tion in the social meetings & gatherings	No family friends	Above 70%	Results			Percent age of failure	
								60% to 70%	45% to 60%	35% to 45%		
	36.5% (73)						10	9	16	11	27	36.98 %
Mothers	66.5% (113)						2	6	15	35	54	47.78 %
			7% (14)				NIL	NIL	NIL	2	12	85.71 %
			30% (60)				9	9	11	13	18	30.10 %
				34% (68)			10	10	12	15	21	30.88 %
	60% (120)						12	10	24	32	42	35.00 %
Father	36.5% (73)						NIL	5	7	17	44	60.27 %
			3.5% (7)				NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL	7	100.00 %
				28% (56)			10	9	8	14	15	26.78 %
					54% (108)		12	13	24	26	33	33.55 %
Family					9.5% (19)		1	4	2	2	12	63.16 %



any leisure time as they had to strive hard for their bread earning activity. They could not get sufficient time to look after their children. Needless to mention that they did not have any social participation at all. None of their children could get even the second class position in the Test. Only 2 students got through the Test on the border line and the percentage of failure was as high as 85.7 % and 100 % respectively.

To be a member of the social associations and actively participate in the social meeting and gatherings in the village is a way through which one can have sufficient social interactions. 30 % (60) mothers and 28 % (56) fathers of the respondents have the membership of the social groups and associations. 34 % (68) mothers and 54 % (108) fathers do participate in the village meetings, gathering and similar functions. Definitely they establish better social contacts and its impact on the language acquisition of their children is revealed in the table No. 9. Almost all top rankers belonged to this category and percentage of failure was considerably low.

Only 9.5 % (19) students in the sample stated that their families did not have any intimate family friends. It is interesting to note that none of them secured distinction only one could get first class and 63.16 % (12) students could not even pass the Test.

Thus from the above description it is evident that the parents who have no leisure time and hence could not go outside their own individual activities, their social life is almost not existant. The compulsion of the job is the cause of it. Their children's performance in the Test was not satisfactory. But the parents who use their leisure time to establish contacts with the society, their children indeed excelled in the Test.

Thus one can not deny the fact that the family background is a

vital factor which influences the learning of the students. In a family a child acquires a model of appropriate behaviour, attitudes and philosophy of life. In other words the family background provides a motivation required for the success and achievements in the life. Certainly the process of the second language learning is also influenced by the family background of the child.

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