ABSTRACT. This study was conducted with a group of 30 problem students who have been identified as irregular in class attendance, non-attentive to class lectures, creating disturbances in the class, etc. The problem students were compared with a group of equal number of normal students with respect to a Purpose in Life (PIL) scale. It was found that the problem students had lower scores (M = 59.87, SD = 18.09) as compared to those of normals (M = 87.93, SD = 0.68). These scores differed significantly (t = 7.230). From this study it was concluded that the problem students demonstrated such activities due to a lack of purpose in their lives, although it was granted that some causality probably runs in both directions. It is hypothesised that counseling may be helpful in order to improve such behaviour.

INTRODUCTION

It has become a usual practice that students go to educational institutions for education with an aim of achieving a better life through better employment. It is usually provided to those who come out with brilliant results. For producing better results, students regularly attend the class-lectures attentively. But in the classroom, it has been always observed that there are some students who have been identified as irregular in class attendance, non-attentive and creating disturbances. These students have been classified as problem students. Moreover, these students show lack of motivation to study and irregularity in performance which is not normally expected from the students. Sometimes they also break the law and disobey the teachers and other educational authorities. This is not a recent observation, but rather universal. It can be described as a part of what has been called an alienation syndrome among the youth community (Khan and Sorcar, 1973). Seeman (1969) reported that powerless and alienated persons possess a lower interest and ability to learn.

It has also been found that most maladjusted adolescent students suffer from socio-emotional problems (Khan and Sorcar, 1970).
Besides, persons become frustrated when they experience less meaning in life, which gives them feelings of unhappiness. This situation leads a person to become a problem (Begum and Rahman, 1991).

In Bangladesh, the pattern of life was very simple in the past and common people had lower aspirations and less demands for daily life. As a result, education was confined mostly to privileged persons only. But now a days, technology has made life more complex and education has been identified as needed for all. This makes people aware of their education for their competitive life. At present, in educational institutions, teachers deal with a larger number of students and become engaged constantly with their teaching affairs. This situation makes teachers more mechanical, and unable to provide personal affection, close supervision and guidance. In this situation, students lose interest in their education and become confused about their goals and ability (Mia, 1970). In such a mental condition these students may indulge in abnormal behaviour in the classroom and outside.

Numerous attempts have aimed at studying the patterns and dynamics of human adjustment problems in major areas of life. The present study was undertaken to find out whether there is any difference in purposefulness of life or meaning in life between problem and normal students.

METHOD

Sample
The sample of this study consisted of a group of 30 problem students which was compared with age-matched regular students in 1st and 2nd year honours of Dhaka University. These problem students were selected at random.

The mean age of the students was 20 years. They belonged to the same institute having educational qualification up to higher secondary level.

Measuring Instrument
A modified Bengali version of the Purpose In Life (PIL) scale was used. This scale was originally developed by Crumbaugh (1968) to measure the degree to which a person experiences a sense of meaning