Chapter – I

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is conceptualized as a transition period, which begins with the onset of puberty and ends with the acceptance of adult roles and responsibilities. Of all life-stages, except childhood, adolescence is the one most marked by rapid and potentially tumultuous transition (Williams, Holmbeck, & Greenly, 2002). This is to be seen in the domain of biological development where the changes are physically and externally manifest as well as in the progression of both cognitive and psychosocial maturity from that of childhood to that of the fully functioning adult (Byrne, Davenport, & Mazanov, 2007). Adolescence is a developmental period characterised by multiple changes in virtually every aspect of an individual’s life, calling for new psychological adaptations. While the transition through adolescence is inevitable, the speed and magnitude of these changes overtax the capacity of many young people to cope and the resulting phenomenon of adolescent stress is now well recognized (Byrne et al., 2007).

In all societies, adolescence is about growing up, about moving from the immaturity of childhood into the maturity of adulthood, of preparation for the future (Steinberg, 2008). The word adolescence derives from the Latin verb “adolescence”, which means “to grow up” or “to grow to maturity” (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). The founding of the scientific study of adolescence as an academic discipline is generally dated from 1904 by G. Stanley Hall in his publication of the two-volume work Adolescence. His view was mainly framed by an evolutionary (Darwian) conception of the basic process accounting for change across this period of life. Hall made adolescence a period of “storm and stress,” a time of universal and inevitable upheaval (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). Although other scholars of this period rejected Hall’s view, theorists of adolescent development used a conceptual lens comparable to Hall’s, at least as far as his biological reductionism and his deficit view of adolescence was concerned (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). On the other hand, Erik Erikson (1959) viewed the period as one wherein an inherited maturational ground plan resulted in the inescapable psychosocial crisis of identity versus role confusion. Further, the developmental theory of cognition
proposed by Piaget (1972) focused on the emergence of formal logical structures and not on the adolescent period per se. The absence of concern in Piaget’s theory with the broader array of biological, emotional, personality, social and societal concerns that had engaged other theorists’ discussion of adolescence did not stop a relatively minor and historically transitory interest in Piaget’s ideas as a frame for empirical understanding of the adolescent period (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009).

Current perspectives on adolescent development have evolved significantly since early conceptualizations of adolescence as a period of stress and turmoil for most or all adolescents (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009). The search for universal descriptions for adolescents has been replaced by recognition of the wide variability that characterises development during the second decade of life and to one of the opportunities for growth and positive development. These observations have contributed to interest in individual differences in the paths and trajectories of development from childhood through adolescence to adulthood (Santrock, 2008; Lerner & Steinberg, 2009; Susman & Dorn, 2009). Although the age range of adolescence can vary with cultural and historical circumstances, in western societies, the adolescent period begins at approximately 10 to 13 years of age and ends between the ages of 18 and 22 (Santrock, 2008). However, the exact ages that mark the beginning and end of this period are not precisely defined. The stage of adolescence has lengthened, both at the beginning and the end, because young people mature earlier physically and because most of them delay entering into work and marriage until their mid-20s (Coleman & Hendry, 1999; Steinberg, 2008). Documented work related to experience of young people, across the globe, indicates that the forms adolescence takes within culture are diverse and distinctive. Still, one can certainly identify common features related to biological, cognitive and psychological imperatives of human development. Further, with the world becoming a global village through increased communication has led to the emergence of world youth community, resulting into commonalities in interest of adolescents across cultures such as style of dressing up, eating habits, music preferences and sexual explorations. However, these commonalities get coloured, adapted and transformed to give different meaning within a cultural system.

The adolescence period involves a number of biological, cognitive, and psychosocial changes (Susman & Dorn, 2009). The biological changes involve physical
changes in an individual’s body with extraordinary growth and change in physical appearance and biological functioning. The pubertal changes also affect the adolescents psychologically, in different ways, and with different intensities and timing. Support is found for that adolescents, especially girls who are “off-time” (earlier or later) in their pubertal development generally experience more stress and emotional problems than adolescents who are “on-time” (Ge, Conger, & Elder, 2001; Graber & Sontag, 2009; Hankin & Abela, 2005; Susman & Dorn, 2009). The cognitive processes are one of the most striking changes to take place during adolescence and involve the development of far more sophisticated thinking abilities and reasoning ability (Kuhn, 2009). The implications of these cognitive changes are also far-reaching. The ability to think more capably in hypothetical and abstract terms affects the way adolescents think about themselves, their relationships, and the world around them. The rapid development of psychosocial processes during adolescence involve changes in emotions, personality, relationships with others, and social contexts (McElhaney, Allen, Stephenson & Hare, 2009).

A critical task of adolescence is the establishment of a stable sense of identity as a part of achieving autonomy. Adolescents must learn to deal with an expanding social universe and must develop the social skills to find friendship, romance, employment and social standing within multiple social spheres (Cote, 2009). In sum, the transition from childhood to adolescence is complex and multidimensional, involving change in many different aspects of an individual’s life. While the transition through adolescence is inevitable for a sound development, the speed and magnitude of these changes may overtax the capacity of many young to cope and result in a potential experience of stress. Adolescents must therefore develop a range of mechanisms which allow them to function effectively in the phase of stress which comes about from the transition of adolescence (Byrne et al., 2007).

In seeking to understand adolescence, we are brought face to face with a variety of puzzling issues. In the first place no one is entirely sure when adolescence begins, and when it ends. It may be convenient to use the teenage years - from 13 to 19 - as one definition, but it hardly fits the facts. At one end puberty may commence at 10 or 11, and parents or teachers may describe the behaviour of a boy or girl as 'adolescent' well before
they reach the age of 13. At the other end those remaining in higher education, or still living at home in their early twenties, may be manifesting confrontational or dependent behaviour which is strikingly similar to a typical 16 year old. There is therefore, a cautionary note for all those who work with adolescents and youth, may it be researchers, practitioners, employers, policy makers and parents not to have a universalistic notion about adolescence. Adolescence needs to be understood in historical and cultural context and its variegated and tentative nature be acknowledged and appreciated (Brown and Larson 2002). It is particularly significant when policies are formulated and interventions are planned for adolescents to ensure their well being with reference to a particular culture/country.

1.1 Some Definitions of Adolescence

The term adolescent has a long history extending through Middle English and Old French. In terms of etymology, Adolescence comes from a Greek word 'ADOLESCERE' which means ‘to grow to maturity’.

G. Stanley Hall (1921) splendidly portrayed, "Adolescence is a period of stress and strain, storm and strife."

Adolescence, in the words of Thomas (1932) is one of the most interesting and important period in the entire life circle.

Crow and Crow (1965) "It begins at puberty and ends with acquisition of full physical growth, capacity for intellectual behaviour and mature emotional control."

Encyclopedia of Psychology (1946) says, "Adolescence extends roughly from 13 years of age till 21 years for the girls and 15 to till 21 for boys".

Erik Erickson (1959) suggested that “Adolescence, from a socioemotional point of view, is characterized by the struggle of the individual to develop an internal sense of identity”.

Valentine (1975) says, "It is the age of adolescents during which love affairs reach their highest peak and the highest number of suicides and murders. Elopements, abductions and running away from the home occur". 
1.2 Historical Roots of Adolescence

We need to examine the historical foundations of adolescence, and to study adolescence in relation to cultural patterns, forms of life, cultural institutions, and norms and values. A historical approach is often understood as retrospective explanation based on the problems of today. History makes us conscious of what is before our eyes as a matter of course, it makes us aware of the aspects of change, and makes us critical to why it was not different or why it actually became the way it is.

Throughout most of history, adolescence was unknown as a stage of life. Native societies have observed Rites of Passage signifying the emergence of young people from childhood into adulthood, but no concept of adolescence intervened between stages. In the classical world, Aristotle recorded what now is known as adolescent development, that is, the appearance of secondary sexual characteristics in both males and females, but he and other ancients recognised only three distinct periods of life: childhood, youth, and old age. The notion of youth as a time of sexual awakening and rebellion received particular expression in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s philosophical narrative, (Emile 1762), which described the evolution of a noble boy into a civilised man. At age fifteen or sixteen, according to Rousseau, a boy experiences crisis, and his mind is in such ‘constant agitation’ that he is ‘almost unmanageable’. With proper care and education, however, he learns to enjoy beauty and wisdom so that at the end of adolescence he is ready to marry and raise children. Rousseau addressed the condition of childhood but Goethe had a greater influence with respect to adolescence. In 1774, he wrote The Sufferings of Young Werther, which described a sensitive youth experiencing suicidal despair in facing the adult world. The book was an instant success and legend has it that there was a series of similar suicides across Europe.

Among Romans, the term child (puer) could be applied almost without regard to age, and through the Middle Ages it served as a demeaning label for any person of low social status. By the Renaissance, the establishment of schools for a somewhat larger proportion of the population helped to extend the period of childhood but still did not define a separate stage of adolescence because neither school attendance nor grade in school was based on age. Other factors inhibiting the evolution of distinct life stages
included the brevity of total life span, the necessity for almost all people except elites to work, and the rigid social hierarchies that made most people, regardless of age, dependent on nobility.

The largely agrarian world of early modern Europe kept young people in a condition of semi-dependence, in which economic and personal status involved important contributions to the family economy but left the individual dependent on parents. Among lower classes in Western (though less frequently in southern) Europe, England and Colonial America, many boys and girls in their teens were sent from their homes to work as employees for other families, a practice that served both economic and upbringing functions.

Though the French word adolescence existed, the term youth (or its equivalent) was more pervasively applied to people in this semi dependent condition. Some historians have posited that a Youth Culture, manifested by organisations and activities, existed to some extent in the eighteenth century. Moreover, in Europe and America at that time, adults, particularly religious leaders expressed concern over presumed emotional and behavioural problems of young people and began to urge their education such that it helps them to get prepared for future roles in the family and community.

The Industrial Revolution was important in constructing the concept of ‘adolescence’. The Industrial Revolution, and the mass manufacturing economy that it spawned, largely destroyed the old craft ethic of thoughtfulness and personal involvement. It reduced apprenticeship by the mid twentieth century to an almost meaningless ‘serving one’s time’. The earlier integration of home, community and work that had characterised English society for centuries was replaced by a mass manufacturing society which took parents out of their homes, and largely left children either unsupervised or as cheap, disposable factory labour. Parents did not consider their skills worthwhile to share with their children and even children were also not interested in their parents’ boring lines. Quite simply there was no longer much for families to talk about. William Blake in early nineteenth century wrote several poems about the effects of the Industrial Revolution. In every cry of every man/ In every infant’s cry of fear/ In every voice, in every ban/ The mind-forged manacles I hear. (William Blake, London)
During the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, biologists and physicians undertook more formal study of adolescent (or adolescence) phenomena. European scientists researched aspects of physical growth such as the onset of Menarche in females and seminal emission in males. These works provided scientific and philosophical background when, in the 1890s, psychologists began investigating the abilities, behaviours, and attitudes of young people between the onset of puberty and marriage. Their work marked the first emergence of adolescence as a concept. Exigencies of World War II disrupted the lives of European adolescents, but in the U.S. an expanding war economy brought three million youth between ages fourteen and seventeen, about one third of people in this age category, into full or part-time employment by 1945. The income that adolescents earned helped in supporting a renewed youth culture. After World War II, the proportion of adolescents in Western countries temporarily declined. Furthermore, a marriage boom followed the war, drastically reducing the age at which people were entering the wedlock, especially in Great Britain and the United States where the median age at marriage for women declined from twenty-six to twenty-three to twenty-one respectively. Soon the marriage boom translated into the ‘Baby Boom’, which eventually combined with material prosperity to foster an ever-more extensive teen culture. Marketing experts utilised long-standing theories about the insecurities of adolescence, along with surveys that showed adolescents tending toward conformist attitudes, to sell goods that catered to teenagers’ desires to dress, buy and act like their peers.

During the late twentieth century, adolescence has historically ‘matured’ to become a legitimate part of the life span. This does not mean, however, that it is an esteemed part or a well-defined part. Rather, adolescence’s moratorium on clarity of expectations is seen as an unavoidable phase. In a way, society now expects to find in adolescence poorly defined expectations and corresponding behaviour. This expectation invites self-fulfilling prophecy and may well reinforce what we call adolescent behaviour. It sounds like a paradox, but post industrial conditions have evolved a structure of the life span within which we allow for a phase that expects confused expectations. Hence, adolescent behaviour has become normative and is no longer considered random or
unstructured. Adolescents are expected to reflect ‘storm and stress’, to be rebellious, and to have a subculture of their own.

1.3 Adolescence: Indian Context

In contemporary India while adolescence is a comparatively new term, the word youth is better known and has been used at the levels of policy formulation and programming (Singh 1997). However, even the ancient text of Dharamshastra recognized the crucial nature of adolescence and prescribed specific codes of conduct for the phase. These codes are deeply rooted in the Indian psyche and continue to influence cultural practices towards adolescents in a powerful manner (Verma and Saraswathi 2002). To contextualize the cultural milieu, in which adolescents grow in India, the relevant traditional cultural values and themes that shape and affect the environment of adolescents during growing years need to be described. The family universally is acknowledged as an institution of socialisation; however, it plays a major role in the life of an Indian. Despite the fast pace of social change, it continues to have a direct bearing on adolescents’ development, since most young people stay in family until adulthood or even later in the case of joint family set-up.

Most Indian families observe sacred ritualistic ceremonies at various stages of life cycle (Kakar 1979, Saraswathi & Pai 1997). These are markers of progressive attainment of competencies both in social and behavioural aspects of life. The onset of puberty is acknowledged by the family and new code of conduct is prescribed both for boys and girls. Several studies have indicated that parents rarely provide the desired support to growing adolescents regarding biological and physiological changes as also the meaning attached to these. Youth sexuality stands out as an important aspect which is inadequately understood; taboos to access information and lack of counselling services make youngsters turn to peers and other sources of information (Abraham 2000; Sachdev 1982; Murthy 1965). We need to be aware that distorted information has consequences related to exploitation, abuse, mental health problems and risk of HIV/AIDS. Providing awareness services and strengthening capabilities of institutions like family, community
and school to act as sources of correct information are thus important and need to be
given attention.

1.4 Varied Images of Indian Adolescents

Adolescents include both boys and girls but in Indian context these two have very
different experiences during growing years including adolescence, the cultural
differences are vast with regard to their conduct and are based on traditional adult roles
stereotypes. Growing as a female in India carries with it the connotation of inferior status,
and lesser privileges as compared to a male child. It cuts across all social classes of the
society and through entire lifespan. For a girl, the onset of puberty implies more
restrictions on her movement, fewer interactions with boys and men, and more active
participation in household chores. Boys begin to exercise greater freedom to move about,
expected to seek educational and vocational pursuits as a priority and to take adult roles.
Besides age old gender distinctions, there are many variations in the current images of
adolescent's in India. The variations arise from factors such as urban, rural and tribal
residence, ethnicity and socio economic levels of the family.

Lifestyle of urban adolescents from upper socio-economic status is quite different
from that of middleclass and lower-class adolescents. Former have access to private,
good quality education and are influenced by western ways of life style through travel
and exposure; their preferences for music, clothes and interaction with opposite sex are
very close to the western counter parts. On the surface there does not appear to be any
gender discrimination in the families of these adolescents but covertly they do exist.
Pursuing educational endeavours is encouraged both in upper and middle urban class.
Urban Adolescents from lower class have to struggle for survival and grow in
impoverished, disadvantaged environment making them vulnerable to several risks.
Malnutrition, risk of poor health, becoming victims of antisocial activities, brewing and
sale of illicit liquor, sex exploitation, prostitution and drug peddling were reported threats
for adolescents from slums in a multi indicator survey (Khosla 1997).

The picture of rural adolescents is different; the disparity between boys and girls
is even greater among them. Less emphasis on formal education makes boys and girls
participate in adult activities at home and outside at an early age. The boys are expected
to join men in work to earn their living, may it be on a farm or a factory or a traditional
craft at home. The routine of a pre-adolescent/adolescent rural girl is demanding—cleaning the house, cooking, washing, fetching water, bathing younger siblings. Rural girls rarely pursue education beyond primary school level. Early marriage as a trend is common even now, both for boys and girls in rural India.

The traditionalism and familialism are evident in various facets of family life, both in rural and urban settings (Bhende 1994; Pathak 1994). Parental involvement and control is high. Emotional interdependence among family members, respect for elders and family solidarity are characteristics of an Indian family. It has implications for social responsibilities of caring for old parents, protecting sisters and providing support to other dependents as a traditional duty, valued within the culture, and these values are emulated by growing male adolescents. Adolescent girls are groomed to become good wives and mothers having sacrifice, tolerance and dependences as an integral part of their disposition. There is also a general acceptance of double standards for males and females in matters related to premarital sex and selection of marriage partners, with considerably more freedom for males (Uplaonkar 1995).

1.5 Characteristics of Adolescence

While some general characteristics for adolescents have been identified, there is a need to recognize that changing characteristics are on a continuum with many variations at each grade and for different ages. Various development characteristics of adolescents have been discussed in following section:

1.5.1 Physical Developmental Characteristics

Physical development encompasses bodily changes including growth, improved gross and fine motor skills, and biological maturity. During early adolescence, the body undergoes more development than at any other time, except the first two years of life. Young adolescents' growth is accelerated and uneven (California State Department of Education, 1987; Kellough & Kellough, 2008; Manning, 2002; Scales, 1991, 2003; Wiles, Bondi, & Wiles, 2006), with growth spurts occurring about two years earlier in girls than boys (Tanner, 1973). Developmental growth includes significant increases in height, weight, and internal organ size as well as changes in skeletal and muscular systems (Kellough & Kellough). Since bones are growing faster than muscles, young
adolescents may experience coordination issues. Actual growing pains result when muscles and tendons do not adequately protect bones (Kellough & Kellough; Wiles, Bondi, & Wiles). Fluctuations in basal metabolism cause these youth to experience periods of restlessness and lassitude (Kellough & Kellough). Additionally, young adolescents tend to "have ravenous appetites and peculiar tastes" (Kellough & Kellough, p. 22) and have a propensity for improper nutrition. They are often physically vulnerable due to poor physical fitness, poor health habits, (Scales, 2003) and high-risk behaviours including the use of alcohol or illicit drugs (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2005) and experimentation with sexual activity.

Puberty, a phase of physiological changes includes the development of sexual reproductive systems, begins in early adolescence (Manning & Bucher, 2005). Triggered by the release of hormones, the onset of puberty is an intense developmental period. A cascade of hormones signals the development of primary sex characteristics (genitalia) and secondary sex characteristics (e.g., breast development in girls; facial hair in boys) during this period. Girls tend to mature one to two years earlier than boys do (Caissy, 1994). Increased production of adrenal hormones affects skeletal growth, hair production, and skin changes (Dahl, 2004). These highly visible changes and disparate rates of maturity cause many young adolescents to feel uncomfortable about differences in physical development (Simmons & Blyth, 1987). The brain also undergoes remarkable development during young adolescence. Though brain size remains relatively unchanged, researchers (Blakemore & Choudhury, 2006; Casey, Giedd, & Thomas, 2000; Dahl, 2004) report significant changes within the brain. The advent of neuroimaging technology allows researchers to examine the structures and functions of the young adolescent brain without invasive procedures. For example, researchers observe that the prefrontal cortex, the area of the brain that handles executive functions including planning, reasoning, anticipating consequences, sustaining attention and making decisions, is not fully developed in young adolescents. They also note gender-specific differences in young adolescent brains. (Caskey & Ruben, 2007)

1.5.2 Intellectual Developmental Characteristics

Intellectual development refers to the increased ability of people to understand and reason. In young adolescents, intellectual development is not as visible as physical
development, but it is just as intense (Stevenson, 2002; Van Hoose, Strahan, & L'Esperance, 2001). During early adolescence, youth exhibit a wide range of individual intellectual development (California State Department of Education, 1987; Kellough & Kellough, 2008; Manning, 2002; Scales, 2003), metacognition (the ability to think about one's own thinking) and independent thought (Kellough & Kellough). They tend to be highly curious and display a broad array of interests—though few are sustained (Kellough & Kellough; Scales, 2003). Typically, young adolescents are eager to learn about topics they find interesting and useful, favor active over passive learning experiences, and prefer interactions with peers during educational activities (Kellough & Kellough, 2003).

Young adolescents develop the capacity for abstract thought processes (Elkind, 1974; Flavell, 1963; Piaget, 1952, 1960) however; this transition to higher levels of cognitive function varies significantly across individuals as well as across and within content areas. During early adolescence, youth typically progress from concrete logical operations and problem solving to acquiring the ability to develop and test hypotheses, analyze and synthesize data, grapple with complex concepts, and think reflectively (Manning, 2002). As they mature, young adolescents start to understand the nuances of metaphors, derive meaning from traditional wisdom, and experience metacognition (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). Similarly, they are increasingly able to consider ideological topics, argue a position, question adult authority, and appreciate sophisticated levels of humor (Stevenson, 2002). Young adolescents, as learners, build upon their individual experiences and prior knowledge to make sense of the world around them (Piaget, 1960). Experience plays a central role in developing the brain and induces learners to construct meaning based on what they already believe and understand (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 1999). During early adolescence, youth are most interested in real-life experiences and authentic learning opportunities; they are often less interested in conventional academic subjects (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). Young adolescents tend to be inquisitive about adults and are often keen observers of adult behaviour (Scales, 2003). They also develop an improved ability to think about the future, anticipate needs, and develop personal goals (Kellough & Kellough, 2003).
1.5.3 Moral Developmental Characteristics

Moral development is associated with a person's growing ability to make principled choices. Young adolescents tend to be idealistic and possess a strong sense of fairness in human relations (Kellough & Kellough, 2008; Scales, 2003). Their increased capacity for analytical thought, reflection, and introspection exemplifies the connection between young adolescents' moral and intellectual development. Young adolescents begin to reconcile their understanding of people who care about them with their own egocentricity (Roney, 2005), as they progress into the interpersonal conformity stage of moral development (Kohlberg, 1983). Young adolescents are often keenly aware of flaws in others, but are reticent to acknowledge their own. They pose broad, unanswerable questions about life and refuse to accept trivial responses from adults (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). During early adolescence, youth move from blanket acceptance of adult moral judgment to the development of their own personal values; however, they usually embrace the values of their parents or key adults. Young adolescents start to view moral issues in shades of grey rather than strictly in black and white. They start to consider complex moral and ethical questions, yet are unprepared to cope with them. Consequently, young adolescents are at risk when it comes to making sound moral and ethical choices (Kellough & Kellough, 2008).

1.5.4 Emotional/Psychological Developmental Characteristics

During early adolescence, emotional and psychological development is characterised by the quest for independence and identity formation. It is a time when young adolescents seek their own sense of individuality and uniqueness (Knowles & Brown, 2000). They are searching for an adult identity as well as adult acceptance, while striving to maintain peer approval (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). As young adolescents' affiliation base expands to include family and peers, feelings of conflict arise because of competing allegiances (Wiles, Bondi, & Wiles, 2006). Their search for identity and self-discovery may exacerbate feelings of vulnerability as they become increasingly attuned to the differences between self and others (Scales, 2003). Typically, the period of early adolescence is intense and unpredictable. Young adolescents have a tendency to be moody, restless, and may exhibit erratic and inconsistent behaviour including anxiety, bravado, and fluctuations between superiority and inferiority (Kellough & Kellough;
Scales; Wiles et al., 2006). They are also often self-conscious, prone to lack self-esteem and are highly sensitive to criticism of their perceived personal shortcomings. Emotionally charged situations may trigger young adolescents to resort to childish behaviour patterns, exaggeration of simple occurrences, and vocalization of naïve opinions or one-sided arguments. Their emotional variability also puts young adolescents at risk for making decisions with negative consequences (Milgram, 1992). Furthermore, young adolescents are apt to believe that their experiences, feelings and problems are unique (Scales, 2006).

1.5.5 Social Developmental Characteristics

Social development refers to a person's capacity for more mature interactions with individuals and groups. Young adolescents have a strong need to belong to a group with peer approval becoming more important as adult approval decreases in importance (Scales, 2003). This need often results in fierce loyalty to peer groups (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). "Friendships, positive peer relationships and social interactions can boost young adolescents' self-esteem." (Manning, 2002). As young adolescents mature socially, they often experience opposing loyalties to peer group and family (Wiles, Bondi, & Wiles, 2006). As they search for a social position within their peer group, young adolescents may experiment with slang and alternative behaviours. Young adolescents tend to emulate esteemed peers or non-parent adults and prefer to make their own choices, yet the family remains a critical factor in final decision-making (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). Though young adolescents may be rebellious to parents and adults, they still depend on them (Scales, 2003). Young adolescents also tend to test the limits of acceptable behaviour and often challenge adult authority (Scales, 2003). Feelings of adult rejection can drive young adolescents into the somewhat secure social environment of their peer group (Kellough & Kellough, 2008). Social maturity often lags behind physical and intellectual development. Consequently, young adolescents may overreact to social situations, ridicule others and feel embarrassment (Scales, 2003). Young adolescents are also socially vulnerable due to influences of media and negative interactions with adults (Kellough & Kellough; Scales, 2003).

1.6 Major Challenges during Adolescence
“Adolescence” is the stage of youth, or maturity. Adolescence is that part of one’s life that he or she will never forget because it plays a big role in the formation of who the person will become. It is a critical period of human development manifested at the biological, psychological and social levels of interaction, or variable onset and duration, but making the end of childhood and setting the foundation for maturity.

1.6.1 The Biological Challenges

With the exception of infancy, the amount and speed of physical growth and change in adolescence is greater than in any other time in a person's life. The first indication of changes to physical appearance varies from individual to individual. Often referred to as 'puberty', these changes can start in children as young as 8 or 9 years of age, but will generally occur between the ages of 11 and 15 years. In general, girls start growing rapidly up to 18 months before boys. Most of the growth usually happens in short but rapid bursts called 'growth spurts'. Unfortunately for adolescents, growth patterns are often uneven and unpredictable, and the process can be most unkind. These changes in physical appearance can make adolescents feel a little insecure and unsure of themselves. Our society places a high value on physical attractiveness, so it's not surprising that teenagers can become preoccupied with how they look. The changes in hormone levels affect the growing adolescent in many ways. Hormonal changes lead to sexual growth, including changes in body shape, the full development of sex organs, growth of pubic hair and voice changes in boys. These are the changes generally referred to as biological changes.

1.6.2 The Psychological Challenges

Adolescents think in increasingly sophisticated ways. They are able to reason and think more logically. Adolescents become more critical and questioning. They can see new possibilities, and are less likely to accept things the way they are or to believe in something just because an adult says so. Adolescents do a lot of moralizing. As a result, they often become more interested in current affairs and political issues. However, despite enormous developments in thinking ability, adolescents can make inaccurate and unhelpful assumptions. Adolescents may also fall into the trap of 'mind-reading'. Innocent actions of others may be taken as personal criticisms as the adolescent jumps to conclusions about what others are thinking and feeling.
This does not work in reverse, however, and adolescents often refuse to believe that anybody, particularly their parents, can understand the new and intense feelings they are experiencing. Adolescents also assume that they are invincible and that nothing bad will happen to them. This is one reason why adolescents engage in risk taking. They might know about the consequences of risky behaviour, but will assume that these consequences will not happen to them. The psychological changes also involve adolescents trying to work out what kind of person they will be, and how they will fit into the world. It has been said that being an adolescent is like living with a constant imaginary audience. This intense self-consciousness and critical self-evaluation means that children in the early stages of adolescence are very vulnerable to feelings of low self-esteem. Adolescents can go from demanding autonomy at one moment to being very needy the next.

1.6.3 The Social Challenges

Adolescence is a time when relationships with families and peers also undergo significant change. One of the most common concerns for parents is the influence of the peer group. It is unfortunate that peer groups have been given a lot of 'bad press'. The term 'peer' has negative associations, and the role of friends in an adolescent's life tends to be viewed with suspicion. Generally speaking, the negative power of peers is greatly exaggerated. Despite the common belief that peers can corrupt a teenager, friends do not have the power to force teenagers to do things that they really do not want to do. In any case, adolescents tend to select friends who are like themselves. Although there is an increase in the amount of squabbling that occurs at this time, most arguments in families with adolescents are over relatively minor issues like homework chores and television.

Thus from the above discussion we may say that adolescence is characterised by innumerable and unique problems with the demands of globalization; the nature and number of challenges have become still more compared to the yesteryears. The concept adolescence encompasses physical and emotional stages of transition from childhood to adulthood. With the dramatic physical changes and development, adolescents worldwide find themselves in a situation characterised by an uncertain status and events, which might affect their concept of their own. The study of adolescents is especially important today when the demands of a complex and rapidly changing age make hand down
answers from older generations absolute. It helps to define the adolescent's roles and status, identifies both wholesome and unwholesome features of personality and pinpoints the characteristic problems peculiar to this development stages.

1.7 Adolescents and Home

Among the various social groups, home occupies the first and most important place for the development of an individual. Home is the person’s primary environment from the time he is born until the day he dies; hence its effect on the individual is also most significant and enduring. Home environment is the most important institution for the existence and continuance of human life and the development of various personality traits. An ideal home environment is one where there is proper reward to strengthen the desired behaviour, a keen interest in and love for the child, provision of opportunities to express its views freely, where parents put less restrictions to discipline the child, not preventing the child from acting independently and not continuing infantile care, optimum use of physical and affective punishment, where the children are not compelled to act according to parental desires and expectations, where they are neither threatened of being isolated from beloved persons nor deprived of love, respect and
By action and example, parents shape the lives of their children from birth through adulthood. In adolescence, the influence of friends and peers takes on greater importance, but research clearly demonstrates the continued significance of parents in shaping the behaviours and choices of teens as they face the challenges of growing up. Close parent/adolescent relationships, good parenting skills, shared family activities and positive parent role modeling all have well-documented effects on adolescent health and development. These are also areas where parents can make choices to make positive changes for their children and where social policy can help support parents in taking such steps. It has also been shown by various studies that most of the children who are successful/great achievers and well adjusted come from the families where sustaining wholesome relationships exist. So, it is the home which sets the pattern for the child’s attitude towards people and society, aids intellectual growth in the child and supports his aspirations and achievements.
It has also been reported that a positive affective relationship between parents and children increases the likelihood that the child will initiate and persist in challenging and intellectual tasks. Positive and affective relationship is likely to get hampered when control and punishment exist beyond optimum limits. Studies show that high parental involvement leads to high achievement and low parental involvement leads to low achievement (Ahuja and Goyal 2005). Parental involvement is much more likely to promote adolescent school success when it occurs in the context of an authoritative home environment (Steinberg et al. 1992). Parental acceptance and encouragement are positively related with academic school success and competence (Lakshmi and Arora 2006). Shek (1997) has found that family factors play an important role in influencing the psychosocial adjustment, particularly the positive mental health, of adolescents. Rani Mohanraj and Latha (2005) observed that family environment appeared to influence home adjustment as well as academic performance.

The assertion that friends play a more prominent role than parents in the personality development of adolescents does not mean that parents do not have any role to play (Beckett, 2002). The fact that adolescents gradually detach themselves from their parents does not mean that they do not need their parents’ emotional support. Parental support is critically important for adolescents in terms of emotional security and their ability to assert their independence during early adolescence. According to the results of Brendgen, Wanner, Morin & Vitaro (2005) problematic relationships with parents increase the possibility of a depressed mood during early adolescence. In an investigation conducted by (Le Croy Dacey & Kenny, 1994), it was found that those Grade 10 and 12 learners who had loving and healthy relationships with their parents had strong self-images and experienced fewer problems at school. Other researchers have reached similar conclusions in their research. Raja, McGee and Stanton (1992) and Vihjalmssson (1994) assert that the quality of the parent-child relationship is an important predictor of the adolescent's psychological well-being, while Forgatch and DeGarmo (1999), as well as Crosnoe and Elder (2004), found that parents play a role in terms of the child's adjustment at school. It is clear from the research that parents do influence the personality development and behaviour of their children, but whether their influence plays a greater or lesser role, than that of the peer group have not been definitively determined.
1.8 Adolescents and School

School is a setting where interpersonal relations are promoted, which are important for youngsters’ personal and social development (Ruini et al., 2009); it is responsible for the transmission of behavioural norms and standards and it also represents an essential role in the adolescent’s socialisation process. The school is able to gather different peer communities and to promote self-esteem and a harmonious development between adolescents, which makes it a privileged space for meetings and interactions (Baptista, Tomé, Matos, Gaspar & Cruz, 2008). Adolescents spend a great part of their time at school, which also makes it a privileged context for involvement in or protection from risk behaviours (Piko & Kovács, 2010). Camacho et al., (2010) confirmed that adolescents who like school were those that more often were part of a peer group without involvement in risk behaviours; whilst those that mentioned they did not have any friends reported that they liked school less. While the primary purpose of school is the academic development of students, its effects on adolescents are far broader, also encompassing their physical and mental health, safety, civic engagement and social development. Further, its effects on all these outcomes are produced through a variety of activities including formal pedagogy, after-school programs, caretaking activities (e.g., feeding, providing a safe environment) as well as the informal social environment created by students and staff on a daily basis.

For most adolescents, school is a prominent part of their life. It is here that they relate to and develop relationships with their peers and where they have the opportunity to develop key cognitive skills. For some youth, it is also a source of safety and stability. Some of the qualities that characterise families of adolescents, who do well—a strong sense of attachment, bonding, and belonging, and a feeling of being cared about, also characterise adolescents’ positive relationships with their teachers and their schools. One additional factor, adolescent perception of teacher fairness, has also been found to be associated with positive adolescent development. These factors, more than the size of the school, the type of school (e.g. public, private), or teacher–pupil ratio, have been found to be strongly associated with whether adolescents are successful or are involved with drugs or delinquency or drop out of school (Resnick et al., 1997; Klein, 1997). Because schools are such a critical setting for adolescents, it can be important even for professionals who
work in other settings to connect with the school psychologist, counsellor or social worker of an at-risk adolescent to help create a supportive system of care.

1.9 Adolescents and Peer Group

It is clear from the literature that adolescence is a period during which great differentiation takes place on the social terrain (Rose, 2005). Although adolescents are still close to their parents, they spend increasingly more time with their friends. Their physical and emotional dependence on their parents decreases and they move closer to the peer group. During this time, the personality development of adolescents (specifically identity formation) reaches a crisis point and the development of a unique and stable personality is often a very difficult aspect to deal with (Ryan & Deci, 2003). Harris (1995) argues that children often behave differently outside the home than they do at home. She argues that their personalities are largely influenced by their conduct outside the home, as adolescents consider the feedback from their friends as more important than that of their parents. Peers may strongly determine preference in the way of dressing, speaking, using illicit substances, sexual behaviour, adopting and accepting violence, adopting criminal and anti-social behaviours and in many other areas of the adolescent’s life (Padilla, Walker & Bean, 2009; Tomé, Matos & Diniz, 2008). Stronger friendships may provide adolescents with an appropriate environment to development in a healthy way and to achieve good academic results. Adolescents with reciprocal friendships mention high levels of feelings of belonging in school; at the same time, reciprocity and feelings of belonging have positive effects in academic results (Vaquera & Kao, 2008).

The peer group may on one hand, serve as a model and influence behaviours and attitudes, whilst on the other hand, it may provide easy access, encouragement and an appropriate social setting for consumption (Glaser, Shelton & Bree, 2010). Social Learning Theory suggests that it is not necessary for adolescents to observe a given behaviour and adopt it; it is sufficient to perceive that the peer group accepts it, in order to be able to opt for similar behaviours (Petraitis, Flay & Miller, 1995). Despite the positive influence of the peer group during adolescence, the higher the adolescent’s autonomy from the peer group, the higher his/her resilience against its influence. This resilience seems to increase with age, which may mean that it is associated with
youngsters’ maturity; and girls emerge in several studies as more resilient than boys (Sumter, Bokhorst, Steinberg & Westenberg, 2009).

Another factor that may be found in the influence of the peer group is the type of friendship, which adolescents maintain with their peer group: if friends are close they have a greater influence on the other’s behaviours (Glaser, Shelton & Bree, 2010). When the friendship is perceived as reciprocal and of quality, it exerts greater influence (Mercken, Snijders, Steglich, Vartiainen & Vries, 2010). Another factor, which has been identified as a possible factor of decreasing peer influence is assertive refusal. Adolescents that are able to maintain an assertive refusal are less susceptible to the group’s influence (Glaser, Shelton & Bree, 2010). These are only some variables identified as possible factors decreasing peer influence.

1.10 Adolescence: Age of Storm and Stress

Adolescence as a period of stress and storm can be traced back as far as writings of Plato and Aristotle. Plato (1953) described adolescent boys as constantly arguing and very easily excited. Aristotle (1941) described adolescents as "lacking in sexual self-restraint, fickle in their desires, passionate and impulsive". However, during the middle ages, adolescence was mostly ignored as a life stage and children were viewed as small adults. "Childhood and adolescence were regarded as two sides of the same coin" (Dubasa et al, 2003). The first person to determine a difference between the two was Rousseau. Rousseau described adolescence as "A change in humour, frequent anger, a mind in constant agitation, makes the child almost unmanageable. His feverishness turns him into a lion. He disregards his guide; he no longer wishes to be governed." (Rousseau, 1911)

Psychologists of that time agreed with Rousseau's ideas and in 1904, influenced by the evolutionary theories of Charles Darwin, G. Stanley Hall defined adolescence as a period of "storm and stress, a time of universal and of inevitable upheaval". To Hall, adolescence represented a period when early human beings went from being beast-like to being civilized. To Hall, the end of the adolescent stage marked a new birth, in which higher, more completely human traits were born. Culturally, in the 18th century, the period of adolescence was first seen in middle- and upper-class children as education went on longer and children stayed home for an increasing portion of their lives. By the
20th century, after World War II, adolescence became a general phenomenon. This idea of adolescence being a period of ‘storm and stress’ – a perspective which was introduced by Hall (1904) and supported by the psychoanalytic tradition (Freud, 1958) and Erikson’s (1968) definition of adolescence as a time of identity crisis was popular for most of the 20th century. In this view, adolescence is characterised as an inevitably turbulent process; accompanied by negative moods, a problematic relationship with parents and risky behaviour, including delinquency (Deković & Buist, 2004; Gecas & Seff, 1990; Goossens, 2006a). Since the 1980s, however, improved empirical data caused this view to stagger. Even though the notion that adolescents would have a despondent temper is (cautiously) supported – adolescents experience slightly more negative emotionality than children (overview in Goossens, 2006b) – it was also determined that for most adolescents, the relationship with parents does not become troubled (Boer, 2004; Deković & Buist, 2004; Gecas & Seff, 1990).

Despite these findings, the increase of internalizing and externalizing problem behaviours in this developmental stage indicates that the idea of adolescence as a tumultuous and on occasion miserable period cannot just be discarded (Alsaker & Dick-Niederhauser, 2006; Burssens, 2007; Hooge, Decaluwé & Goossens, 2000; Junger-Tas, Steketee & Moll, 2008; Moffitt, 1993; Slot, 2004). Reasons for this discomfort were introduced by different scientific disciplines. It is more specifically the interaction between biological-emotional, cognitive and social indicators that are most referred to in this case.

Even if we accept the argument that adolescence is a time of heightened tendency toward storm and stress, the question of why this should be so remains. To what extent do the roots of storm and stress lie in the biological changes that takes place in the course of puberty? To what extent are the roots cultural, with adolescent storm and stress being especially pronounced in cultures that value individualism? Current evidence indicates that biological changes make some contribution. With respect to mood disruptions, reviews of the effects of hormones on adolescents' moods have concluded that the dramatic hormonal changes that accompany puberty contribute to emotional volatility (Buchanan et al., 1992) and negative moods (Brooks-Gunn, Graber, & Paikoff, 1994), particularly in early adolescence when the rate of hormonal change is steepest.
However, scholars in this area emphasise that the hormonal contribution to adolescent mood disruptions appears to be small and tends to exist only in interaction with other factors (Brooks-Gunn et al., 1994; Brooks-Gunn & Warren, 1989; Susman, 1997). More generally, with respect to mood disruptions as well as with respect to conflict with parents and risk behaviour, too little is known about the role of biological factors to make definitive statements at this point about the role they may play in adolescent storm and stress. Numerous possibilities exist concerning biological influences on storm and stress and the interaction between biological and cultural factors. For example, recently a phenomenon called delayed phase preference has been identified (Carskadon, Vieria, & Acebo, 1993), which is a tendency, based in the biological changes of puberty, for adolescents to prefer staying up until relatively late at night and sleeping until relatively late in the morning. Other possible biological contributors to adolescent storm and stress include genes that may become active in adolescence and increase the likelihood of mood disruptions, as well as biological bases for developmental changes in characteristics such as emotional regulation (mood disruptions), aggressiveness (conflict with parents) and sensation seeking (risk behaviour).

1.11 Concept of Stress

Although ideas such as tension, anxiety and conflict had been a part of psychological thought for the long time, Hans Selye coined and developed the specific term ‘stress’ in 1936. Thereafter, it was promoted into an important research and theory concept. In common parlance the term ‘stress’ and ‘strain’ are used synonymously in a non-scientific manner. Derived from the Latin word ‘stringer’, stress was popularly used in the seventeenth century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. In 18th and 19th centuries, it was used to denote force, pressure, strain or strong effort with reference to an object or person. Anything that causes a change in one’s body can be called stress. These changes usually come from different feelings one has, such as happiness, sadness, scaredness, madness, etc. Stress is the body’s reaction to change. These changes can come from feelings, situations and people. For example, going to a new school is a change that can cause stress. Things that cause stress are called stressors for example,
divorce or separation of parents, winning an award, taking a test, death of a relative, being sick and so on.

Stress has been defined as “the state manifested by the specific syndrome, which consists of all the non-specific induced changes in a biological system” (Selye, 1974). According to Skinner (1985), “Stress is a cerebral reaction of a particular individual to a stimulus event.” Stress is usually thought of in negative terms like causing something bad or distress to the individual. But there is also a positive and pleasant side of stress, leading to good things. It can be defined as an adaptive response to a situation resulting in physical, psychological and behavioural deviations. Stress is not simply anxiety or nervous tension and necessarily something damaging or bad, which need to be avoided. Stress is inevitable at some time or other. But it can be prevented or can effectively be controlled to some extent if proper measures are to be taken.

Depending on the nature of factors and their effects on stress, the factors causing stress can be classified as physiological and psychological:

- Physiological factors include ill health, excess physical loads, high and low climatic conditions, work which requires more physical strain, pain, difficult respiration, lack of proper ventilation etc.

- Psychological factors include the stress due to excessive workload, suffering from a problem, improper or slow decision making, high responsibility, lack of co-operation of other members, anger, depression etc. This can also be seen in the situations of threat, danger, offence, anger and so on. Stress was there, is there and will be there in all societies at all times. Every individual at one time or other should be influenced by stress and its associated consequences.

Cox (1978) distinguished usages of the term ‘Stress’ in three different types:

- The engineering model of stress referred to stress as a negative one like overload of work, role conflict, ambiguity, poor working conditions.

- The physiological model conceptualized stress as something within the individual.
Transactional stress conceptualized stress as a result of imbalance or discrepancy between the demands on the individual and the ability to meet or cope with them. Thus the common factors affecting an individual’s stress can be categorized as:

- Extra-organizational
- Organizational
- Group
- Individual

The causes of stress are many. Stress falls into various groups—physical, environmental, cultural expectations, and personal and social expectations. Stress affects both physical and emotional well-being of an individual. Managing stress is more than coping. It is learning to cope adaptively and effectively. Coping with stress is the process of developing ways to decrease its effects and to get through difficult tasks; stress coping is the ability to reduce disappointment and anxieties. Hans Selye described three stages, an individual encounters in stressful situations:

1. Alarm stage
2. Resistance
3. Exhaustion

The initial phase (Alarm Stage) is marked by general mobilization of body resources to resist the stressor. In the resistance stage the body’s adaptation to the stressor is developed. If individual adapts successfully he/she is in the stage of equilibrium. If, however, the stress agent continues or the defense mechanism does not work, the individual moves on to the third stage of exhaustion in which adaptive mechanism collapses. Selye called this pattern of injury and recovery the General Adaptation Syndrome. It is useful to clarify what we mean by stress by breaking the elements or stress down into stressors (environmental changes that can induce a stress response), the stress response (physiological changes such as automatic arousal which occur as a result of stress) and
the stress experience (how we perceive the situation the situation in the experience we are having. (Banyard and Hayes, 1994)

Components of Stress
(From Banyard and Hayes, 1994)

1.12 Stress and Psychological Functioning in Adolescents

The transition into adolescence seems to be the starting point for an increase in psychological problems like depression and anxiety (Graber & Sontag, 2009; Hankin & Abela, 2005; Kessler, Avenevoli, & Merikangas, 2001), especially among girls (Costello, Foley, & Angold, 2006; Hankin & Abela, 2005; Bouma, Ormel, Verhulst, & Oldehinkel, 2008). Studies have shown that the occurrence of different levels of depression among adolescence are varied and some studies have indicated that approximately 25% to 40% of adolescent girls experience significant depressed mood, compared with 20% to 35% of boys, with a smaller group adolescents (2-3%) experiencing depressive disorder (Graber & Sontag, 2009; Hankin & Abela, 2005). Despite differences in overall developmental trends, anxiety and depression share symptoms and have substantial co-occurrence (Avenevoli, Knight, Kessler, & Merikangas, 2008; Graber & Sontag, 2009; Hankin & Abela, 2005; Hankin, Abramson, Miller, & Haefel, 2004).

A review of Grant et al. (2003) has identified more than 1500 empirical investigations of the relation between stressors and psychological symptomatology among youth (Grant et al., 2003). This review found that of 60 studies that had examined the association between stressful events and measures of psychological symptoms using a prospective design, a significant effect of stressors on psychological symptomatology was found in 53 of the studies (Grant et al., 2003). Studies have also reported support for a reciprocal relation between stressors and psychological symptoms (Grant et al., 2003;
Thus, evidence indicates that the cumulative effect of stressful events meets the criterion for a risk factor.

Relations between stressors, especially those in an interpersonal context (e.g. peers, family, romantic relationships) (Rudolph, 2002; Hankin & Abela, 2005) and symptoms of depression in childhood and adolescence have been well established in cross-sectional and prospective longitudinal studies (Bouma, et al., 2008; Grant et al., 2003, Garber, 2006; Hankin, et al., 2007; McLaughlin, Hatzenbuehler, & Phil, 2009; McLaughlin & Hatzenbuehler, 2009; Waktaar, Borge, Fundingsrud, Christie, & Torgersen, 2004). The same association is found between stress and symptoms of anxiety (Grant, et al., 2004; Kim et al., 2003; McLaughlin & Hatzenbuehler, 2009). In this regard, girls appear to be more vulnerable to the negative psychological effects of interpersonal stress, than boys (Bouma et al., 2008; Charbonneau et al., 2009; Hankin et al., 2007; Shih et al., 2006).

### 1.13 Symptoms of Stress in Adolescence

Adolescents display symptoms of stress in a number of different forms. Elkind (2001) reported that “children’s respond to chronic stress depends upon several factors, including the child’s perception of the stress situation, the amount of stress he or she is under, and the effects of availability of effective coping mechanisms” (p. 186). Selye (1976) researched the physiological stress response in people and determined that most humans react to immediate stress in a stereotypical manner. In the initial shock stage, heartbeat becomes irregular, blood pressure falls, muscle tone is lost, and body temperature drops. After the initial shock, the counter shock stage occurs in which these symptoms are reversed in order to prepare the individual for defense known as the “fight-or-flight response” (Selye, 1976). Physiologically, chronic stress also manifests itself in frequent headaches or stomachaches, sweating, sleeping problems, crying and sadness, and excessive or under eating (Santrock, 1990).

Stress can also result in headaches, indigestion, acne, and hives. There are many long term physiological ailments that can result from prolonged stress. These include high blood pressure, ulcers, asthma, allergy attacks, and some forms of cancer (Santrock, 1990). Selye (1974, 1983) reported that the longer the stress persists, the more damage it
does to the adolescent's body. Psychologically, stress in adolescence can result in aggression, boredom, anxiety and worry, irritability, passivity, lack of interest in things previously enjoyed, rebellion, withdrawal, isolation and difficulty in concentrating (Frydenberg, 1997). Elkind (2001) refers to Freud’s notion of “free-floating anxiety” to describe how children feel restless, irritable and anxious due to chronic stress, not attached to a specific fear (p. 186). Stress can manifest itself in other ways, leading to drug and alcohol addiction, truancy or school refusal, gang behaviour, promiscuity and violence (Frydenberg, 1997).

1.14 Adolescent Stressors

There are many life stressors that typical adolescents face. One study noted that “stressors for adolescents appear in various forms including catastrophic events, personal loss, daily aggravations, and normal developmental transitions” (Hains, 1994). These stressors can vary from minor ones and “hassles” to major stressors from catastrophic life changes and events. While some stressors may be seen as major life events, Armacost (1989) proposed that it is the cumulative build up of regular daily stressors that have the greatest impact on adolescents’ lives. The most common stressors faced by typical adolescents can be categorized into family, social (peer), academic and societal challenges.
1.14.1 Family stressors

Family stressors have a major impact on adolescent’s lives since they are still largely dependent on the family unit. As adolescents begin to test limits of independence, parent-youth conflict often arises (Hains, 1992). In addition, family changes such as divorce or separation of parents, remarriage of a parent, death of a family member or pet, birth of a sibling, moving and family financial challenges are major causes of stress for adolescents (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995). Many adolescents also face family stress caused by physical or sexual abuse and by chaotic living conditions (Kessler & Edelman et al., 2000). Arnold (1990) noted that parental stress can have a significant effect on adolescents. When parents are stressed by challenges such as mental illness, marital discord, unemployment, and low socioeconomic status it causes great strain on the family (Arnold, 1990).

1.14.2 Peer Group Stressors

The adolescent’s relationship with peers is one of the most central aspects of this time period. Peer relationships and friendships help adolescents identify who they are and associations within a peer group foster their sense of identity and belonging (Schmitz &
Hipp, 1995). Peer relationship problems (De Anda, 1998) and dating anxieties (Hains, 1992) associated with testing relationships with the opposite sex become central causes for stress in adolescent lives. Much of the stress involves fitting in, maintaining and developing friendships, being made fun of or rejected, loyalty, commitment and first dealings with intimacy (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995). Santrock (1990) described that in an adolescent’s world, how they are perceived by their peers is often the most important aspect of their lives. Many adolescents will do anything to fit in with the group and exclusion is one of the most prevalent forms of stress. Pressure to conform to peers in order to be included is a central aspect of their lives and can lead to the adolescent partaking in activities or acting out in ways that are detrimental to themselves in order to be accepted (Santrock, 1990). Stress in adolescents also comes from their changing bodies and physical appearance and worry over whether their changes are “normal” in relation to their peer group (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995).

1.14.3 Academic Stressors

Because adolescents spend the majority of their lives in the school setting, daily demands and expectations in the school environment are central to their stress concerns. During adolescence most students change schools from elementary to middle school and middle to high school. This transition can be stressful to a young adult (Arnold, 1990). Many students report feeling academic pressure to succeed from parents, teachers and society as well as competition to set themselves apart from other students (Hains & Szyjakowski, 1990). Wilburn & Smith (2005) found that “academically successful students experience greater amounts of stress than do their less successful peers because more successful students feel more pressure to maintain their level of performance” (p. 35). Many students also report high levels of test anxiety especially on examinations that will help decide their future (Keogh, & Bond et al., 2006). Fiske (1988) noted that schools have gone “test crazy” with the emphasis placed on tests, resulting in increased stress for students. In addition, as they move up in grade level, adolescents begin to worry about college, future goals and careers (De Anda, 1998). Elkind (2001) describes a phenomena known as “school burnout” in which the chronic stresses of school become too much to bear for adolescents, often resulting in dropping out of school or turning to drugs or alcohol for relief.
1.14.4 Societal stressors

Today’s adolescents also face societal stresses unlike any other generation. Schmitz & Hipp (1995) noted that youth today live in a culture that no longer promotes a safe transition for adolescents into adulthood. Increased numbers of children are now living with divorced or separated parents or in single parent homes (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995). Some literature has focused on the loss of neighborhood and community support, which has occurred in recent years, causing adolescents to have less of a support network to rely on. Today’s teens are also faced with growing up in a changing economy and with many unrestricted freedoms and choices (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995). More than ever teens are exposed to choices regarding sex, drugs and to violence openly portrayed in the media. Lastly, the societal issues of racism, sexism, classism, and pressure to succeed are still active for today’s youth (Schmitz & Hipp, 1995).

1.14.5 Positive Stressors

While most of the research focuses on negative experiences that cause stress, there has been some work done on stress that occurs due to positive experiences (Santrock, 1990). Selye (1983) described this type of stress as “eustress”. Examples include being chosen captain of a team, transitioning from elementary to middle school, making the honour role, performing in a school play or musical concert or competing in state athletic championships. Although all of these situations are viewed as positive life events, they can also cause significant levels of stress for adolescents (Santrock, 1990).

1.14.6 Compound Stressors

Santrock (1990) reported that when adolescents face more than one stressor at a time, the effects can become compounded. For example, Rutter (1979) reported that adolescents who were dealing with more than one chronic life stressor at a time were four times more likely to need psychological services than those who were coping with one stressor.

1.15 Concept of Academic Stress

The existing literature on stress in adolescence reveals several sources of stress to which adolescents find themselves vulnerable in their ongoing social interactions. The stressors emanating from the family, school and peer groups are of particular importance
It is in these three spheres of life that adolescents spend most of their time and in which most of their stressful events occur (Siddique & D'Arcy, 1984). Since the family, school and peer group form the major socializing influences on adolescents, the expectations or demands they make may convert into stressors. Further, adolescents may perceive these expectations as limiting their behaviour counter to their own predispositions which may increase the impact of such stressors. A large body of research suggests that parents have a particularly strong influence on their child’s education in a variety of ways. Studies conducted with western samples have found that parents may have high expectations for their child’s future, hold positive beliefs about their child’s abilities and involve themselves in their child’s education (Eccles, Jacobs, & Harold, 1990; Jodl, Michael, & Malanchuk, 2001). Studies conducted with East Asian immigrant families have identified other ways in which parents may be involved in their child’s education. For instance, researchers have found that many parents make financial and social adjustments to their lifestyle in order to advance their child’s academic and professional outcomes or create an environment that promotes academic achievement (Kim, 1993; Schneider & Lee, 1990). While Indian parents are known to be deeply involved in their children’s education (Larson, Verma & Dworkin, 2000), at present, little is known about the role of parents in the student’s experience of academic stress and adolescent distress. Research studies suggest that academic stress can have serious consequences for students.

1.16 Concept of Coping

People respond to perceptions of threat, harm and loss in diverse ways, many of which receive the label ‘coping’. Some prefer to limit the concept of coping to voluntary responses (Compas et al. 2001); others include automatic and involuntary responses within the coping construct (Eisenberg et al. 1997, Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck 2007). Of course, distinguishing between voluntary and involuntary responses to stress is not simple; indeed, responses that begin as intentional and effortful may become automatic with repetition. Coping can be defined as thoughts, behaviours or may be strategies that are used to manage a negative or stressful event like an academic failure (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984; Kamins and Dweck, 1999; Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). Students
cope with an academic failure in three stages. In the first stage, students define the event as an obstacle to their goals. In the second stage, students think about the possible strategies to handle the negative event and choose one of them. In the third stage, students apply the decided solution (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987; Folkman and Lazarus, 1988).

There are various coping strategies that people can use when they face a difficulty. Tero and Connel (1984) classified coping strategies under the four categories; positive coping, projective coping, denial coping and non-coping. Positive copers may ask for help and try to find out what went wrong when they face an academic failure. On the other hand, projective copers blame other people, like their teacher, for their failure. Thirdly, denial copers try to forget, or ignore the failure. Lastly, non-copers blame themselves.

Some of the coping strategies are related to positive outcomes, while others are related to negative outcomes. Therefore, researchers also classified coping strategies as adaptive and maladaptive strategies. Trying again, studying more or finding errors and help seeking are examples of adaptive or positive coping. On the other hand, accusing others or ignoring the mistakes are examples of maladaptive or negative strategies (Kaplan and Midgley, 1999; Friedel, Cortina, Turner and Midgley, 2007). In Tero and Connel’s classification, while positive coping refers to adaptive coping because of their relation to positive outcomes, projective, denial and non-coping refer to maladaptive coping because of their relation to negative outcomes (Kaplan and Midgley, 1999).

Additionally, using a coping strategy is a personal choice; that is reactions to a stressful event can vary from person to person. For instance, while some students persist at the difficult task in science, others can give up quickly (Lazarus and Folkman, 1987; Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen and DeLongis, 1986; Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel, Schetter, DeLongis, and Gruen, 1986; Lazarus, 1990). Besides, there are many factors that may influence students’ use of coping strategies. Although, relevant literature suggests gender as one of the demographic factors that influence coping styles (Feldman, Fisher, Ransom, and Dimiceli, 1995), there are few studies that examined gender differences in students’ coping strategy use for academic failure (Altermatt, 2007). These studies revealed that girls tend to use maladaptive coping strategies more than boys and tend to blame their
ability for the failure. In general, they tend to use maladaptive coping strategies when they face an academic failure (Altermatt, 2007; Hampel and Petermann, 2005). According to the Thinklin (2003), girls value education and tend to be better prepared more than boys (Lawrance, Ashford, and Dent, 2006). However, there is a large difference in the performance tests of science (Meece and Jones, 2001). These may be because society gives different roles to girls and boys (Piko, 2001). For example, science is known as more male dominant field. Much science oriented occupations like physical sciences and engineering are chosen by males since the tradition lead them in that way. On the other hand, girls tend to choose occupations that can help society like teachers or nurses (Eccles, 1994). Hence, girls tend to think that their ability is inadequate in the domains such as science and math and they tend to blame themselves when they face an academic failure in these domains. In contrast, boys tend to blame other external factors or study harder for the next time instead of blaming their ability.

1.17 Coping Distinctions and Groupings

Coping is a very broad concept with a long and complex history (Compas et al. 2001, Folkman & Moscovitz 2004). Several distinctions have been made within the broad domain; indeed, it might even be said that a bewildering number of distinctions have been made (Skinner et al., 2003). Some of the more important ones are as follow:

1.17.1 Problem versus Emotion focused

The distinction that launched modern examination of coping was that between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman 1984). Problem-focused coping is directed at the stressor itself: taking steps to remove or to evade it or to diminish its impact if it cannot be evaded. For example, if layoffs are expected, an employee’s problem-focused coping might include saving money, applying for other jobs, obtaining training to enhance hiring prospects or working harder at the current job to reduce the likelihood of being let go. Emotion-focused coping is aimed at minimising distress triggered by stressors. Because there are many ways to reduce distress, emotion-focused coping includes a wide range of responses, ranging from self-soothing (e.g. relaxation, seeking emotional support), to expression of negative emotion (e.g. yelling,
crying), to a focus on negative thoughts (e.g. rumination), to attempts to escape stressful situations (e.g. avoidance, denial, wishful thinking).

Problem-focused and emotion-focused coping have distinct proximal goals. The proximal goal determines the responses category assignment. Some behaviour can serve either function, depending on the goal behind their use. For example, seeking support is emotion focused if the goal is to obtain emotional support and reassurance, but problem focused if the goal is to obtain advice or instrumental help. Problem and emotion-focused coping can also facilitate one another. Effective problem focused coping diminishes the threat, but thereby also diminishes the distress generated by that threat. Effective emotion-focused coping diminishes negative distress, making it possible to consider the problem more calmly, perhaps yielding better problem-focused coping. This interrelatedness of problem- and emotion-focused coping makes it more useful to think of the two as complementary coping functions rather than as two fully distinct and independent coping categories (Lazarus 2006).

1.17.2 Engagement versus Disengagement Coping

A particularly important distinction is between engagement or approach coping, which is aimed at dealing with the stressor or related emotions, and disengagement or avoidance coping, which is aimed at escaping the threat or related emotions (Moos & Schaefer 1993, Roth & Cohen 1986, Skinner et al. 2003). Engagement coping includes problem-focused coping and some forms of emotion-focused coping: support seeking, emotion regulation, acceptance and cognitive restructuring. Disengagement coping includes responses such as avoidance, denial and wishful thinking. Disengagement coping is often emotion focused, because it involves an attempt to escape feelings of distress. Sometimes disengagement coping is almost literally an effort to act as though the stressor does not exist, so that it does not have to be reacted to, behaviourally or emotionally. Wishful thinking and fantasy distance the person from the stressor, at least temporarily and denial creates a boundary between reality and the person’s experience.

Despite this aim of escaping distress, disengagement coping is generally ineffective in reducing distress over the long term, as it does nothing about the threat’s existence and its eventual impact. If you are experiencing a real threat in your life and you respond by going to the movies, the threat will remain when the movie is over.
Eventually it must be dealt with. Indeed, for many stresses, the longer one avoids dealing with the problem, the more intractable it becomes and the less time is available to deal with it when one finally turns to it.

Another problem is that avoidance and denial can promote a paradoxical increase in intrusive thoughts about the stressor and an increase in negative mood and anxiety (Najmi & Wegner 2008). Finally, some kinds of disengagement create problems of their own. Excessive use of alcohol or drugs can create social and health problems, and shopping or gambling as an escape can create financial problems. The concept of disengagement coping has been extended to include relinquishing goals that are threatened by the stressor (Carver et al. 1989). This differs from other disengagement responses in that it addresses both the stressor’s existence and its emotional impact by abandoning an investment in something else. Disengaging from the threatened goal may allow the person to avoid negative feelings associated with the threat.

1.17.3 Accommodative and Meaning focused Coping

Within engagement coping, distinctions have been made between attempts to control the stressor itself, called primary control coping and attempts to adapt or adjust to the stressor, termed accommodative or secondary-control coping (Morling & Evered 2006, Skinner et al. 2003). The term accommodative may be used here because it does not carry connotations either of exerting control or of being secondary to other coping efforts.

The notion of accommodative coping derives from conceptions of the process of successful aging (Renner 1990). It refers to adjustments within the self that are made in response to constraints. In the realm of coping, accommodation applies to responses such as acceptance, cognitive restructuring and scaling back one’s goals in the face of insurmountable interference. Another kind of accommodation is self-distraction. Historically this reaction has been considered disengagement coping, but confirmatory factor analyses consistently indicate that intentionally engaging with positive activities is a means of adapting to uncontrollable events (Skinner et al. 2003).

A related concept is what Folkman (1997) called “meaning-focused coping” (Folkman 2008, Park & Folkman 1997), in which people draw on their beliefs and values to find or remind themselves of, benefits in stressful experiences (Tennen & Affleck 2002).
Meaning-focused coping may include reordering life priorities and infusing ordinary events with positive meaning. This construct has roots in evidence that positive as well as negative emotions are common during stressful experiences (Andry kowsky et al. 1993), that positive feelings influence outcomes and particularly that people try to find benefit and meaning in adversity (Helgeson et al. 2006, Park et al. 2009). Although this construct emphasises the positive changes a stressor brings to a person’s life, it is noteworthy that meaning focused coping also represents an accommodation to the constraints of one’s life situation. Meaning-focused coping involves reappraisal and appears to be most likely when stressful experiences are uncontrollable or are going badly (Folkman 2008).

1.17.4 Proactive Coping

Although most discussions of coping emphasising responses to threat and harm, (Aspin Wall & Taylor, 1997) have pointed out that some coping occurs proactively before the occurrence of any stressor. Proactive coping is not necessarily different in nature from other coping, but it is intended to prevent threatening or harmful situations from arising. Proactive coping is nearly always problem focused, involving accumulation of resources that will be useful if a threat arises and scanning the experiential horizon for signs that a threat may be building. If the beginning of a threat is perceived, the person can engage strategies that will prevent it from growing or that will remove the person from its path. If the anticipation of an emerging threat helps the person avoid it, the person will experience fewer stressful episodes and will experience stress of less intensity when the experiences are unavoidable.

Thus we have seen from above discussion that different experts have explained coping in their own way. Different types of coping have been described by various psychologists on different basis. Folkman and Lazarus have worked on different aspects of coping and elaborated the phenomena of coping which helps us to understand this concept in detail. Folkman and Lazarus, after doing an extensive study on coping have given eight types of coping strategies which have been discussed in the following table:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coping Strategy</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Confrontive Coping</td>
<td>Describes aggressive efforts to alter the situation and suggests some degree of hostility and risk taking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distancing</td>
<td>Describes cognitive efforts to detach oneself and to minimize the significance of the situation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Controlling</td>
<td>Describes efforts to regulate one’s feelings and actions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking Social Support</td>
<td>Describes efforts to seek informational support, tangible support and emotional support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting Responsibility</td>
<td>Acknowledges one’s own role in the problem with a concomitant theme of trying to put things right.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Escape-Avoidance</td>
<td>Describes wishful thinking and behavioural efforts to escape or avoid the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planful Problem Solving</td>
<td>Describes deliberate problem-focused efforts to alter the situation, coupled with an analytic approach to solving the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Reappraisal</td>
<td>Describes efforts to create positive meaning by focusing on personal growth. It also has a religious dimension.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.18 Adolescence and Coping

Various adolescents use different kind of strategies to cope with problems and stress of life. Coping is defined as cognitive and behavioural effort to master, reduce or tolerate internal and external demands and conflicts among them that tax or exceed the person’s resources. Coping efforts are a manifestation of an individual’s struggle for existence. In other words, because prolonged stress has the potential to cause physical and psychological damage, coping efforts are directed towards saving oneself from such damages. Virtually all living beings routinely utilise coping skills in daily life. These are perhaps most noticeable in response to physical disabilities. An easy example of the use of coping skills in the animal kingdom are three-legged dogs, which typically learn to
overcome the obvious disability to become as agile and mobile as their four-legged counterparts, whether born with the disability or having received it due to an injury.

When helping humans dealing with specific problems, professional counsellors have found that a focus of attention on coping skills (with or without remedial action) often helps individuals. The range of successful coping skills varies widely with the problems to be overcome. However, the learning and practice of coping skills are generally regarded as very helpful to most individuals. Even the sharing of learned coping skills with others is often beneficial. Coping refers to the thoughts and actions we use to deal with stress. Psychologically, coping can be defined as the process of managing taxing circumstances, expending effort to solve personal and interpersonal problems, and seeking "to master, minimize, reduce or tolerate stress" or conflict.

1.19 Concept of Personality

Mischel, Shoda and Smith (2004) state that the term personality has many definitions, but no single meaning is accepted universally. In popular usage, personality is often equated with social skill and effectiveness. In this usage, personality is the ability to elicit positive reactions from other people in one’s typical dealings with them. Some definitions by known personality psychologists are presented below:

Cattell (1950) thinks that personality is a predicting agent who will tell what a person will do under certain circumstances and covers all those behaviours which are manifested in his actions as well as hidden ones.

Hall & Lindzey (1998) state that personality may be defined in terms of attributes or qualities, that are highly typical of an individual and is an important part of the overall impression created on others.

Pervin (1997) describes that personality is the complex organisation of cognitions, affects and behaviours that gives direction and pattern (coherence) to the person’s life. Like the body, personality consists of both structures and processes and reflects both nature (genes) and nurture (experience). In addition, personality includes the effects of the past, including memories of the past, as well as constructions of the present and future.
1.20 Different Approaches to Personality

1.20.1 The psychoanalytic approach

Psychoanalytic theory of Freud is simultaneously a theory of personality, motivation, development and mental illness. Main idea behind the psychoanalytic scheme is the concept that only a small part of human mental activity is illustrated by conscious thought. A relatively large part of mental activity occurs at the preconscious and unconscious levels. Processes that are not in consciousness at a given time are preconscious activities, but that can become conscious as needed. However, unconscious activities are more important; these are largely, storage of instinctive urges. Unconscious activities can influence behaviour, but these activities cannot directly enter consciousness. Freud’s perception of how these three levels interact in an individual’s personality is based on three inferred personality structures: id, ego and super ego. Unconscious forces, which are accumulation of the sex and aggression instincts, are represented by id. Although id’s mental workings are not available for conscious inspection but its impulses can be sensed. Conscious representative of rational thought is ego.

Newly born baby reflects only id forces; and the ego develops gradually through the child’s interaction with the external world. Along with ego, superego is also developed by the child’s experience. Superego represents the internalisation of the society’s and parent’s prohibitions. According to Freud, behaviour is determined by the interaction of these three elements of the adult personality.

Carl Jung, soon after receiving his degree became a close associate of Freud. Jung’s point of view included two forms of unconsciousness. Jung’s personal unconscious was almost similar to Freud’s preconscious, which contains thoughts and memories that are not conscious at present but these could be. Jung’s novelty was the concept of a collective unconscious shared by all human beings as an evolutionary heritage. Jung’s collective unconscious, like Freud’s unconscious could influence behaviour but could not enter consciousness directly. Designs of images within the collective unconsciousness were termed as archetypes; these are the common experiences of all human beings that have sound symbolic meaning e.g. rising of the moon. Jung
thought that these archetypes were actually the summary of experiences of human’s ancestors and were expressed in similar myths and folk love of different cultures.

Like Jung, Alfred Adler, wanted to signify human drives for success and superiority. According to Adler, the dominant force in humans is a struggle for superiority. The special direction in which each person struggles for superiority is an individual one, but it is mostly unconscious and only dimly understood by the person. Horney (1953) stressed on a concept of the intrinsic difficulties of life. Horney said that people face risk in coping with childhood experiences of helplessness and isolation and this risk is actually development of ten different neurotic trends, e.g. neurotic need to exploit others.

1.20.2 The Behavioural Approach

Before Skinner’s behaviourism and Bandura’s social learning theory a brief description of Dollard and Miller’s behavioural approach is being described. Ruch (1984) explains that John Dollard and Neal Miller developed their theory of personality in the late 1940s. The theory they developed was based on four concepts: drive, cue, response and reinforcement. Freud’s instincts, as represented in the id, became for Dollard and Miller primary drives. These, in turn, were the basis for other learned drives (Miller, 1951). The combination of primary and learned drives provided the energy or motivation for behaviour and cues determined when, where and which behaviour would ensue. Any distinctive stimulus, in any sensory mode, could become a cue for some response, based on the learning history of the organism. Once the response had occurred, it could be followed by reinforcement. If so, the response became more probable in the presence of the cues.

Although not the only version of behaviourism, Skinner’s approach is one of the best known and most controversial (Rachlin, 1994). All behaviourists emphasise overt, measurable behaviour, but Skinner has insisted on limiting analysis to it. Internal activity, whether phrased in nervous-system terms or mental terms, is not an appropriate level of analysis, he feels. In this, Skinner is more extreme than many behaviourists, who are more willing to consider, for example, the possibility of thoughts as covert behaviour (Meichenbaum, 1977). Skinner’s view is often termed radical behaviourism because of his insistence on referring to environmental events in considering any behaviour. His is
virtually the only approach to personality to forgo all inferred constructs and to rely only on observed behaviour and contingencies of reinforcement. Skinner refuses to consider internal activities partly because they are so difficult to measure. But he also believes that internal events such as thoughts or emotions are results of external events, not causes of them.

Ruch (1984) explains that Bandura’s social learning approach is a form of learning theory, which implies both a conceptual emphasis on learning processes and a methodological emphasis on observable behaviour and replicable results. Social learning theory also emphasises the effects of reinforcement on learning. The central focus of social learning theory, as elaborated by Bandura and others, is on the process of modelling, the observation of some other person’s actions and the learning from those actions, without the observer necessarily either performing the action or being rewarded for it (Bandura, 1977). As Bandura has developed it, modelling involves four major processes (Bandura, 1977): for observed behaviour to be modeled successfully, it must first be attended to. Retention process must then ensure that the observed behaviour is retained for later use. Motor reproduction processes govern whether the observer is physically able to perform the modeled action, and motivational processes offer the reason to do so. Overall, social learning theory sees a person’s personality as developing through a lifetime interaction between the person and his or her environment, each of which influences the other (Bandura, 1974, 1978). It offers a flexible framework for combining self and situation variables, for adding cognitive features and so forth, while seeking to remain as objective and behaviourally focused as possible.

1.20.3 The Humanistic Approach

The humanistic approach is usually attributed to the independent approaches of two theorists, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers. Both emphasise concepts of the self and self development, but they differ somewhat in how these concepts are defined and used. Ruch (1984) explains that Maslow’s views, like Freud’s were strongly influenced by his beliefs about human motivation, but his view of motivation differed radically from Freud’s. Instead of powerful, innate, negative forces that must be kept in check, Maslow saw weak, innate, positive tendencies that must be nurtured (Maslow, 1968, 1970, 1971). Survival motives are the most powerful and most immediate motives. Maslow proposed
his well-known hierarchy of needs to suggest how more exclusively human needs might appear after more basic needs were satisfied.

According to Maslow, all of the needs in the hierarchy are innate to humans, but those higher in the hierarchy are weaker; they only direct action when all earlier needs have been satisfied. Roggers’s view is concerned with the development of self, but he approaches the concept of self differently than Maslow did (Suls, 1982). Roger’s personality theory is a person-centered theory in several ways (Holdstock & Rogers, 1977). First, it emphasises a phenomenological approach, noting that each person’s experienced world is unique, built up in part from that person’s experiences. Roger’s view is also person-centered in emphasising self-actualization, though he defines it somewhat differently than Maslow did. To Roggers, to be self-actualising is to strive toward congruence between one’s concept of self (the set of beliefs about who and what one is) and one’s experience. When a person’s experience is at odds with the self, a state of incongruence exists and the person may become a patient. Roger’s theory is thus a mixture of emotional and cognitive elements.

1.20.4 The Trait Approach

Mischel, Shoda and Smith (2004) explain that the trait approach to formal personality study begins with the common sense conviction that personality can be described with trait terms. But it extends and refines those descriptions by arriving at them quantitatively and systematically. Efforts to explain individual differences by formal trait theories face some of the same problems that arise when traits are offered as causes by the layman. However numerous safeguards have been developed to try to control some of these difficulties. One of the most outstanding trait psychologists was Gordon Allport. A Psychological Interpretation launched the psychology of personality as a field and discipline. In his classic work and many later contributions, he made a convincing case that a distinctive field was needed, to understand the person as a coherent, consistent whole individual. His view of personality was broad and integrative, and he was sensitive and attentive to all its diverse aspects. Reacting against the tendency of researchers to study isolated part processes, such as learning and memory, in ways that failed to take account of individual differences, he wanted to pursue two goals. One was to understand the differences between people in personality; the other was to see how the
different characteristics and processes (like learning, memory and biological processes) that exist within an individual interact and function together in an integrated way. His vision underlies much of what is still the definition and main mission of personality psychology today.

Allport’s conception of traits continues to guide much of the work at the trait-dispositional level of analysis. Allport (1937), in his theory explains that traits have a very real existence: they are the ultimate realities of psychological organisation. Allport implied that traits are relatively general and enduring: they unite many responses to diverse stimuli, producing fairly broad consistencies in behaviour. Allport was convinced that some people have dispositions that influence most aspects of their behaviour. He called these highly generalised dispositions cardinal traits. For example, if a person’s whole life seems to be organised around goal achievement and the attainment of excellence, then achievement might be his or her cardinal trait. Less pervasive but still quite generalised dispositions are central traits and Allport thought that many people are broadly influenced by central traits. Finally, more specific, narrow traits are called secondary dispositions or “attitudes”. Allport believed that one’s pattern of dispositions or “personality structure” determines one’s behaviour. No two people are completely alike, and hence no two people respond identically to the same event. Each person’s behaviour is determined by a particular trait structure. Allport thought that trait never occurs in any two people in exactly the same way: they operate in unique ways in each person. This conviction was consistent with his emphasis on the individuality and uniqueness of each personality.

Raymond B. Cattell is another important trait theorist. For Cattell, the trait is also the basic unit of study: it is a “mental structure,” inferred from behaviour and a fundamental construct that accounts for behavioural regularity or consistency. Like Allport, Cattell (1950) distinguished between common traits, which are possessed by all people and unique traits, which occur only in a particular person and cannot be found in another in exactly the same form. Cattell (1965) also distinguished surface traits from source traits. Surface traits are clusters of overt or manifest trait elements (responses) that seem to go together. Source traits are the underlying variables that are the causal entities determining the surface manifestation. In research, trait elements are analysed statistically
until collections of elements that correlate positively in all possible combinations are discovered. This procedure according to Cattell, yields surface traits. For Cattell, source traits can be found only by means of the mathematical technique of factor analysis. Using this technique, the investigator tries to estimate the factors or dimensions that appear to underlie surface variations in behaviour. In Cattell’s system, traits may also be grouped into classes on the basis of how they are expressed. Those that are relevant to the individual’s being “set into action” with respect to some goal are called dynamic traits. Those concerned with effectiveness in gaining the goal are ability traits. Traits concerned with energy or emotional reactivity are named temperament traits (Cattell, 1965).

Eysenck (1961, 1991) has extended the search for personality dimension to the area of abnormal behaviour, studying such traits as neuroticism-emotional stability. He also investigated introversion-extroversion as a dimensional trait. Eysenck and his colleagues have studied the associations between people’s positions on these dimensions and their scores on a variety of other personality and intellectual measures and developed an influential model of personality designed to account for the roots of these traits in ways that connect to the biological level of analysis. Eysenck (1991) emphasised that his dimension of introversion-extroversion is based entirely on research and “must stand and fall by empirical confirmation”. Eysenck suggested that the second major dimension of personality is emotional stability or neuroticism. This dimension describes at one end people who tend to be moody, touchy, anxious, restless and so on. At the other extreme are people who are characterised by such terms as stable, calm, carefree, even-tempered, and reliable.

### Common Features of Trait Theories

Mischel, Shoda and Smith (2004) explain some common features of trait theories:

1. **Inferring Traits from Behavioural Signs**: Traits are inferred from questionnaires, ratings, and other reports about the person’s dispositions. Usually, these self-reports are taken as direct signs of the relevant dispositions. For example, the more often you rate yourself as aggressive, the more you are assumed to have an aggressive disposition. So the relationship between what is sampled and the inferred trait is direct and additive: the more frequently a behavioural tendency is reported or described, the greater the amount of the underlying disposition.
2. **Generality and Stability of Traits:** Trait theorists often have disagreed about the specific content and structure of the basic traits needed to describe personality, but their general conceptions have much similarity and they remain popular. They all use the trait to account for consistencies in individuals’ behaviour and to explain why persons behave differently to the same stimulus.

3. **Search for Basic Traits:** Guided by the assumption that stable dispositions exists, trait psychologists try to identify the individual’s position on one or more dimensions. They do this by comparing people tested under standardized conditions. They believe that positions on these dimensions are relatively stable across testing situations and over long time periods. Their main emphasis in the study of personality is the development of instruments that can accurately tap the person’s underlying traits.

4. **Quantification:** The main feature of the trait approach has been its methodology. This methodology is “psychometric” in the sense that it attempts to measure individual differences and to quantify them. Psychometricians study persons and groups on trait dimensions by comparing their scores on tests. To do this, they sample many people, compare large groups under uniform conditions and devise statistical techniques to infer basic traits. Their methods over the years have become increasingly sophisticated and effective for meeting a wide range of measurement goals (e.g. Jackson & Paunonen, 1980; John, 1990).

For many years in the long search for a “universal taxonomy” of traits, researchers disagreed actively as to which personality dimensions they should use to describe personality. Some proposed as many as 16; others, as few as two or three (Vernon, 1964). More recently, however, consensus has grown among many researchers to focus on five dimensions of personality (Goldberg, 1990; John, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 1985, 1987, 1999) that emerges from ratings using English-language trait adjectives. These dimensions are found by using the method of factor analysis.

### 1.20.5 The Five-Factor Model of personality

A “trait” is a temporally stable, cross-situational individual difference. Presently, the most popular approach for studying personality traits are two important models with five factors, Costa & Mc Crae’s Five Factor Model and Goldberg’s Big Five (Mc Adams, 1992). The Five-Factor Model represents the factors as Extraversion, Openness,
Agreeableness Conscientiousness and Neuroticism. The Big Five model replaces “neuroticism” with “emotional stability” and names the “openness” factor “intelligence”. The Big Five are based upon factor analysis of the entire trait-descriptive adjective in a natural language, as collected from a dictionary. The Big Five are meant to provide a comprehensive description of phenotypic personality traits. The Big Five model is a descriptive taxonomy that attempts to organize and quantify traits, which make up the foundation of trait theory. A brief discussion on these traits is presented here:

**Extraversion-Introversion (E)**

An extrovert is sociable, likes parties, has many friends, talkative and does not like studying or reading by himself. He takes chances, craves excitement, and acts on the spur of the moment. He always has a ready answer, is fond of practical jokes, likes change; he is easygoing, optimistic, carefree and likes to laugh and be merry. He tends to be aggressive, is not always reliable and prefers to keep moving. A typical introvert is introspective, quiet, likes books and reserved, he looks before he leaps and tends to plan ahead. He takes matters of daily life with seriousness, does not like excitement and likes a well-ordered mode of life. He seldom behaves in an aggressive manner and keeps his feelings under control. He is usually pessimistic, but places value on ethical standards and is reliable (Eysenck & 1965).

**Openness to Experience (O)**

The open person is imaginative, curious, creative, daring, complex, insightful, independent, unconventional, analytical, artistic, explorative and liberal. The open person likes to think. In contrast persons who are low in openness are down to earth, conventional, uncreative, conforming and conservative.

**Emotional Stability-Neuroticism (N)**

This trait plays a role in almost all of the contemporary factor models for personality. Emotional stability versus neuroticism is thought to cover many other personality traits like nervousness, chronic anxiety, depression, self-consciousness, moodiness and hostility. Neuroticism is “a dimension of personality defined by stability and low anxiety at one end as opposed to instability and high anxiety at the other end” (Pervin, 1989). A neurotic individual will express emotions more frequently than an emotionally stable one. In contrast persons who score low dimension are generally
secure, relaxed, self satisfied, relatively unemotional, cool and calm (Carlson, 1971; Lanyon, 1984).

**Agreeableness-Antagonism (A)**

It represents the extremes of easy going versus stubborn or trusting versus suspicious. Persons high in agreeableness are sympathetic to others, helpful and understanding. Persons low in this trait are skeptical, argumentative and strong-built.

**Consciousness (C)**

Those high in this disposition are careful, organised, determined, dependable, conventional, thorough, efficient, responsible, orderly and reliable. Those on the low end of this dimension are careless, lazy, weak willed, undependable, disorganised, and not self-disciplined (Carlson, 1971; Lanyon, 1984).

### 1.21 Academic Stress and Personality

Personality influences the frequency of exposure to stressors, the type of stressors experienced and appraisals (Vollrath 2001). Neuroticism predicts exposure to interpersonal stress and tendencies to appraise events as highly threatening and coping resources as low (Bolger & Zuckerman 1995, Grant & Langan-Fox 2007, Gunthert et al. 1999, Penley & Tomaka 2002, Suls & Martin 2005). Conscientiousness predicts low stress exposure (Lee-Baggley et al. 2005, Vollrath 2001), probably because conscientious persons plan for predictable stressors and avoid impulsive actions that can lead to financial, health or interpersonal problems. Agreeableness is linked to low interpersonal conflict and thus less social stress (Asendorpf 1998). Extraversion, conscientiousness and openness all relate to perceiving events as challenges rather than threats and to positive appraisals of coping resources (Penley & Tomaka 2002, Vollrath 2001). Unsurprisingly, high neuroticism plus low conscientiousness predicts especially high stress exposure and threat appraisals and low neuroticism plus high extraversion or high conscientiousness predicts especially low stress exposure and threat appraisals (Grant & Langan-Fox 2007, Vollrath & Torgersen 2000).

### 1.22 Coping Strategies and Personality

Coping has been described as “personality in action under stress” and theorists have suggested that “coping ought to be redefined as a personality process”. These ideas
have been supported by evidence that personality and coping have a shared genetic basis and by correlations between personality and coping exceeding. However, the magnitude and even direction, of correlations between personality and coping has varied across studies, with many studies failing to demonstrate expected relations despite adequate statistical power and use of reliable and valid measure. This inconsistency suggests that relations between personality and coping may be more modest than has been assumed or that moderators such as stressor severity, the focus or reporting timeframe of the coping measure or demographic factors influence relations.

Personality may affect coping strategy selection directly, by constraining or facilitating use of specific strategies or indirectly, by influencing the nature and severity of stressors experienced or the effectiveness of coping strategies. Direct effects of personality on coping may begin in early childhood, with biologically based appetitive, defensive and attentional systems providing the framework in which coping develops. By facilitating approach to rewards, withdrawal from threats and engagement or disengagement of attention, these biological tendencies may affect coping selection throughout the lifespan. Personality may also indirectly affect coping. Because coping is motivated by stress-exposure, stress-reactivity and situational demands, the influence of personality on the frequency, intensity and nature of stressors experienced may partially explain relations between personality and coping. Individuals who experience numerous stressors or are highly stress reactive may disengage to tame their own unpleasant arousal, whereas individuals who experience few stressors, are low in stress reactivity, and generate positive appraisals may be better positioned to use engagement coping.

Personality traits may influence the effectiveness of coping strategies, with strategies that are beneficial for some individuals being less effective or even harmful, for those with different personality traits. Personality may influence coping by shaping the strategies that are easiest for an individual child to implement and by influencing the success of those strategies. Personality does influence coping in many ways, however, some of which occur prior to coping. Even prior to coping, personality influences the frequency of exposure to stressors, the type of stressors experienced and appraisals. Neuroticism predicts exposure to interpersonal stress and tendencies to appraise events as highly threatening and coping resources as low. Conscientiousness predicts low stress
exposure, probably because conscientious persons plan for predictable stressors and avoid impulsive actions that can lead to financial, health or interpersonal problems. Agreeableness is linked to low interpersonal conflict and thus less social stress. Extraversion, conscientiousness and openness all relate to perceiving events as challenges rather than threats and to positive appraisals of coping resources. Unsurprisingly, high neuroticism plus low conscientiousness predicts especially high stress exposure and threat appraisals and low neuroticism plus high extraversion or high conscientiousness predicts especially low stress exposure and threat appraisals.

Given exposure to stressors, personality can be expected to influence coping responses in several ways. From a biological view, responses to stress presumably stem from temperament based approach, avoidance and attentional regulation systems (Derryberry et al. 2003, Skinner & Zimmer-Gembeck 2007). From an expectancy-value view, coping efforts presumably are influenced by expectations of future outcomes (Carver et al. 2009). Extraversion, grounded in an approach temperament, involves sensitivity to reward, positive emotions, sociability, assertiveness and high energy (Caspi et al. 2005, McCrae & John 1992, Rothbart & Hwang 2005). Strong approach tendencies and assertiveness should provide the energy required to initiate and persist in problem solving (Lengua et al. 1999, Vollrath 2001); positive affect should facilitate cognitive restructuring and an orientation toward others and access to a social network should facilitate social support coping.

Neuroticism, grounded in an avoidance temperament, reflects tendencies to experience fear, sadness, distress and physiological arousal (McCrae & John 1992, Miles & Hempel 2003, Rothbart & Hwang 2005). Given this vulnerability to distress, neuroticism should lead to emotion-focused coping and disengagement from threat. Disengagement may be reinforced through short-term relief of distress (Lengua et al. 1999); this relief may reduce motivation to return to the stressor, thus minimising engagement coping. Furthermore, the mere presence of intense emotional arousal can interfere with the use of engagement strategies that require careful planning. Negative affect should also make positive thinking and cognitive restructuring difficult.

Conscientiousness implies persistence, self discipline, organisation, achievement orientation and a deliberative approach (Caspi et al. 2005, McCrae & John 1992). The
planful, disciplined properties of this trait should facilitate problem solving and make disengagement less likely (Lengua et al. 1999, Vollrath 2001). The strong attention-regulation capacity underpinning conscientiousness (Derryberry et al. 2003) should predict success at cognitive restructuring, which requires a capacity to disengage from powerful negative thoughts. Agreeableness involves high levels of trust and concern for others (Caspi et al. 2005, McCrae & John 1992). Because those high in agreeableness tend to have strong social networks (Bowling et al. 2005, Tong et al. 2004), agreeableness may predict social support coping. Openness to experience involves the tendency to be imaginative, creative, curious, flexible, attuned to inner feelings and inclined toward new activities and ideas (John & Srivastava 1999, McCrae & John 1992). These tendencies may facilitate engagement coping strategies that require considering new perspectives, such as cognitive restructuring and problem solving, but may also facilitate use of disengagement strategies such as wishful thinking.

Optimism involves the expectation of good outcomes and an engaged approach to life, apparently reflecting the belief that good outcomes require some effort. These characteristics suggest that optimism will relate positively to engagement types of coping, such as problem solving and cognitive restructuring and inversely to avoidance or disengagement coping. Pessimism involves the expectation of bad outcomes, which should promote distress and disengagement coping.

Evidence bearing on these predicted associations is now available from hundreds of studies of relations between personality and coping. Most report cross-sectional correlations between personality and broad measures of dispositional coping; others address coping with specific stresses. The number of studies and the great diversity of situations investigated, makes summarising the associations a difficult task. Two recent meta-analyses have attempted to integrate this literature. Connor-Smith & Flachsbart (2007) focused on Big Five personality traits in a meta-analysis of data from 165 adult, adolescent and middle-childhood samples. Solberg Nes & Segerstrom (2006) focused on optimism as measured by the Life Orientation Test or its revised version (LOT-R) using data from 50 samples of adults and adolescents. Some individual studies have found strong correlations between personality and coping. Overall, however, both meta-analyses suggest that relations between personality and coping are modest. This does not
mean that the impact of personality on coping is unimportant. A small influence, multiplied by the thousands of stressors experienced over a lifetime, may result in a large impact over time.

Furthermore, both meta-analyses found substantial heterogeneity in or affect sizes across studies. In part, this heterogeneity reflects diversity among samples and measures. But it also illustrates the need to test specific coping strategies rather than only broad coping types and to consider moderators of relations between personality and coping. Both meta-analyses presented effect sizes for broad engagement and disengagement coping responses. Connor-Smith & Flachsbart (2007) also considered specific strategies within the broad categories and separately examined two emotion-focused categories with varying overtones of engagement and disengagement. Solberg Nes & Segerstrom (2006) also presented effect sizes for problem-focused and emotion-focused categories and crossed those categories with engagement and disengagement to explore four more focused coping types.

1.23 Home Environment

Children grow up in several environments. Home, school and community are the setting for social and intellectual experiences from which they acquire and develop the skills, attitudes and attachments which characterise them as individuals and shape their choice and performance of adult roles (Morrison and McIntyre, 1973). During childhood and adolescence most of the social influences upon individual can be categorised as being associated either with home or with school environments. In the early years the family is the most potent source of influence, but once children have entered school, new opportunities are created for adults and for peers and older pupils to influence individual development. It is well known fact that most of those who become successful in life have come from homes where parental attitudes towards them were favourable and where a wholesome relationship existing between parents and children produces happy and friendly children who are constructive and affectionate members of the group. By contrast, those who are unsuccessful in life usually come from homes where the parent-child relationship is unfavourable.

During the past few decades home environment had been identified as being a contributing factor in a child’s educational, cognitive and affective development.
Researchers typically separate elements of the home environment into two major categories; social and physical (Casey, Bradley, Nelson & Whaley, 1988; Wachs, 1989). Crow and Crow (1965) describes that home is the primary societal unit. Family relationships play an important role in an individual’s life pattern from early childhood through adulthood. Much of an individual’s personality patterning originates at home. Not only does the child inherit certain family potentialities, but during his developing years, his attitudes, beliefs, ideals and overt behaviour reflects the influences on him of home experiences. Crow and Crow (1965) state that, the fulfillment of a child’s basic psychological and physical needs is the primary responsibility of his or her family. The degree of successful adjustment achieved by the child in his family relationships depends on various factors of influence. Of these, special attention is diverted towards traditional parental attitudes toward child rearing (rigid versus permissive), emotional reactions of family members (emotionally stable versus disturbed) and the socioeconomic status of the home (middle and upper versus lower class).

Peck (1958) thinks that the child reared in a rigid home tends to be submissive but resentful of restrictions on his freedom; the permissively reared child is likely to be aggressive and outgoing. The child of emotionally stable parents can be expected to exhibit well-controlled behaviour reaction; the child of emotionally disturbed parents is of those who display inconsistent attitudes toward him may become a confused or frustrated individual, reflecting in his own behaviour the personality defects to which he has been exposed. As a result of an eight year longitudinal study of adolescent character development, Peck concluded that the personality characteristics of the subjects of the study were “significantly related to the emotional relationships and the disciplinary patterns which they experienced in living with their parents.” Kundu (1989) concludes that, a close emotional relationship between parents and the child affects the inculcation of effective emotional relationship. Rejection and broken homes in the form of separation, divorce, desertion and death of a parent or denial of advantages of privileges, punishment, threats and humiliation, poor socioeconomic conditions also affect the social adjustment and behaviour of the child.

Because of its pre-eminence the family probably has the greatest influence on a child’s future life than any other agent. All schools of thought, involved in the study of
personality are in agreement that child imitates his parents; his acquisition of pictures of social roles and his tendency to act out in later relationship are all associated with his interaction with his parents. This interaction lets us comprehend the resultant personality characteristics, if dealt with, in a particular parents-behaviour toward child rather than in a general theoretical way. Family life, in other words, is a general morale pattern, including satisfaction of parents with each other and with the home situation, but likely to involve also the inconsistency of discipline, differing standards by parents, quarrels between parents, etc. As family is a strong socialising agent, it becomes obvious that child takes on the roles of his family members i.e. the parents in particular. When a child acquires roles from his family then, it is evident that a low-morale home does not start him off on a favourable path.

Kagan et al. (1998) state that parents also influence their children through their own characteristics. Children come to conclusions about themselves, often incorrect, because they assume that since they are biological offspring of their mother and father, they possess some of the qualities that belong to their parents. This emotionally tinged belief is called identification and it is the basis for national pride, loyalty to ethnic and religious groups. Thus, if a parent is perceived by her child as affectionate, just and talented, the child assumes that he or she, too, probably possesses one or more of these desirable traits and as a result, feels more confident than she has a right to given the evidence. By contrast, the child who perceives a parent who is rejecting and without talent, feels shame because he assumes that he probably is in possession of some of these undesirable characteristics. Support for this claim is the fact that all children become upset if someone criticizes their family. The anxiety or anger that follows such criticism is strong because children assume, unconsciously, that criticism of their parents is also a criticism of them. Kagan et al. (1998) describes that it is rare to find a belief that all societies, ancient and modern share. No society claims that the family’s influence on the child is without significance.

Baumrind (1971) as cited by Fabes & Lynn (2000) suggested following four common styles of parenting:

**i.) Authoritarian parenting:** This type of parenting is characterised by efforts by parents to control judge and shape, the attitudes and behaviours of their children according to
rigid standards of conduct. These parents usually value obedience and favor harsh, forceful measures, including physical punishment, to ensure that children comply with their rules. These parents discourage verbal give and take, believing that children should accept their word for what is right. Thus, authoritarian parents are high in demandingness and low in responsiveness. These parents set rules, and expect that children are to obey these rules because the parents say so. Preschoolers from authoritarian homes have low levels of self-control and independence, and they tend to be aggressive, anxious, and resistant to correction. (Baumrind 1971; Kochanska & Askan 1995).

ii.) **Permissive parenting:** Parents who practice permissive parenting make few demands on their children. They are tolerant and accepting of their children’s impulses and desires. These parents view themselves as resources to be used as their children wish rather than as agents responsible for shaping or altering their children’s behavior. Permissive parents avoid the use of force to accomplish their goals and thus are low in demandingness and high in responsiveness. Because permissive parents are unable to set limits on the behaviour of their children, preschoolers raised by permissive parents resemble those from authoritarian homes. They tend to be relatively immature, demanding, rebellious, impulsive, aggressive and less socially competent (Baumrind 1971).

iii.) **Uninvolved parenting:** Uninvolved parenting describes the style of parents who make few demands on their children but are unresponsive or rejecting as well. Uninvolved parents do whatever they can to minimise the costs of being a parent and put little time and effort into interaction with children. Parent’s efforts relate more to their own immediate comfort and convenience than to the long-term development of the child. For example, these parents are unlikely to establish and enforce rules about bedtime or children’s diets. At the extreme, uninvolved parents may be neglectful. Parental depression is sometimes related to uninvolved parenting; depressed parents tend to be disengaged, withdrawn, and unresponsive to their children. As you might expect, children from homes where the parents are uninvolved, neglectful, or depressed do not fare very well. These children tend to be noncompliant, aggressive,
withdrawn, and insecure in their attachments to others (Egeland & Sroufe 1983; Miller, Cowan, Cowan, Hetherington, & Clingempeel 1993).

iv.) Authoritative parenting: This type of parenting is exhibited by parents who encourage verbal give-and-take and explains to their children the reason behind discipline and household rules. These parents value conformity to their rules and exert consistent and firm—but not excessive control to bring it about. Authoritative parents are loving and supportive and they recognise the importance of children’s individual interests and needs. Authoritative parents can be classified as high in demandingness and high in responsiveness. Preschool children raised in authoritative homes tend to be friendly, cooperative, socially competent, confident, and self-reliant. (Dekovic & Janssens, 1992; Hinshaw et al., 1997).

Because different cultures hold different values, it is not surprising that the degree to which parents are authoritative or authoritarian differs across cultures and subcultures. Authoritative parenting is more prevalent in two-parent families than in single parent families or step families (Hetherington & Clingempeel, 1992). Authoritarian parenting is more common among families experiencing financial difficulties and among ethnic minorities (Steinberg, Mounts, Lamborn, & Dornbusch 1991). Moreover, parents who adhere to conservative religious beliefs tend to adhere to an authoritarian parenting style more often than do parents who are less conservative in their religious beliefs. These findings indicate that parenting styles and their impact on children are influenced by family circumstances and cultural beliefs and attitudes.

Rathbam, Divirglio & Waldfogel (1958) have described that the power of parental behaviour is seen in the fact that some children who were orphaned and made homeless by war were able to regain intellectual and social skills they failed to develop during their early privation if they were adopted by nurturing families. Crow and Crow (1965) think that family’s socioeconomic status can exert a powerful influence on a young person’s developing personality. Not only is the adolescent of an economically underprivileged home denied many of the privileges and enriching experiences enjoyed by upper- and middle-class children but his life values are affected by parental ambitions for him.

Kohn (1959) conducted a study of the social class values of four families with children in the fifth grade of public and parochial schools in Washington, D.C. In his
conclusions Kohn suggests that parents of all social classes have values that are related to their social class and parents think that it is important for their children to develop traits of honesty, obedience and consideration for others. He found that working-class mothers indicated a deep appreciation for such qualities as neatness and cleanliness. They rate high those qualities that make for respectability. Middle-class parents are greatly concerned with values associated with internal standards that govern individual relationships with people including one self. Happiness is high on the value list for boys by middle-class mothers; working-class mother’s rate honesty and obedience before happiness for their sons and place happiness first for their daughters.

Swatantra (1971) on the basis of the findings contained in the individual case histories, found the following factors to be the causes of aggression in children:
(a) Poor relations between parents and children, parents’ inconsistency of behaviour, nagging, ridiculing, beating, attitude of domination, laissez-fair towards children results in aggressive behaviour
(b) Discord among parents affecting the peace of mind of the children. Parental non-adjustments and emotional outburst adversely affect children’s behaviour
(c) Her study shows that 68% of the cases showing aggressive behaviour came from families living from hand to mouth and the economically depressed ones
(d) Of the aggressive children studied, 40% are the first born, 32% the second born, 12% the youngest born and 16% the others. Almost all the aggressive children had bad relations with their siblings, particularly their younger’s
(e) 48% of the aggressive children came of the parents who received education only up to different classes of primary school stage, or quite illiterate.

1.24 Dimensions of Home Environment

The psychological atmosphere of a home may fall into any of the four quadrants, each of which represents one of the four general combinations: acceptance-autonomy, acceptance-control, rejection-autonomy and rejection-control (Johnson & Medinnus, 1969). Grebow (1973) reported that ‘nurturance-affection’ and ‘achievement expectations, demands & standards’ constitute the two dimensions of parental behaviour that have been regarded as important by previous researchers. Various researchers have identified the following characteristics of home environment or parental child rearing
practices-permissiveness, willingness to devote time to the child, parental guidance, parental aspiration for achievement, provisions for the child’s intellectual needs, affective reward, instrumental companionship, principled discipline, neglect, deprivation of privileges, protectiveness, power, indulgence, conformity, independence, dependence, involvement with the child etc. There exists a great overlapping in the kinds of behaviours which are in association with different characteristics. Dr Karuna Shanker Misra has given following ten dimensions of home environment:

1. **Control:** It indicates autocratic atmosphere in which many restrictions are imposed on children by the parents in order to discipline them.

2. **Protectiveness:** It implies prevention of independent behaviour and prolongation of infantile care.

3. **Punishment:** It includes physical as well as affective punishment to avoid the occurrence of undesirable behaviour.

4. **Conformity:** It indicates parent’s directions, commands, or an order with which child is expected to comply by action. It refers to demands to work according to parent’s desires and expectations.

5. **Social isolation:** It indicates use of isolation from beloved persons except family members for negative sanctions.

6. **Reward:** It includes material as well as symbolic rewards to strengthen or increase the probability of desired behaviour.

7. **Deprivation of privileges:** It implies controlling children’s behaviour by depriving them of their rights to seek love, respect and child care from parents.

8. **Nurturance:** It indicates existence of excessive unconditional physical and emotional attachment of the parents with the child. Parents have a keen interest and love for the child.

9. **Rejection:** It implies conditional love recognizing that the child has no rights as a person, no right to express his feelings, no right to uniqueness and no right to become an autonomous individual.

10. **Permissiveness:** It includes provision of opportunities to child to express his views freely and act according to his desires with no interference from parents.
1.25 Academic Stress and Home Environment

We react to our environment with different degrees of intensity; in 20th century with anxiety and in the present century with stress. In an academic situation, such as school, a student reacts in the form of mental distress to an anticipated frustration associated with failure in annual examination or even to the awareness of the possibility of such failure (Gupta & Khan, 1987). Academic stress is an emotional tension of a student which is expressed or felt by him during his failure to cope with the academic demands and its consequences may be exhibited in the form of major health hazards and problems, both physical and mental.

Children's success in their educational endeavours and their general socioemotional adjustment are influenced by a variety of personal characteristics and environmental experiences. One of the most powerful determinants of children's developmental course is the social context in which they live. One of the important sources of academic stress in school children is the great expectation of parents for achieving good marks in their examination. Students now have more home work than ever before and if the child fails to do home work as per the expectations of their teachers, the results is the cumulative academic stress. The home environment and the treatment of the child by the parents can severely stress the intellectual functioning or psychological stability of the child.

One of the saddest things to see is a child who doesn't grow into their full potential due to an incredibly stressful home life. Family should be the stabilizing factor around a child, the ones they can count on for love and security, but this is not always the case. There are many children who are extremely intelligent, above average in intellectual ability, yet never succeed in the classroom because of the things that is going on within their immediate families. When a child lives in a home that is unstable, there is often intense emotion in the air. This can lead to nightmares or even night terrors that are disruptive to sleep. The child will not be able to get proper rest for their physical and mental health which leaves them unable to perform well in the classroom.

Poor family environment in terms of parental hostility, rejection and inconsistencies can all contribute to psychological problems viz., anxiety, stress,
neuroticism, depression and many others (Sharma, Verma & Malhotra, 2008). The family is the backdrop in which the child learns to deal with emotions, drives and to handle problems in a socially acceptable manner when the family does not help the youngsters to adjust to the environment, they lose effective agent of socialization and hence create stress and anxiety among its members especially the adolescents as in adolescence, the development of independence from the family and adjustment to various social and environmental demands is vital, as the young people have to learn to meet everyday challenges of social relationships, educational attainment and employment (Sud & Sethi, 2008). These novel experiences and demands may evoke anxiety and stress coupled with other emotional reactions.

The family and the various relationship dynamics and interaction patterns therein, serve as a very important context for the psychological development of adolescents at a time when the latter are attempting to discover their personal sense of self and are struggling to establish themselves as independent, self-governing individuals. At the same time, the adolescents’ attempts toward individuation may affect parent-child relationship (Sharma, 2009) and unbalance the family environment leading to conflicts thereby thwarting the cohesiveness and organization of the family leading to stress and anxiety (Sharma, 2008).

1.26 Coping and Home Environment

Adolescence is commonly viewed and experienced as a time of tumult, as one makes the series of transitions from childhood into adulthood. This maturing process presents the adolescent with dramatic physical, emotional, relational changes and challenges. Thus, the period of adolescence itself can present a strong challenge to the psychological well being of the individual. Furthermore, the adolescent is influenced by various social systems, as stated above. Therefore, while normal development presents its own challenges, numerous social influences can also exert conflicting demands upon the adolescent. One such system is the adolescent’s family, which has been one of the strongest influences upon his or her psychological development and functioning throughout childhood and remains as such throughout this transition period of development (Compas, 1987; Lohman & Jarvis, 2000; Phelps & Jarvis, 1994; Stern & Zevon, 1990).
The family environment does have a significant impact on children and adolescents’ development in many domains (Baumrind, 1991; Steinberg, 2001). For example, parents who provide their children with a high level of warmth and emotional availability (involvement), moderate restrictiveness in the form of reasonable limits (structure), but at the same time considerable freedom to explore the environment (autonomy support) have children who are more competent and prosocial than those exposed to other parenting styles (Lamborn, Mounts, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1991; Dusek & Danko, 1994; Fletcher, Darling, Steinberg, & Dornbusch, 1995; Gray & Steinberg, 1999). In addition, home environment have been found to influence active coping behaviours of children (Kliewer et al., 1996). Cohesive, low conflict, communicative families were more likely to model active coping behaviours for children and had children who more frequently use active coping behaviours and exhibited less problem responses when dealing with stressful events.

Skinner and Wellborn (1994) offer four ways in which the family, particularly one’s parents, might influence the individual’s development of effective coping strategies. First, the family can be an objective source of stress for the child and particularly the adolescent, which necessitates that the individual find some means of dealing with such a salient stressor. Second, the family functions from the earliest moments of life as a buffer, filtering to the child only those stressors that the child is developmentally capable of managing. Third, typically, the child first begins to acquire his or her coping strategies, both adaptive and maladaptive, from direct observation of family members. Finally and especially during adolescence, family members may serve as a safety net by acting as a social support network to which the individual can turn for assistance and support as he or she attempts to cope with stressors. Although the adolescent appears to rely upon his or her peer groups for support and help in coping with the challenges of this period as independence from his or her parents develops, the coping strategies employed by the adolescent are still quite firmly influenced by his or her family. For example, Lohman and Jarvis (2000) demonstrated the strong positive relationship between the adolescents’ chosen coping strategies and those of their parents.

Thus, the adolescent who frequently used acceptance is likely to have a parent who also endorsed frequent use of acceptance strategies. Coping strategies have been
linked to family environment to the extent that the family provides the context in which
the individual first experiences various coping strategies. Furthermore, the individual can
then begin to test coping strategies with family members. Finally, the individual can
return to the family for particular types of coping such as advice-seeking and social
support. It follows, then, that one’s chosen coping strategies are likely to be influenced by
the conflict or cohesion that characterises his or her family environment (Compas, 1987;
De Anda et al., 2000; Lohman & Jarvis, 2000; Phelps & Jarvis, 1994; Skinner &

Researchers have consistently demonstrated that parental rearing and family
environment can either facilitate or hinder the development of autonomy and
psychological health in adolescents, including coping strategies. Anxious rearing
behaviours such as overly rigid or erratic discipline have been shown to be linked to
increased incidence of avoidant coping strategies (Muris, Meesters, Merckelbach, &
Hulsenbeck, 2000). Negative family environments can be characterised by a controlling
dynamic in which the ties in the family are rigid and resistant to change and are related to
higher reports of depression and other internalising disorders in adolescents aged 16 and
17 years (Aydin & Oztutuncu, 2001). In addition, Johnson, LaVoie, and Mahoney (2001)
found that increased interparental conflict was related to feelings of social anxiety and
loneliness in late adolescents (ages 17 to 21 years). Conversely, cohesive family
environments, which are marked by such characteristics as warm, affective ties, were
found to be predictive of decreased internalised symptomatology (Aydin & Oztutuncu,
2001; Johnson, LaVoie, & Mahoney, 2001).

1.27 Rationale of the study

It is clear from the literature that adolescence is a period during which great
differentiation takes place on the social terrain (Rose, 2005). Although adolescents are
still close to their parents, they spend increasingly more time with their friends. Their
physical and emotional dependence on their parents decreases and they move closer to
the peer group. During this time, the personality development of adolescents (specifically
identity formation) reaches a crisis point and the development of a unique and stable
personality is often a very difficult aspect to deal with (Ryan & Deci, 2003). Cognitive,
emotional and attitudinal changes which are characteristic of adolescence, often take place during this period and this can be a cause of conflict, stress and depression on one hand and positive personality development on the other. Because the adolescents are experiencing various strong cognitive and physical changes, for the first time in their lives they may start to view their friends, their peer group, as more important and influential than their parents/guardians.

Similar to Stanley Hall's characterisation of the adolescent period as one of storm and stress, many other theorists have also portrayed adolescence as a troubled and unique period of the life cycle. Adolescence is a time of turbulence, when youths go through biological, psychological and social changes as they grow from childhood to adulthood. For many youths, rapid physical changes often outpace their social and emotional maturity, yet social expectations increase because they are viewed by some as more like adults than like children. So, they live in a state of ambiguity. Moreover, now-a-days, stress is becoming a common problem in everyday life and especially life for many young people is a painful tug of war filled with mixed messages and conflicting demands from parents, teachers, coaches, employers, friends and oneself. Growing up negotiating a path between independence and reliance on others is a tough business. It creates stress and it can create serious depression for young people ill-equipped to cope, communicate and solve problems. Teenagers may lead to other negative consequences such as poor academic performance, low self-esteem and low well-being. Their consequences, in turn can lead to other problems and issues. There is no opposition to the fact that a limited academic stress is motivation for the student to study more and more. However, in the same breadth, it has to be accepted that post-optimum stress is harmful as it results in several psycho-somatic abnormalities.

Various adolescents use different kind of strategies to cope with all these problems and stress of life. Coping efforts are a manifestation of an individual’s struggle for existence. In other words, because prolonged stress has the potential to cause physical and psychological damage, coping efforts are directed towards saving oneself from such damages. Research studies suggest that academic stress which is often not taken seriously can have serious consequences for students and they may find it difficult to cope up with
this. This is a particularly interesting moment in Indian history in which to explore the issue, because there has been significant social change in India since the early 1990s.

Personality also influences coping in many ways, however, some of which occur prior to coping. Even prior to coping, personality influences the frequency of exposure to stressors, the type of stressors experienced and appraisals. Neuroticism predicts exposure to interpersonal stress and tendencies to appraise events as highly threatening and coping resources as low. Conscientiousness predicts low stress exposure, probably because conscientious persons plan for predictable stressors and avoid impulsive actions that can lead to financial, health or interpersonal problems. Agreeableness is linked to low interpersonal conflict and thus less amount of stress. Extraversion, conscientiousness and openness all relate to perceiving events as challenges rather than threats and to positive appraisals of coping resources. Unsurprisingly, high neuroticism plus low conscientiousness predict especially high stress exposure and threat appraisals and low neuroticism plus high extraversion or high conscientiousness predicts especially low stress exposure and threat appraisals.

According to a study conducted by Bolger & Zuckerman (1995) personality may affect coping strategy selection directly, by constraining or facilitating use of specific strategies, or indirectly, by influencing the nature and severity of stressors experienced or the effectiveness of coping strategies. Direct effects of personality on coping may begin in early childhood, with biologically based appetitive, defensive, and attentional systems providing the framework in which coping develops (Derryberry, Reed, & Pilkenton-Taylor, 2003). Personality may also indirectly affect coping. Because coping is motivated by stress-exposure, stress-reactivity, and situational demands, the influence of personality on the frequency, intensity, and nature of stressors experienced may partially explain relations between personality and coping. De Longis & Holtzman (2005) found that personality traits may influence the effectiveness of coping strategies, with strategies that are beneficial for some individuals being less effective, or even harmful, for those with different personality traits. Further, a study on personality development will help the teachers, parents, administrators, curriculum planners and policy makers to coordinate in an effective way so that our students can have a sound personality and better academic achievement resulting in less academic stress.
Adolescents’ growth and development is also closely linked with his/her adjustment to home. It usually follows that an adolescent who experiences a normal and well-integrated home and school life carries over into all his other associations a similar wholesomeness of attitude and control of behaviour (Field et al, 1995; Kokko and Pulkkinen, 2000 and Lai and Mcbride-Chang, 2001). Moreover, the cause of an adolescent's social maladjustment often can be traced to a home environment in which the teenager has had little or no opportunity to experience cooperative group living. In fact, home environment is the quality and quantity of the cognitive, emotional and social support that has been available to the child within the home and connotes the psychological environment of home. The total home environment refers to both positive and negative conditions which interact with each other, either favourably or unfavourably, to determine home environment to be 'better' or 'poor'.

Shah and Sharma (1984) found if parents want their children to achieve better, they should provide and maintain in the family, highly congenial atmosphere. Albers et al. (1986) showed that disturbed family functioning predicted poor quality of later intimate relationships among adolescents. Lau and Kwok (2000) concluded that a cohesive, orderly and achieving family environment is conductive to more positive development among adolescents. Williamson (2006) observed that college students possessing strong positive feeling towards recollection of early childhood family influences also possessed greater confidence in themselves and in others as well as greater perceptions of academic self-efficacy. Poor home environment has been reported to have long term effects on adolescents' life style (Albers et al. 1986; Olsson et al., 1999; Lai and McBride-Chang, 2001). As the above mentioned researches indicate the importance of home environment for individuals’ development, the researcher, found it interesting to explore the influences of different indices of home environment on students’ academic stress and coping strategies.

The investigator could lay hands on only a few studies conducted abroad which intended to see the relationship of coping strategies and stress in general but the relationship of other variables like personality and home environment with academic stress and coping strategies has not been investigated so far. Moreover, in India there is a dearth of studies on academic stress itself though some studies have been conducted on
stress in general. Despite best efforts, the investigator could not trace research studies investigating the relationship of academic stress and coping strategies with adolescents’ personality and home environment. Taking cognizance of the facts stated above, the present investigator visualized a need to investigate on the present problem which is delineated as under:

1.28 Statement of the Problem

*Academic Stress and Coping Strategies of Adolescents in relation to their Personality and Home Environment*

1.29 Operational Definition of terms to be used

**Academic stress:** Academic stress refers to the unpleasant psychological situations that occur due to the educational expectations from parents, teachers, peers and family members, pressure of parents for academic achievements, present educational and examination system, burden of home work, coaching etc.

**Coping Strategy:** Any effort or strategy made by an individual to eliminate or master the stressful situation so that his physical and psychological survival is ensured is called coping strategy.

**Adolescents:** It is the period of development and adjustment during the transitional period between childhood and adulthood. This period emerges from childhood and merges into adulthood. The students of 11th and 12th grade are taken as sample for this study.

**Personality:** Hall & Lindzey (1978) state that personality may be defined in terms of attributes or qualities, that are highly typical of an individual and is an important part of the overall impression created on others.

**Home Environment:** Home Environment stands for all those circumstances at home, which assert their influence on the child since conception to death. It is the environment where he/she learns how to talk, eat, wear cloths, cooperation, goodwill and social virtues etc.