5.0. Conclusion
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5.1 SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

The objective of the study is to examine the role of Test anxiety, Academic overload and Perceived Parenting on the Self-concept of the school children in Kolkata metropolis. In order to enable the researcher to delve into the problem a sample of 302 adolescents with average intelligence were taken from classes IX – XII, within the age range of 14-18 years from English medium schools of the urban population of Kolkata city. The tools used to measure the variables included TAI by Speilberger (1980), Perceived Parenting Scale by Bharadwaj et al (1998), Self-concept Questionnaire by R.K. Saraswat (1992) and an Academic Overload Questionnaire developed by the researcher. An intelligence test by Cattell (1973) was used to treat intelligence as a controlled variable.

The summary of major findings include:-

H :1 The mean Self-concept score of the school children in the age range 14-18 years is above average.

The results obtained from the study support the above statement.

Adolescence in modern societies is a longer phase with puberty coming earlier than in traditional societies. This is a period of breaking away from parental control, establishing more intimate relationships with peers, exploring romantic relationships and adult identity. The major task of adolescence is to re-evaluate who they are, and how their bodies and identities have changed. They strive to establish final independence from their families and others of their age to become the person they want to be.
Self-concept when seen as an emotional responsibility is an internal state or a desirable feeling like happiness. When an individual accomplishes something for himself, he feels good and happy about himself and consequently his self-esteem enhances. Likewise the participants in the present study reveal that they have above average self-concept, which means that they accept responsibility for their actions, take pride in their accomplishments, are willing to make risks and are capable of handling criticism. They seek the challenge and stimulation of demanding goals and can take command and control of their lives.

The concept of the self is seen to be strongly connected to a sense of competence and worthiness. The observations in relation to hypothesis 1 show that the school children of kolkata Metropolis are well-grounded in reality and have a balanced sense of worth and competence.

This could probably be because the targeted group seems to come from homes of educated and aware parents, who do not seem to distinguish between a girl and a boy child. Moreover they go to good schools, and mingle with peers of the same background who cater to the significant others in their lives. A positive feedback of these ‘significant others’ in the individuals life help in the formation of a strong self-concept.

**H:2 The mean Test Anxiety scores of school children in the age range 14-18 years is above average.**

The findings of the study shows that the Test anxiety scores of the participants are well within the average range, which implies that the findings have led to the rejection of hypothesis 2.
This is not in consonance with the popular belief that almost all the school age population undergo severe test anxiety. The result shows that there are exceptions as well. As the school children move through the educational system they experience a greater frequency of testing. Children become better judges of their own performance with age and receive a greater amount of feedback on their performance. There is a greater urge in attaining academic excellence at high school and at the university level. Comparisons of performance with peers become important at this stage, which only serves to increase Test anxiety with the increase in grade and age. The school children at this stage are more given to parental and other family pressures to succeed in academic spheres, thus suffering from increasing levels of Test anxiety. Children who understand the silver lining of the situation that, not all children in a class can excel experience an average amount of test anxiety, which often acts as a catalyst for a good result than as an obstacle for performance. Instead of hating tests or worrying about them they put all the energy into getting ready for them. At the same time it needs to be mentioned that the participants were all from so called good schools of the city, where the children came from parents of various educational and occupational backgrounds. The parents may have been able to make them understand that grade or score is probably not the true reflection of his/her knowledge and understanding of the subject. Coming from good schools their test anxiety is within the average range resulting possibly because of good study habit, effective test-taking skills and self-controlled relaxations as reflected in their response to AOQ. These weapons could have helped them to learn how to take tests in stride.
H:3 The mean Academic Overload scores of school children in the age range 14-18 years is above average.

It was initially assumed that the teenagers of today are academically overloaded with the deadline that they have to overcome of their school projects, assessment, tutorial classes and the various co-curricular activities that they have to live up to. The findings of our study have led to the rejection of the above assumption and hypothesis 3 at the same time. This implies that there is a significant section of the school children who are not all that academically overloaded with these various extra, out of school activities that they are engaged with. They are more than happy to get themselves involved in these various activities, as they use it as an outlet for the vent up emotions in a much more useful and creative way.

Since adolescents of today are much more successful in handling their stressful situations, they are more sure of themselves and confident enough to face the darker as well as the lighter side of life.

H: 4 The mean Perceived Parenting score of school children in the age range 14-18 years is above average.

Parents in the present study seem to be fairly open in their parenting style resulting in breaking the ice between their teenage son and daughter and be one of their most trusted companions. Such an attitude from the parental side helps the teenager to perceive their parenting as positive. The present study shows that the Perceived Parenting scores of the participants are above average, and therefore the study failed to reject hypothesis 4. Although this is the time of more attachment towards peers than parents. It is a fact that the form and quality of relationships
that develop with friends is an extension of the quality of relationships that has developed within the family.

The parents of the participants of the study are well educated and reside in a metropolitan city, which could be the reason for such a trend. In a Metropolitan city, the parents as well as the children are exposed to a number of varied circumstances, and the experiences of such are also varied. A parent therefore exercises control to the extent to which it is needed, and extends full support when allowing freedom too. The parents on the other hand are exposed to a lot of things and therefore do not set rigid standards unnecessarily. Such an atmosphere brings in a sense of comfort and high level of understanding in between the two resulting in above average Perceived Parenting score. This has probably also happened because of the fact that the global culture of a Metropolitan city and the education of the parents has helped them to assimilate such open minded thought process.

H0:5-H0:8 Adolescent boys and girls do not differ significantly in their mean Self-concept, Test Anxiety, Academic Overload and Perceived Parenting scores.

The study reveals the absence of any gender bias on the Mean scores of Self-concept, test anxiety, academic overload and Perceived parenting, which means that the findings of the study have failed to reject the H0:5-H0:8. The explanation behind this is that children normally think and feel about themselves the way they are made to feel and think from their childhood days. In this endeavour a lot depends upon how the 'significant others, in their lives think about them and interact with them. The social setting in the Metropolitan cities of India is based much more on equilibrium, which establishes an equal dominance of girls
and boys in many spheres during the early years of life. These days' women are seen to be working and earning no less than the men. As a result of which they are practically, financially and emotionally at par with the men. In an urban setting a girl child gets an equal opportunity regarding studies, exposure to games etc., than an adolescent boy. Although some marginal difference may exist between the two, but after statistical analysis the difference just vanishes.

The findings also make an important contribution to our existing knowledge about the developmental patterns of anxiety in school going adolescents. Gender has no impact on the level of Test anxiety experienced by the adolescents, may be because of the increasing exposure to the global culture prevailing in the Metros. As a result of this the coping mechanisms used by the girls of today are as effective as that of the boys. Today’s adolescents are more of self-managers, and therefore showed average Test anxiety levels. This is in spite of the fact that many studies showed girls to be more Test anxiety prone than boys.

For many years the overt and covert message from the society has been that, to be accepted one has to be an academic genius, and to be unique, one has to be more of the same. But in the last ten years, this concept has changed, as one can be seen to be successful even if one is not an engineer or doctor, but the time frame has become shorter. The youth of India today chase performance targets set by narrow definitions of success in academics or in society. These targets are so narrow that the adolescents view of their success is “all” or “none”. As a result of which the entire generation of adolescents (girls and boys) is demoralized and academically overloaded. But the study results contradict the above notion, showing that both adolescent’s girls and boys face more or less the same level of academic overload. This is in spite of the fact that discrimination between the male and the female child is still a nagging problem. But fortunately the parents of the
participants are aware and educated enough, who have tried to overcome the superstition. Living in a Metropolitan city has also helped them to provide the same facility and social setting to their child irrespective of the gender.

The research work also shows that the parenting styles practiced in the cities do not differ with the change in gender in the child. The logic behind is that if an adolescent boy is provided with good food, clothing, the adolescent girl is also provided with the same quality of good food and clothing. This shows that discrimination with respect to gender did not prevail in an urban cosmopolitan setting. As a result of this, prevailed equality of opportunity especially in education as well as in other spheres. Girls are no longer a cause of burden to the parents. The parents now first educate their girl child to their satisfaction, get a job and then think of getting them married and have children at a much later age than before.

**H0 9 :** The Self-concept scores of adolescent children has no significant relationship with their Test Anxiety scores

**H0 10 :** The Self-concept scores of adolescent children has no significant relation with their Academic Overload scores.

**H0 11 :** The Self-concept scores of adolescent children have no significant relation with their Perceived Parenting scores

The findings of the study have led to the rejection of Null hypotheses no.H0 9-H0 11.

The current study reflects an inverse relationship between the adolescents Self-concept and the level of Academic Overload and Test Anxiety experienced by them, and a positive relation with their Perceived Parenting scores. This implies that the stronger the Self-esteem of the adolescents
the decreased levels of Academic Overload and Test Anxiety is experienced by the adolescents in the study, and the higher the Perceived Parenting scores the stronger are the Self-concept in the adolescents.

An important component of self-concept is self-esteem- 'Who I am', which represents how we feel about or value ourselves. The psychological well-being and the quality of adjustment of an adolescent is the result of his/her parental relationships. The quality and quantity of communication between parents and children have been thought to be influenced by many factors. One of the most well-defined and well researched of which is the parenting style. The participants of the study had high self-concept and perceived parenting scores, which could mean, that good or positive parenting helped the adolescents to communicate effectively, take control of their lives, and in doing so, enhanced their self-concepts.

The study presented a negative correlation with the level of self-concept and test anxiety experienced by the participants. This is so because positive perceived parenting lead to more advanced reasoning performance which comes with high self-concept and subsequently lower academic overload and test anxiety levels. Another explanation that comes here is that self-esteem protects the individual from distress, it helps the person to bounce back in times of high stressful or academically overloaded situations. This is only possible, when the individual figures out ways to overcome the problem instead of avoiding them.

Thus it seems, good parenting is the foundation for a house made of strong personality with a roof of high self-concept, that protects the individual from Tsunamis and Hurricanes in the form of anxiety and stress. Self-concept helps the person to deal with any stressful or anxious state, be it academic overload or test
anxiety with the help of the person's coping mechanism, which are unique to the person concerned as problematic situations differ from person to person.

H0 12: The effect of test anxiety, academic overload and perceived parenting taken together has no significant impact on the self-concept of the adolescents.

Multiple correlation of the sample scores taken as a whole states that R = .22. This means that 22% of the variance in self-concept is accounted for by whatever is measured by the test anxiety, academic overload and perceived parenting questionnaires taken together, eliminating from double consideration things that they have in common.

The remaining % of the variance which is 86% (1-R) is still to be unaccounted for. Since the coefficients of multiple determination or r is composed of the three components, and since each component pertains to only one of the independent variables, it is permissible to take each component as indicating the contribution of independent variable to the total perceived variance of Y or self-concept.

This being the case the variable (X1) indicates the contribution to the self-concept scores by test anxiety questionnaire, the second variable (X2) indicates contribution of the academic overload tests and the third variable (X3) of the contribution made by the perceived parenting questionnaire. However, this cannot be concluded as the only factors leading to the variance, as there may be some other factors, which have not been eliminated from consideration. Regression analysis of the total sample shows that perceived parenting is the only variable making a 4% significant contribution to the level of self-concept. Regression
analysis of the sample gender wise revealed the same picture, with perceived parenting scores for males and females contributing to the self-concept variation by 2.9% or 3% and 4.8% or 5% respectively. The sample was further broken down grade wise and the regression analysis again yielded consistent results. Perceived parenting scores of classes X, XI and XII contributed to the self-concept scores with 5%, 4% and 6% respectively. (All three with a significant P value). While in classes IX Test anxiety was found to be significantly affecting the self-concept level by 7% in the adolescents.

**H0 13.1- 13.2 :** Multiple correlation results have led to the rejection of hypotheses 13.1 and 13.2. The same picture as that of hypotheses 12 is seen to be prevalent in adolescent girls as well as in adolescent boys across the four grades. The % of variance effecting the Self-concept of the adolescent boys is between 48% -58% and that of adolescent girls is between 65%-82% respectively. This means that the collective effect of Test Anxiety, Academic Overload and perceived Parenting on the Self-concept of the adolescent goes up to 82% in girls, which is higher than adolescent boys. A possible cause could be that girls give more weightage to interpersonal and social relationships. While the boys at this stage give more importance to outdoor activities. The case of this high variance in girls when considered collectively could be understood with the help of some more research. Perhaps some qualitative case study approach could help to explain the nature of the result.

**H0 14.1-14.4 :** Findings obtained from the present work have led to the rejection of the above hypotheses, as the average collective effect of all the independent variables on the dependant variable have been seen to be about 55.5%. This shows that a moderate and substantial relationship prevails.
5.2 DISCUSSION IN THE CONTEXT OF OTHER RESEARCH FINDINGS

India is a vast country with a huge population. About 1/5th of India’s population is in the adolescent age group of 10-19 years. It is estimated that there are almost 200 million adolescents in India (ages 15-24). This is expected to grow reaching over 214 million by 2020. (Census, 2001).

It is evident that technological advances, modernization and socio-cultural changes have brought significant changes in the conventional roles of adults. These have been so rapid that most parents find themselves at a loss to adapt to them. Today’s parents are faced with a lot of challenges, such as how to monitor the child’s studies; how to motivate the child to excel in academics so that he can make an elite career; how much freedom to be given etc. There are quite a number of youngsters who may develop a gnawing frustration that might blaze into aggression, insecurity, loneliness, and a failing of being at the brink of crisis. Some parents may be at a loss to guide them as they themselves have no experience in facing such problems. Although the role of biological factors in the overall development of the individual cannot be denied, one must accept the role of social stressors and the importance of positive parenting in this area. At the same time there are many adolescents who are able to face the challenges successfully and pass on smoothly into adulthood. (Sharma, 2006).

Self-concept is considered as the key-stone of personality. A positive self-concept has a marketable value in a complex society and is highly prized and sought after. The development of harmonious personality of the individual depends to a large extent on the proper training in childhood. Emotional and social development is a very important aspect on which depends the future and career of
the child. Personality has been regarded as a practical force in determining success or failure in life. Nowadays adolescents attitude towards high school is more favourable. By knowing the value of education adolescence is willing to make sacrifice in leisure time to earn good grades. High achievement as a status symbol has a profound influence on the self-concept of the individual, but for performing at the level of excellence, healthy emotional climate is essential. (Suresh & Jacob, 2002).

While doing so some teens become overloaded with stress. Inadequately managed stress can lead to anxiety. There arises a situation of 'fight', 'flight' or 'freeze'. The same mechanism that turns on the stress response, can turn it off. (AACAP, 1997). But are all students susceptible to stress? No. The findings of the present study indicate that not all students are susceptible to stress. Stress is synonymous with human existence and has been there at every stage of life, be it personal, family, social or academic. Challenges are a part of the charm of life itself. Making stress particular to the examination system is wrong. It is just a stepping stone in life, where a child is brought to confront his own testimony about performance. (NDTV, 2006). Stress is not pervasive, but a part of everyday life's testing period. Researchers have also opined that a certain amount of optimal amount of stress is needed in life as it acts as an arousal to perform better, provided that stress is distributed evenly across the academic life. Parents have to identify and learn to accept the changes in their wards life.

The overall findings of the study indicate that the mean self-concept and perceived parenting scores of adolescent school children in the sample group with age range of 11 to 14 years have been found to be above average. It is believed and proved that adolescents with high self-esteem would therefore have a collection of positive traits and attributes, as well as favourable 'goodness of fit'
between themselves and their family members. The level of adolescents' self-esteem is like a product of the family's influence as well as the adolescents' characteristics and behaviours. (Amato, 1989; Bogenschneider et al, 1997; Margolin et al, 1998). Parental control is reflected in such tasks as to how many decisions the parent makes for the child, amount of supervision they implement, and the extent and severity of the rules that they bestow on the child. (Amato, 1989). When parenting styles reflect a rigid authoritarian manner, adolescents tend to reject parental authority. (McDonald et al, 1988). (Amato, 1989) found that overprotectiveness and restrictiveness was associated with low self-esteem in adolescents. Conversely, gradual reduction of parental control, maintenance of close parent/adolescent relationships, and continued guidance maximize the adolescents' independence and positive self-esteem. (Amato, 1989). Thus the above studies suggest that adolescents with high self-esteem feel good about themselves, because family members regard them in a positive manner.

The results thus obtained from the Fig: 28 on page 143 tells us that the perceived parenting scores of the adolescent is the most highest in classes XI and XII or during mid to late adolescence, while it is at its lowest in early to mid adolescence or in class IX and X.

We are aware that adolescence is seen as a developmental phase where parental relationships become less salient or even inhibitory as the individuals orient themselves to the world of their friends and peers. (Blos, 1979; Coleman, 1961; Douval & Adelson, 1966). At the same time cognitive models argue that the form and quality of relationships that develop with peers is an extension of the form and quality of relationship that has developed within the family. (Bowlby, 1969/1997; Offer et al, 1981; Sullivan, 1953). And the quality of peer attachments is just as important as quality parental relationships to adolescent
psychological health and adjustment. (Armsden & Greenberg, 1987; Batgor & Leadbetter, 1994; Goosens et al, 1998). But it is still widely agreed that parental relationships still pay a relatively important role in the psychological well-being of adolescents. (Wilkinson, 2004). The individuation process is a cooperative endeavour between the parent and child that involves the child asserting and parents granting independence, while both maintain their connection. (O'Koon, 1997). During early to mid adolescence, they become peer focused, with friends becoming preferable disclosure targets. (Guerrero & Afifi, 1995), parents remain an important source of emotional support. Although adolescents choose to spend the majority of their time with peers, parental availability and support provide security as adolescents construct their identities. (Weiss & Schwarz, 1996). It so seems that parent-adolescent relationship serves as a launching pad for adolescents to explore and develop a sense of self. (Sartor & Youniss, 2002). This attachment with parents continues through late adolescence, as they re-define themselves within the family context. (O'Koon, 1997). Probably this is the reason why the level of perceived parenting increased in mid to late adolescence.

The findings of the study from Fig:25 on page 140 are consistent with the results of Syngollitou & Daskalou, (2004) and Harter, (1992); Harter & Monsour, (1992) which have shown that early adolescence is the period during which the teenagers possess the most positive self-evaluations, concerning the domain factors and global self-worth. Middle adolescence is the period with more negative self-perceptions and lower self-worth. This decline is combined with increased negative affective mood referring to the present moment and it is in accordance with relevant research findings which reinforce the existence of conflict during middle adolescence, caused by opposing attributes in self-portrait. (Harter, 1992; Harter & monsour, 1992) accompanied by distress in the form of negative affective reactions or confusion. Findings of several studies also revealed
that there is an increase in the mean levels of self-concept especially in late adolescence and early adulthood. (O’Malley & Bachman, 1983).

The findings of the present study confirms the above observation, where the adolescent boys and girls within the age group of 14-18 years was not found to be either test anxious or academically overloaded, as they were well within the average limit. Thus the results of the study rejected the hypotheses no. 2 & 3. It implies that the mean scores in Test Anxiety and Academic Overload scores of school children in the selected sample are within the average range. This has been probably so because the schools that have been considered for the study come under average to good schools, who are capable of instilling effective test taking skills, time management skills and good study techniques in their students. Moreover, in this atmosphere of continuous and constant assessments and evaluations, they are more than used to taking tests, being a part and parcel of their everyday life, as a result of which they are more or less prepared with their regular studies, follow instructions in class properly leading to an insignificant level of test anxiety and academic overload. Despite all the pressures and anxieties they are confident about their future and have sufficient time to achieve what they want. This finding is completely in agreement with a few previous research studies. (Balakrishnan & Narasimha, 1998; Ainslie et al, 1996).

**Fig : 26 on page** 141 shows us a more detailed picture where we see that with the increase in grade there is an increase in the Test Anxiety of the participants of the study. As children move through the educational system they typically experience a greater frequency of testing. With this come greater expectations and pressures from parents and schools to perform well, expectations that may become internalized in the child. Children also become better judges of their own performance with age and receive a greater amount of feedback of their
performance. Comparisons of performance with peers will also become important. (Nicholls, 1976). Since everybody cannot excel, competition with others in the class can only serve to increase anxiety revolving around tests. The system of publicly evaluating schools through test results can only serve to further increase the pressure on teachers, pressures which children are likely to be immune to. (Hill, 1972; Sarason et al, 1960). Thus Test Anxiety tends to increase with age (Mc Donald, 2001) and therefore with school grade also. Tests and evaluating situations are a considerable source of concern and anxiety to a significant proportion of the school children.

Fig:27 on page 142 gives us a vivid picture of the amount of academic overload experienced by the adolescents in grades IX, X, XI and XII. The X and XII graders experience the maximum academic overload for the simple reason that these two classes are the final classes for the secondary and higher secondary levels, after the completion of which they need to sit for their Board Examinations. It is at the same time that they have to get themselves prepared for the entrance tests of various professional, technical, vocational colleges and the regular arts and science colleges as well. It is therefore but natural that the adolescents of these grades will feel overloaded than their juniors in class IX and XI. Students perceived that they get stressed due to pressure from competition, meeting deadlines and interpersonal relationships. (Misra, et al, 2000). Students may experience less stress, when they are detached from this environment, thus allowing them to experience leisure time at a more satisfactory level. (Misra, et al, 2000). Thus the study helps to explain the research finding of the low level of academic overload in classes IX and XI respectively.

The study reveals no significant difference in the self-concept of adolescent boys and girls within the age group of 14-18 years. This is in
confirmation with several studies (Kale, 1982; Brower, 1991; Brower, 1993; Bharati, 1984; Baldwin & Hoffman, 2002). Some also opined that differences between adolescent boys and girls self-concept is 'ambiguous, inconsistent and methodologically inconsistent.' (Grain, 1996). Moreover the self-concept of the adolescents was found to be very high, irrespective of gender and age (Block & Robbins, 1993). It has been seen that self-esteem is not constant over time, it is dynamic and changes depending on one's success and expectations. (McCandless, 1970). Negative life events is said to decrease the level of self-esteem in the adolescents. (Youngs & Rathge, 1990). If the self-images change at all during adolescence, the direction of these changes is more likely to be positive than negative. (Marsh, 1989; O'Malley & Bachman, 1983; Savin-Williams & Demo, 1984). Probably this could have been the reason of the high level of self-concept enjoyed by the adolescents as perhaps they have still not faced any significant negative events in their life span so far to demean themselves. This is true for only those who have come across many life changes all at once. (Simmons et al, 1987). At the same time it needs to be mentioned here that parental influence remains extensive in adolescence. (Steinberg et al, 1994). Self-concept is one's perception of the self and this stems from how one perceives the general social environment, particularly in relation to the significant others in the individual's life. (Shavelson et al, 1976). As a result of this the higher the perceived level of parental warmth, the higher the self-concept. (Parish & McClusky, 1992). This is in support of the findings of the study, where both the adolescent girls and boys showed above average level of self-concept.

The findings of the study confirmed the statement that gender does not have a significant impact in the Test Anxiety and Academic Overload scores of adolescent children in the age range of 14-18 years. The findings of the present study are in support of a previous findings (Misra, 2002) where no statistically
significant difference was found in gender and age for academic stress and anxiety. Widenfeld et al (1990) is of the view that gender is not a major determinant of anxiety level, but ethnicity is. Balakrishnan & Narasinha (1998) has found that despite all the pressures and anxieties, a majority of the adolescents were confident about their future and had sufficient freedom to achieve what they wanted. No difference amongst the adolescent boys and girls in this respect was reported. Although in some studies (Abouserie, 1994) females reported high levels of test anxiety and academic stress (Abouserie, 1994) than their male counterparts. At this juncture it must be pointed out that the adolescents under study showed high self-concept. It has been found that students with high self-esteem are less stressed than those with low self-esteem. If self-esteem has an influence on the stress and anxiety levels, then this may be due to the fostering of social resources and effective coping when esteem is high. (Abouserie, 1994). It has also been seen that students flourish with unconditional love and encouragement as such an atmosphere brings out the best in them. One should learn to relax, study hard, not panic and do well. The stress should be given on preparation and not on pressure. (Anupama, 2004).

Although no significant difference was found in gender with respect to academic stress, females reported to display more reaction to stressors than did the male counterparts. The reported stress by females was mostly self-imposed, which indicated that they like to compete, be noticed, loved and worry for others, sometimes seeking perfect solutions that lead to higher anxiety and stress. Possibly they attempt to do several activities such as achieve academic excellence, take care of families and work at one time. (Misra, McKean, West & Russo, 2000).

Copeland & Hess (1995) says that the means by which adolescents cope with life stressors are gender specific. Females tend to use social support and
emotional expression, while males generally employ problem-focused strategies. Inspite of the above findings and many more, Compas (1987) is of the view that understanding how adolescents cope with stress is an area that is too little understood.

No significant difference was found in the mean perceived parenting scores of adolescent boys and girls. This is inspite of the fact that India has traditionally been a male dominated society, where girls are discriminated and a strong preference for son prevails. A lot is said and done about this by the government of India. But with the world "shrinking" by virtue of new technologies, bringing people from far flung corners of the globe into close contact with each other, has been most instrumental in changing the attitude of a large number of the Indian people that has taken a shift, especially in the metropolis and cities. A few cases have also come into limelight in rural India also. A foot in the door of globalization has opened the way for changes in behaviour and beliefs. (Arnett, 2002). Parents in the cosmopolitan cities view both their girl and the boy child as equal and strive to achieve the expectations of their wards. Each one is taught to be self-sufficient. This is why the adolescents of either gender found no differences in their view of parenting.

Considerable support emerged from the current study for the hypotheses 9 to 11, leading to the rejection of Ho9 to Ho11.

Ho9: There prevails an inverse relationship between self-concept and test anxiety of the adolescents under study. This corroborates to some previous findings (Bijstra et al, 1994; Gholamreza, 1975). Children with high self-esteem are fundamentally satisfied with the type of person they are; and can recognize their strong and acknowledge weak points. They feel positive about themselves
and the competencies they display. (Shaffer, 1988). People who believe that they can manage and control their potential threats experience low levels of anxiety. To exercise control over this anxiety not only requires the development of behavioural coping efficacy but also the perceived self-efficacy to turn them off. (Schwarzer & Wicklune, 1991) Thus adolescents with high self-concept are better able to handle test anxiety and use it as a booster than allow it to act as a blockage for good grades. They have greater poise, self-confidence, self-assurance, are emotionally more stable and more independent. For these individuals the test anxiety is low, helping them to perform well in their studies.

**Ho10**: An inverse relationship is also seen to exist between self-concept and the level of academic overload experienced by the adolescents considered for the study. This is in line with the findings of Abouserie (1994), who showed that positive self-esteem enhances one's ability to cope effectively with stress because individuals with poor coping mechanisms are more vulnerable to environmental stressors. Vulnerable self-esteem precedes the onset of stress. Experience of stress further lowers self-esteem. (Bagley & Young, 1990).

**Ho11**: A positive relation has been found to exist between perceived parenting and the self-concept level of the adolescents. The self-concept is positively related to the perceived parenting of the adolescents, which is in conformity with the findings that self-concept vary directly with their perceived level of parental warmth. (Parish & McClusky, 1992; Gecas, 1971, 1972; Growe, 1980; Graybill, 1978; Hoelter & Harper, 1987; Holmbeck & Hill, 1986).

As a whole the research results indicate positive correlation, definite but small relationship was found in the effect of test anxiety, academic overload and perceived parenting on the self-concept of the adolescents. This is so, as
taking tests has been a way of life for many students. The adolescents are fully aware that the purpose of testing is to provide an accurate assessment of their previous learning, with an ultimate purpose of providing information necessary for educational intervention. The adolescent of today are more organized and do not leave their studies pending. Together with this they have learnt the art of time management, in order to keep up with their out of school activities like (swimming, drawing etc) together with their studies, which do not leave them overloaded, infact they enjoy what they do. To add with this the adolescents coming from authoritative patenting benefit the most. (Lamborn et al,1991). Highly approving parents foster emotionally mature adolescents. (Sharma & Vaid,2005) Parents who are warm and responsive, without harsh discipline stimulated the adolescents to act upon their own to have more satisfying level of friendships. (Engels et al,2002). Moreover the parents of the samples used in the study had some social position or the other. It was found that the higher the social position of the parents, the more likely he/she showed characteristics of self-direction. (Gerris et al,1997).Thus a good relationship with their parents brought about a higher level of self-concept in the adolescents considered for the study. (Chung and Lau,1985).

The same trend is visible when the collective impact of Test Anxiety, Academic Overload and Perceived Parenting on the Self-concept is observed gender wise and grade wise. Therefore the study failed to reject hypotheses no 13.1 and 13.2 as well as 14.1- 14.4. The collective impact is more pronounced here, due to the homogeneity of the samples, reflecting a substantial but small positive relationship.

Erickson (1963) argued that young adolescents are likely to experience at least some erosion of self-esteem as they begin to seek a stable identity. 12 to 15
year olds face an identity crisis. However, Erickson believed that adolescents would eventually view themselves in more positive terms if they achieved a stable identity with which to approach the tasks of young adulthood. It must be noted that young 12 to 15 year old adolescents show no greater fluctuations in mood than the typical grade school child. (Larson & Lampman- Pertraita,1989), and most 11 to 14 year old show no appreciable decline in self-esteem. (Nottelmann,1987; Peterson,1988). In fact if self-images change at all during adolescence, the direction of these changes is more likely to be positive than negative. (Marsh,1989; O’Malley & Bachman,1983; Saven – William & demo,1984). So the portrayal of adolescence as a period of personal stress and eroding self-esteem seems to characterize only a small minority of young people-primarily those who experience many life changes all at one. (Simmons et al,1987).

For the minority of adolescence who suffer a serious erosion in self-esteem, the task of coping with present realities and future possibilities may indeed represent a crisis- one that even trigger suicidal thoughts. But most adolescents see the process of identity as not an aversive, disruptive crisis, but as a normal and necessary part of life. (Shaffer, 1988).

India’s fast changing economy and social realities have placed this critical age group at cultural cross roads of traditional socialization and non-traditional cultural and economic imagery. The exposure to different and at times alien, cultural patterns and models, within a traditional environment puts the adolescent group in a unique situation that requires special skills to guide and manage their growth and development. This is especially true of out of school adolescents. (Bezbaruah,2000).
Good parenting shows when their children is aware of the realities of life, i.e. one needs to be toughened to face success and failure with great courage and optimism. And that poor performance in an examination is not the end of the road for them. One must be able to face the results. And this is brought about by a joint effort of parents, teachers, educationists and the media. (Prem Kumar, June, 2002).

Hopefully our children will develop the ability to face the changes and challenges that life has in store for them, and rediscover the joys of learning and make it a life-long pursuit, and not examination-performance oriented. This is the reason why Socrates some 2500 years ago said that education is the kindling of a flame, and not the filling of a vessel. A mantra that still holds good in the 21st century.
5.3 IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

The findings of the present study reveal certain important aspects that are crucial for the positive well-being of the society in general and the adolescents and their families in particular.

(1) The study provides evidence for the view that the individuation process involves a delicate balance between freedom from and relatedness to parents. The desire for connection is not overridden by the desire to individuate. (Youniss & Smoller, 1985). Adolescence is a period of exploration, which cannot take place without, the establishment of a secure base to which adolescence can return. (Sartor & Youniss, summer, 2002). Thus the importance is given for the parents to develop strong and healthy relationships with their adolescent child, as well as the adolescent must also make an attempt to understand the view point of their parent.

(2) The work aims to help the teachers and the parents to be aware of the positive functions peer relationships can play in academic achievement, emotional well-being and encourage the development of student networks based upon involvement in positive interests, such as academics, community service, athletics, civic engagement and cultural activities.

(3) The study highlights the effects of positive parenting on the self-image of the adolescents.

(4) The findings of the study puts into limelight the actual status of the various newspaper reports of the school students committing suicide due to Test Anxiety and Academic Overload before the exams and their inability to face the results of the board exams. The results thus obtained shows that the
problem of adolescent suicide due to exam stress is still insignificant in the general population of India. One need not panic as it still has not gone too far. Yet, one must start thinking and act fast to undertake measures for prevention in terms of effective techniques in parenting and stress management.

(5) It also provides scope for effective guidance and counseling. Shows the urgency to start Guidance and counseling centers in almost every school, of not only Kolkata but also throughout the country. Although some schools do have such centers, but there are many more who still do not have the infrastructure to provide such.

(6) The study lays emphasis on preserving the academic environment in educational institutions than changing the established pattern and conventions of the educational system. This is because it is high time for the academicians for some introspection and examine carefully whether the ongoing changes in the educational system are really going to help the teacher and students. The ability, strength and basic approach of teachers are also put to test when their students take the examination outside their supervision. (Nirmal Kumar, 2005).
5.4 LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

In spite of all the precautionary measures taken while conducting the work, the researcher identified several limitations during different stages of data analysis and interpretation. These are:

- For the sake of parsimony, intelligence was considered as a control variable. But more sophisticated and detailed analysis could have been obtained if the impact of intelligence could be interwoven with the research design.

- Initially it was hypothesized that students of good schools may experience higher levels of Test Anxiety and Academic Overload. But in doing so the researcher obtained a very typical set of participants with more or less homogeneity in the levels of the dependant and independent variables.
5.5 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The present study has helped to give birth to a number of interesting research problem in the same field. They are as follows :-

(1) A longitudinal study examining the possible changes in the development of the self-concept in the life of the adolescents from early to middle and late adolescence would be a valuable contribution.

(2) Further research may explore the changes in the self-concept growth curve from the above three stages of adolescence in order to eradicate the discrepancy of the change in self-concept of the individual.

(3) While undergoing extensive literature survey for the present study it was found that Academic stress or Academic Overload in school students is highly under-researched in India. An attempt ought to be made to throw some light into it.

(4) The same study could be conducted by comparing urban and rural adolescent with English and non-English speaking adolescents.

(5) The role of the family structure is seen to influence the self-concept of the individual. Therefore a study of the Test Anxiety, Academic Overload and Perceived Parenting and its effect on self-concept of the adolescents coming from single parents(due to death), divorced parents and foster parents may be explored.