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2.1 THE APPROACH OF THE STUDY

Individual development is inextricably bound up with the environment in which it is embedded. Both the adolescent and the environment are changing along interrelated paths and by interrelated processes. The current study draws on a history of theoretical writings in psychology that emphasize the complexity of individual development. Whether from a psychoanalytic, child development, or neurochemical perspective, behavioral development is viewed as a process involving multiple influences.

In 1931, Lewin’s formulation of behavior as a function of person and environment eloquently emphasized the interaction of systems within the person and within the environment, and the embeddedness of individual behavior in multiple and overlapping contexts. Barker (1968) carried Lewinian theory into “ecological psychology”, drawing attention to how much adolescent behavior was studied without reference to the contexts in which it occurred. Bronfenbrenner (1979) furthered this awareness by developing a conceptual scheme for systematically considering contextual information at multiple levels. In 1951, Sears advocated the mother-adolescent dyad as a unit of analysis to replace sole reliance on data in which the adolescent is viewed in isolation. In 1968, Bell argued for consideration of the mutual, bi-directional adolescent-parent influences on the behavior of both. Sameroff and Chandler (1975), Cairns (1986), Cicchetti and Aber (1986), and Rutter (1989), among others, have stressed multiple interactional processes between adolescent and environment. Hinde (1979) introduced more complexity by focusing on the importance of networks of relationships influencing individual behavior. Magnusson and Bergman (1988) concisely summarizes these orientations:

“Development is regarded as a process in which cognitive-affective and biological factors in the individual and distal and proximal factors in the environment are involved in a constant reciprocal interaction”.

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These formulations provide a challenging theoretical-conceptual framework for the present study. The aim of the present study is to capture the person-environment interdependencies, for achieving a comprehensive understanding of sexual behavior in adolescence.

With this perspective in mind, the present investigation approaches the problem from two standpoints: (1) the identification of factors attributable to the environment in which the adolescent develops and (2) the identification of correlates/antecedents attributable to the adolescent. Both of these kinds of variables are based on the contextual parameters specific to the population of the present study. The selection of the variables for the study is based on issues related to primacy and potency of the variables, practicability of the study, and paucity of research attempts using the particular variables.

In the next section, the rationale for the selection of the variables of the study and a review of relevant literature are presented. The variables are classified as falling under different parameters.

2.2 GENDER DIFFERENCE IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

When children reach puberty, gender differences become increasingly important. Everywhere society continues to have different expectations about boys’ and girls’ sexual roles and relationships. Girls face double standards which boys do not. Both face risks, but for girls they are greater. Once a young woman is capable of having children, her mobility and opportunities may be restricted as her family fears she may be sexually victimized or have sexual intercourse that would bring dishonor to the family. Some cultures believe that women have sexual powers that seduce and lead men astray; these cultures impose social restraints on girls and young women through seclusion or other limitations.
Explanations for the gender difference in sexual behavior derive from a wide range of theoretical perspectives: evolutionary psychology (Wilson & Daly, 1993), societal structure and associate patterns of family interaction (Grasmick, Hagan, Blackwe ll, & Arneklev, 1996), social roles (Berger, 1989; Eagly, 1987); feminist theory (Simpson, 1989), and biosocial or personality approaches (Udry, 1994; Zucker man, 1991). Arguing for differences on both counts, Chesney-Lind (1989) charges the andocentric focus of crime and delinquency research, blinding investigators to gender differences in patterns of delinquent behaviors, reasons for engaging in these behaviors, and judicial system responses to status offenses, disproportionately targeting women. She joins many others (e.g., Daly, 1998; Smart, 1976) in calling for new and distinct approaches to the study of gender differences in deviant behaviors. Research findings such as those of Robbins (1989), showing the consequences of substance abuse to be more inwardly directed for women and outwardly directed for men, support this gender differentiated `styles of deviance ’ perspective (Horowitz & White , 1987; Tibbetts & Herz, 1996).

A more complex picture is portrayed by the findings of both Heimer (1996) and Bartusch and Matsueda (1996), who utilized longitudinal data from the National Youth Survey (Elliott, Huizinga, & Menard, 1989) to test predictions from an interactionist theory of delinquency. Their findings supported the gene reality of basic processes but showed gender differences in the magnitudes of certain effects and in specific mechanisms. For example, parental labeling and rejected appraisals as a rule violator relate more strongly to male than to female behavior (Bartusch & Matsueda, 1996), while perceptions of gender role and anticipated disapproval of friends are more important for female (Heimer, 1996).

The present study focus on the question: Are the same or different factors associated with female and male adolescent sexual behavior? The literature suggests that the answer to this question will depend in part upon the nature of the predictor variables being considered.
The identification of gender-differentiated processes requires sensitivity to gender issues in the research questions and selection of factors to be considered in the research. The emphasis, like that of Tibbetts and Gender and Sexual Risk 315 Herz (1995), is on concurrent, proximal correlate of adolescent attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors rather than on more distal family and societal processes. Target factors relevant to female’s versus male’s attitudes and orientations to sexual behavior as well as factors that have been strongly implicated in adolescent risk taking have received little attention in gender-oriented research.

### 2.2.1 Review of empirical research

Various studies such as Delamater, (1987); Hynie, Lydon, Cote, & Wiener, (1998); Leigh, (1989); Lottes, (1993); Moore & Rosenthal, (1998); Murstein & Tuerkheimer, (1998) reported that when asked about motivations for sex, male adolescents are more likely to give reasons associated with physical pleasure, whereas female adolescents emphasize emotional and relational reasons. Studies of Galligan & Terry, (1993) and Moore & Rosenthal, (1998) reported that romantic ideals interfere with safe sexual practices, perhaps somewhat more for female adolescents than for male adolescents Of the six love styles proposed by Lee (1973) Andope, rationalized by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986; Hendrick, Hendrick, Foote, & Slapion-Foote, 1984). According to the study of Hendrick & Hendrick, (1987), game-playing love is more often endorsed by male adolescents and is strongly positively correlated with permissive sexual attitudes, with the belief that the purpose of sex is pleasure, and with number of lifetime partners.

Sexual behavior also may be riskier for female adolescents than for male adolescents in terms of its consequences. The lives of female adolescents, more so than male adolescents, are affected by unwanted pregnancies and the impact these may have upon future educational opportunities and career paths (Anderson et al., 1993). Female adolescents may be more

The double standard with regard to sexual behavior has diminished since the 1960s (Bishop & Lipsitz, 1991; Lottes et al., 1993) but has by no means vanished. Various studies such as Laumann, Gagnon, Michae l, & Michae ls, 1994; Murstein & Mercy, 1994; Lotte s, 1993; Olive r & Hyde, 1993; Poppe n, 1995, reported that Incidence rates and approval of premarital sexual behavior and of many sexual risk practices continue to be higher for male adolescents than for female as does the rate of other risk behaviors such as delinquency and, to a lesser extent, alcohol and drug use (Maguire & Pastore , 1997; Maxim & Keane , 1992) . Broad-spectrum theories, such as Social Role Theory (Eagly, 1987), predict these average gender differences (Oliver & Hyde, 1993) but do not speak to gender differences in relationships with other variables. The nature of these differences is not clearly predictable from the literature and constituted the main research question of the present study.

It was reported by various studies that girls also have significantly higher scores on symptom measures like the Child Behaviors Check List, indicating that they have higher levels of psychopathology and behavior problems than boys (Connor et al. 2004; Friman 2000; Handwerk et al. 2006; Hussey and Guo 2002). Dishion (2000); Granic and Patterson (2006) reported that when rejected by pro social peers, aggressive girls tend to associate with antisocial peers who will accept them and share with them deviant attitudes and behaviors. Only a few studies have explicitly addressed the relationship between gender and maladjustment in youngsters. However, research on gender differences in aggressive and antisocial behavior has begun to document that aggressive and antisocial girls tend to experience different problems than their male counterparts (Connor 2002; Moretti et al. 2004; Pepler et al. 2005; Putallaz and Bierman 2004; Silverthorn and Frick 1999). In a model that
specifically addresses gender differences in aggressive behavior, Crick (1997; Crick and Dodge 1994) proposes that particular combinations of gender and aggression are related to unique combinations of psychological dysfunction.

Israel M. Schwartz (1999) compared the Sexual Activity between Males and Females Prior to Coital Initiation. The study was conducted among volunteer sample of 311 students (120 male and 191 female) and found that both males and females reported considerable pre-coital sexual experience. Although males reported more frequent activity than females on all items of assessment, the difference between groups, with the exception of masturbation, was not significant. The majority of both males and females reported at least one experience, and a sizable minority reported considerably more experience, with cunnilingus and fellatio, risk behaviors for the transmission of STDs, prior to their first coitus.

Janet F. Wang, Patricia S. Simoni, Ying Wu, Christine Banvard (2008) reported a cross-sectional survey which examined the association between attitudes and female adolescents’ sexually risky behaviors. A sample of 159 subjects, aged 14 – 20 from three high schools in West Virginia participated in the study. The results indicate that 60.3% (n = 96) reported having had sexual intercourse and, of this sexually active group, 60.4% (n = 58) stated that they had sex the first time at age 15 or younger. Fifty-five percents (n = 88) reported at least one of the following behaviors: (1) sexual initiation at age 15 or younger, (2) frequent sexual intercourse last month, (3) multiple sex partners, (4) unprotected sex during last sex, and (5) had sex with drug or alcohol.

Nadia Garnefski and Ellen Arends (1998) studied differences between male and female victims of sexual abuse and found that both sexually abused boys and girls reported significantly more emotional problems, behavioral problems, suicidal thoughts and suicide attempts than their non-abused counterparts. The results also indicated that the experience of sexual abuse carried far more consequences for boys than for girls regarding the use of
alcohol, aggressive/criminal behavior, use of drugs, and the amount of truancy, as well as regarding suicidal thoughts and behavior.

Hines, D. (2007) studied the predictors of sexual coercion against male and female among university students. Information was gathered from the International Dating Violence Study where questionnaires were completed by students in a classroom setting at various universities around the world. The findings suggest that adversarial beliefs about romantic relationships were associated with sexual coercion for both genders. The sites with high rates of hostile beliefs about the opposite sex observed a higher number of reports of verbal and forced sexual coercion victimization.

Prospero, M. (2006) reported that Boys were more likely than girls to expect aggressive behavior responses in dating situations even if behavior triggering the aggression was not perceived as inappropriate. To develop the dating scenarios and responses, the investigator used focus groups made up of youth from the same population as those to whom the survey was given.

Santana, M., Raj, A., Decker, M., La Marche, A., & Silverman, J. (2006) reported that men who believed in traditional male gender roles were more likely to have committed intimate partner violence within the past year than men with less traditional beliefs. However, traditional beliefs were not associated with having multiple female partners, forcing unprotected sex, or engaging in unprotected anal sex. Levels of violence were the same regardless of race/ethnicity, country of origin, or acculturation.

Michael W. Wiederman (2005), reports that in Western cultures, scripts for sexual activity are markedly different for males and females. Social scripting theory points to the fact that much of sexual behavior seems to follow a script. Similar to scripts that stage actors
use to guide their behavior, social scripts instruct members of a society as to appropriate behavior and the meanings to attach to certain behaviors.

L. Kris Gowen, S. Shirley Feldman, Rafael Diaz, and Donnovan Somera Yisrael (2004) studied the sexual behaviors and attitudes of female adolescents as a function of age of boyfriend. Boyfriend’s age was dichotomized: similar-aged was defined as within 2 years of the girls’ age; older aged was 3 or more years older than the girl. A school-based, ethnically diverse sample of 9th-grade girls who had been in a serious romantic relationship was surveyed on 5 dimensions of sexual attitudes, 2 classes of sexual motives, 7 normative sexual behaviors, and 3 types of risky sexual practices. Results showed that in terms of behavior, girls with older boyfriends were more likely than girls with similar-aged boyfriends to engage in all forms of sexual intimacy, to have sex under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and to experience sexual coercion. In terms of sexual attitudes, girls with older boyfriends were more likely to endorse beliefs that guys are sexually driven, that sex “just happens” and are spontaneous, and that sex is related to maturity.

Berdahl, Magley, & Waldo, (1996) and Fitzgerald & Hesson-McInnis, (1989) reports that adolescent boys do not seem to feel threatened by some behavior that for girls constitute harassment; in particular, boys do not seem to experience loss of control in response to those behaviors. Similar trends have been reported for adolescent students by Eliasson, Isaksson, & Laflamme, (2005); Fineran, (2002); Fineran & Bennett, (1998); McMaster, (2002) and Murnen & Smolak, (2000), despite the fact that exposure to relevant behaviors show less gender differences in schools than in higher education and the workplace (Hand & Sanchez, 2000). In the studies of adolescent students, boys were more likely to be less upset by the majority of the relevant experiences—except for the homophobic incidents and pressure for relationship—and more likely to interpret situations as “horseplay” (AAUW, 2001; Roscoe, Strouse, & Goodwin, 1994; White, 2000). Whether actors are of the same or different genders
also seems to be of importance for the interpretation of the incidents (McMaster et al., 2002; Roscoe et al., 1994). Hence, men and women—and boys and girls—will be harassed in a different manner, and the factor structures obtained from women’s data so far have not proven stable for men (Baldwin & Daugherty, 2001; Stockdale & Hope, 1997). In recognition of this fact, Waldo revised Fitzgerald’s SEQ to include additional groups of questions (lewd comments, negative remarks about men, and enforcement of the masculine gender role) in his Sexual Harassment of Men scale (Waldo, Berdahl, & Fitzgerald, 1998).

Gutierrez, Oh, & Gillmore, (2000); Tschann, Adler, Millstein, Gurvey, & Ellen, (2002) reported that girls with a high sense of personal control may be more likely than other girls to negotiate effectively within sexual relationships. Boys, on the other hand, generally experience more control in sexual situations as well as feel the ability to make demands and express wishes. Recent research such as De Gaston, Weed, & Jensen, (1996); Santelli, Lindberg, Abma, McNeely, & Resnick, (2000); and Terry & Manlove, (2000) has shown that male and female adolescents are becoming more similar in their sexual behavior (including timing of sexual debut and decency of sex). However, the meaning of sexual intercourse may not be the same for boys and girls. Adolescent girls report significantly less satisfaction with their first sexual experience than do boys according to the study of Thomson & Holland, (1998). They are more likely to regret initiating sexual intercourse as reported by De Gaston, Jensen, & Weed, (1995). Martin, (1996); and Thomson & Holland, et,al., (1998) reports, that engaging in sexual behavior reinforces masculinity. Adolescent boys generally gain status and affirmation from sexual experience. The sexual role for men is that of the aggressor and active partner, says the study of Campbell, (1995) and Martin, et,al., (1996), thus men experience greater power within sexual relationships. Moore & Rosenthal, (1993) reports, that women and girls may feel uncomfortable in expressing their sexual wishes or taking initiative in sexual situations. There is tremendous pressure for female adolescents to be nice
girls —passive, modest, and sexually inexperienced (Kaplan, 1997; Luker, 1996; Phillips, 2000).

2.3 URBAN AND RURAL DIFFERENCE IN SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

One of the most important transformations in the last century, both at the individual family and social level, has been the dissociation between sex and marriage and childbearing greatly attributed to the availability of modern contraception and the growing secularization in the recent past. The effect of the secularization, understood as a reduction of the believes attributed to the religion respect the fertility control and increased laity is expressed as a growing autonomy respect to fertility and health, and India is not an exception in this trend of secularization. The country has experienced many developmental, structural, and demographic changes that have contributed to the process of secularization. It has been experienced a rapid process of urbanization.

People in a rural area are much more geographically isolated from one another, and the department store, movie theatre and hospital are a greater distance that the availability in urban areas. The environment is key, with the resources available to the community greatly contrasted between rural and urban environments. Contextual factors are taken into account and controlled such as the combination of peers and gangs, gender or racial issues, socioeconomic status, and parenting styles. These factors collectively account for the overall development of an adolescent, but are split amongst the major division of location; urban or rural. With the two locations, differences arise in all of the factors listed before. Peers and gang involvement holds different importance in urban regions, while socioeconomic determinants have certain impact on rural families.
Menard and Ruback (2003) noted that rural environments are characterized by greater acquaintance density (i.e., a close network of familiarity among rural residents), greater physical isolation, and a social climate that fosters more informal control by the community. Rural adolescents were reported to be more likely to lack social support, live in poverty, lack education, and live with few services available to help them than urban adolescents (Logan, Walker, Cole, Ratliff, & Leukefeld, 2003). The research of the urban-rural differences is significant because of the real-world application; India is a variety of different environments from rural farms to urban cities, all of which would benefit from the general analysis and solutions presented in this study. Reports of more empirical studies are given below.

2.3.1 Review of Empirical Research

Atav & Spencer (2002) reported that rural adolescents are more likely to engage in sexual behavior than those youth living in urban areas. Although, studies do not suggest that there is more tolerance for teen sex in rural areas. The views of both urban and rural residents tend to be the same when it comes to their teens having sex; they are against it.

Most studies done on the topic of adolescent sexual activity of youth in urban areas are associated with other deviant behavior such as substance abuse and violence. A longitudinal study conducted on sexual activity and problem behaviors among 705 black, urban youth suggests that there is a strong correlation between sexual behavior, substance use, and violence (Ensminger, 1990).

A longitudinal study of 1000 seventh and eighth graders attending public, urban schools suggests that the consistent and strong impact of substance use on adolescent sexual activity is related to the urban ecology (Smith, 1997).
Ensminger, (1990) reported that many of the youth in urban areas are violent, sexually active, and use drugs because of psychological, environmental, and behavioral factors that facilitate and predispose them toward these behaviors.

A study using secondary data from the 1996 Teen Assessment Project (TAP) was done on 2094 teens from rural, suburban, and urban areas. This study suggests that youth who live in rural areas are about twice as likely as their suburban and urban counterparts (Atav & Spencer, 2002).

O’Donnell, O’Donnell, & Stueve, (2001) reported that the likelihood that rural youth participate in sexual behavior more than urban youth could be due to the fact that parents and teachers often underestimate children’s emergent sexual behaviors.

A survey of 374 rural parents suggests that most parents believed that the majority of sex education should be provided by the family and should be supplemented by outside organizations (Jordan, Price, & Fitzgerald, 2000).

Being that rural populations tend to be more religious than urban populations, abstinence is the major topic in sexual education classes for rural youth. Although, most of the rural, religious parents did support including information on contraception methods, and including condoms in formal sexual education courses (Jordan, Price, & Fitzgerald, et.al., 2000). In the evaluation of an abstinence only program, no evidence was found that these types of programs change adolescent sexual behavior (Barnett & Hurst, 2003). Teaching youth that abstinence is the best way to avoid sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy and other health risks does not keep them from having sex.

Atav and Spencer (2002) reported that rural youth were more likely to report frequent use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs and to engage in earlier intercourse experiences than their urban counterparts. These conditions could increase the likelihood that rural youth will experience sexual abuse and be unlikely to report abuse to the authorities. Ruback and
Menard (2001) reported that the absolute number of sexual victimization reports was higher in urban areas, but the rate of sexual victimization reports was higher in rural areas. Lauman and Michaels (2001) reported that urban women are more likely than rural women to have been forced by a man to have sex (21% vs. 18%).

The rural urban divide is very much felt in the area of sexual abuse studies as well. The vast majority of sexual assaults in this country are non-stranger sexual assaults, and for rural communities this is particularly true. For the nation, Rennison (1999) reports that 7 in 10 rape and sexual assault victims knew their assailants. In rural areas, where there is generally less anonymity, or as Ruback and Menard (2001) explain, where there is high acquaintance density, the likelihood of knowing the perpetrator is even greater. Rural culture tends to offer particular difficulties and barriers to reporting sexual assault. A major barrier stems from the high degree of familiarity (Royse, 1999; Ruback & Menard et. al., 2001). The rural network of relationships means that most people have little anonymity. The lower population density in rural areas means a person is more easily noticed. There is an increased likelihood that the victim, or a friend or family member of the victim, may be acquainted with or related to the perpetrator. Additionally, the victim may re-encounter the perpetrator, perhaps on a regular basis.

Even rural law enforcement is likely to be part of the social network (Sims, 1998; Weisheit, Wells & Falcone, 1994). Sims et.al, (1998) explains that for police in rural areas, personal interaction occurs in two arenas, within the police department and within the community "because the two groups appear more integrated as one than segregated as two" (p.13). Thus in rural areas where anonymity is rare, sexual assault victims may be especially concerned with a lack of confidentiality.

In 1989, the National Women's Study, a telephone survey that sampled 4008 adult women age 18 and older, reported 12.65 percent completed rapes over the lifetime of the
responders. The methodology included screening questions and follow-up interviews. Although not initially reported with the survey findings, the data set did include location information on 4002 responses (Lewis, 2003). Recently the researchers involved in this survey analyzed this location data and found that rural completed rape figure at 10.1 percent compared with an urban/suburban figure of 13.6 percent (de Arellano, Ruggiero, Kilpatrick, 2002). Lewis et. al, (2003) explains that even using this more sensitive methodology, there are important aspects of rural sexual assault that are not easily captured or measured by various national surveys. She suggests that the rural propensity to distrust outsiders and agencies may figure prominently as an unwillingness to participate in such surveys (Lewis, et. al, 2003).

Levine Sara B and Coupey Susan M (1999) reported that metropolitan status was not a significant determining factor for involvement in risk behaviours. Of the specific risk factors examined in this analysis, there were no significant differences between rural and suburban youth, and these two groups were combined as nonurban. In subsequent analysis of urban vs. nonurban youth, no significant differences in risk behaviours were found on bivariate or multivariate analyses. This analysis suggests that metropolitan status has little if any association with youth engaging in substance use and sexual risk behaviours. In addition, it appears that urban youth are engaging in these risk behaviours no more frequently than their nonurban counterparts.

Dodoo FN, Zulu EM and Ezeh AC (2007) reported that poverty is significantly associated with the examined sexual outcomes in both urban and rural settings in Nairobi, although, the urban poor are significantly more likely than their rural counterparts to have an early sexual debut and a greater incidence of multiple sexual partnerships. The disadvantage of the urban poor is accentuated for girls; those in Nairobi's slums are at least three times as likely to have multiple sexual partners as their rural counterparts.
Das, Bhubon Mohan, Ray, and Subha (2007) reported that the level of awareness about some aspects of reproductive health seems greater among peri-urban boys than their rural counterparts. However, in terms of reproductive health behaviors both groups appear similar. The study looked at the similarities and differences in reproductive health awareness and behavior among adolescent males living in peri-urban and rural areas of the State of West Bengal. Questionnaire data was collected from 111 school-age adolescent boys between the ages of 15 and 18. Adolescents' lack of knowledge concerning reproduction can be attributed to social and cultural barriers and their hesitancy to access family planning and reproductive health services compared to adults (Kilbourne-Brook, 1998). Consequently, adolescents may be at an increased risk of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) including HIV, unintended pregnancy, and other consequences that can affect their futures as well as the future of their communities. Thus the reproductive and sexual health needs of adolescents are different from those of adults and are still poorly understood in most of the world.

Colleen S. Poon, and Elizabeth M. Saewyc, (2003) compared sexual-minority adolescents living in rural communities with their peers in urban areas, exploring differences in emotional health, victimization experiences, sexual behaviors, and substance use. Rural sexual-minority adolescent boys were more likely than were their urban peers to report suicidal behaviors and pregnancy involvement. Rural sexual-minority adolescents, especially girls, were more likely to report various types of substance use. Rural status was associated with a lower risk of dating violence and higher risk of early sexual debut for sexual-minority girls and a higher risk of dating violence and lower risk of early sexual debut for sexual-minority boys.

Voeten Hélène A C M, Egesah Omar B, and Habbema J Dik F (2004) reported that sexual behaviour was more risky for women in rural than in urban areas, also after adjusting for socio demographic differences. Rural women reported less frequently being a virgin at
marriage, a higher number of lifetime partners, and less consistent condom use with non-spousal partners. For men, sexual risk behaviour was equally high in urban and rural areas.

Populations of rural and urban areas both agree that sex among adolescents is wrong. Neither urban nor rural areas have a higher tolerance of this behavior. Most of the research above is based on self-reported data. This type of data could pose problems due to the reporting of incorrect information. The results of much of the research cited cannot be generalized because it was not taken from a representative sample. Also, most of the research is either based on sexual behavior of rural adolescents or sexual behavior of urban adolescents. Only one article was a comparison of the two. More research could be done comparing the differences of sexual behaviors among rural and urban. More data should be collected from representative samples so that intervention programs can be developed to target the specific needs of rural youth and of urban youth.

2.4 SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Child abuse refers to any damage done to a child which cannot be reasonably explained. Giovannoni (1971) had distinguished between abuse and neglect; defining abuse as acts of commission, which result in harm, and neglect as acts of omission, which have negative effects. Abuse might be taken as an exploitation of the rights of the parents to control, discipline and punish their children, while neglect represents the failure to perform parental duties, including those of supervision, nurturance and protection. The generic concept of abuse is further divided into five major categories, that is, physical abuse, physical neglect, emotional abuse, emotional neglect and sexual abuse.

Physical abuse is indicated by physical injuries generally inflicted by a caretaker. Physical neglect occurs when a child’s health or safety is endangered because of lack of adequate food, clothing, shelter or supervision. It includes hitting, kicking, slapping, burning,
etc. Emotional abuse represents injury to a child’s psychological self just as physical abuse consists of injury to a child’s body. Its intent and effect are punitive and it is generally experienced as parental hostility. This may include yelling, name calling, negative comparisons to others, etc. It can also be taken as emotional deprivation, a failure on the part of the parents to provide psychological nurturance necessary for a child’s psychological growth and development.

Sexual abuse can be considered as any act of a sexual nature upon or with a child presumably performed by a parent or caretaker without the child’s consent and understanding (National Centre on Child Abuse and Neglect, 1978, pp. 9–10).

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, (2001), Child sexual abuse includes a variety of sexual offenses, including: sexual assault – a term defining offenses in which an adult touches a minor for the purpose of sexual gratification; for example, rape (including sodomy), and sexual penetration with an object. Sexual molestation – a term defining offenses in which an adult engages in non-penetrative activity with a minor for the purpose of sexual gratification; for example, exposing a minor to pornography or to the sexual acts of others. Sexual exploitation – a term defining offenses in which an adult victimizes a minor for advancement, sexual gratification, or profit; for example, prostituting a child, and creating or trafficking in child pornography. Sexual grooming - defines the social conduct of a potential child sex offender who seeks to make a minor more accepting of their advances, for example in an online chat room.

Sexual abuse is a traumatizing experience that leads to both immediate and long-term consequences in many, if not most, victims. Beitchman, Zucker, Hood, daCosta, & Akman, (1991) ; Beitchman, (1992); Cahill, Llewlyn, & Pearson, (1991); and Jumper, (1995) identified and reported wide range of problems that have been found with notable consistency
to be more prevalent among victims of childhood sexual abuse than among non-abused samples.

2.4.1 Review of Empirical Research

In a study done by Raj A., (1997) of over four thousand high school students, 30.2 percent of females and 9.3 percent of males reported a history of sexual abuse. Abused males were four to five times as likely as non-abused males to report multiple partners, substance use at last sex, and involvement in a pregnancy. Abused females were twice as likely as non-abused females to report early coitus, multiple partners, and a past pregnancy.

One study of high school students done by Valois RF, (1999) found a significant relationship for both black and white females between having been a victim of dating violence and/or date rape and the number of sex partners. For males, a significant association existed between multiple sexual partners and being victims of rape (whites) or being a perpetrator or victim of dating violence (blacks).

Leonard A. Doerfler, Peter F. Toscano Jr. And Daniel F. Connor, (2008) reported that youngsters who had experienced sexual abuse exhibited higher levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms than youngsters who had not been abused. Three types of abuse experience were examined in a sample of 397 youngsters: sexual abuse only, physical abuse only, and both sexual and physical abuse. Results indicate that girls exhibited higher levels of internalizing and externalizing symptoms even though abuse experience was accounted for in the analyses.

Jennie G. Noll, Chad E. Shenk, and Karen T. Putnam, (2008) did a meta-analyses of 21 studies using a random effects model of binary outcomes to determine aggregate effect-size estimates controlling for study heterogeneity. Results show that child sexual abuse significantly increased the odds of experiencing an adolescent pregnancy by 2.21-fold (95%
A supplemental analysis suggested that 4.5 out of 10 pregnant adolescents may have a prior history of sexual abuse in childhood.

Messman & Long, (1996) examined the impact of childhood sexual abuse on a particular aspect of psychological functioning: the development of sexual behavior and sexual relationships, and reported that individuals who were sexually abused as children are at greater risk of experiencing sexual victimization in later life than individuals without experience of abuse.

Banyard, (1997) reported that the victims of child sexual abuse have been found to have problems in establishing and maintaining satisfying relationships with their sexual partners.

Beitchman et al., (1992); Browne & Finkelhor, (1986); Bagley, Wood, & Young, (1994); Barnett et al., 1997 and Browne, (1994) reported two potential effects of the child abuse experience on male victims. First, is that childhood experience of abuse is linked to the development of a homosexual orientation, mediated by the victim’s uncertainty about his sexual identity. Second, is an increased risk for male abuse victims to become per- predators of sexual aggression.

Jacquelyn W. White (1998) studied three incoming freshmen classes of men and provided data in a 5-year longitudinal study of the relationship between childhood victimization experiences and sexually coercive behaviors during adolescence and 4 years of college. A key finding of this study was that men who were physically punished, sexually abused, or who witnessed domestic violence in childhood were at greater risk for sexual perpetration in high school. Furthermore, men who perpetrated in high school were at greater risk for sexual perpetration in college; and after controlling for perpetration in high school, those who were abused or witnessed violence in childhood were not at greater risk for college perpetration.
Briere and Brown, (1988); Browne and Finkelhor, (1986); Yama , (1993) reported that the symptoms among the adolescent survivors of sexual abuse include fears, anxiety, phobias, nightmares, hyper vigilance, hyper arousal, anger, guilt, feelings of isolation, helplessness, hopelessness, low self-esteem, difficult trusting others, and sleep disturbances.

Fergusson & Mullen, (1999) reported a recent review of community studies published since 1990 and found that 39 out of 42 calculated total odds ratios showed statistically significant relationships between Child Sexual Abuse and a wide range of sexual behavior outcomes such as early age first sexual intercourse, sexual desire disorders, engaging in prostitution during adolescence.

Holmes and Slap (1998) reported that, in spite of the high prevalence of negative sequelae, many men who have experienced Child Sexual Abuse have reported neutral or positive reactions to their abuse, with 91% of those with positive reactions recalling the events as physically pleasurable.

Jake M. Najman, Michael P. Dunne, David M. Purdie, Francis M. Boyle, and Peter D. Coxeter, (2005) examined self-reported adult sexual functioning in individuals reporting a history of childhood sexual abuse (CSA) in a representative sample of the Australian population. Samples of 1793 persons, aged 18–59 years, were randomly selected from the electoral roll for Australian states and territories in April 2000. Respondents were interviewed about their health status and sexual experiences, including unwanted sexual experiences before the age of 16 years. More than one third of women and approximately one-sixth of men reported a history of CSA. Women were more likely than men to report both non-penetrative and penetrative experiences of CSA. For both sexes, there was a significant association between CSA and symptoms of sexual dysfunction. In assessing the specific nature of the relationship between sexual abuse and sexual dysfunction, statistically significant associations were, in general, evident for women only.
Samantha Chromy, (2006) reported that the child’s experience of abuse impact the development of Sexual Behavioral Problems (SBP). This conclusion was derived by using a retrospective chart review of the clinical records of 125 children who received services at a counseling center specializing in sexual abuse concerns. The children who exhibited Sexual Behavioral Problems and those who did not were compared on variables related to their experience of sexual abuse. Analysis showed a statistically significant difference between the two groups on the frequency and the age of onset of abuse. The children who exhibited SBP were abused with more frequency and at a younger age than those who did not.

Kendall-Tackett, Williams, & Finkelhor, (1993) reviewed across 13 studies regarding children’s sexual behavior. The finding was that, out of 1,353 sexually abused children, 28% exhibited highly sexualized behavior.

Friedrich (1995) reported, “sexual behavior is one of the more reliable and valid markers of sexual abuse,” though not all studies support this conclusion (McNicol& McGregor, 1999; Silovsky& Niec, 2002). Although increased frequency of sexual behaviors may be one of the most common after effects of sexual abuse, not all sexually abused children develop SBP. Pithers&Gray, (1998) reported, for example, only 25% of sexually abused children developed SBP.

Hall and Matthews (1996) identified as the most significant factors in the development of interpersonal Sexual Behavioral Problems to be those related to the child’s experience of his or her own sexual abuse. These included the sexual arousal of the child during the abuse, sadistic abuse, the active involvement of the child in the sexual abuse, the acting in the “offender” role in child to child acts, and the child blaming himself or herself or being ambivalent as to who is to blame for the abuse.

Kimberly A. Tyler, Dan R. Hoyt, Les B. Whitbeck & Ana Mari Cauce (2001), investigated the impact of childhood sexual abuse on later sexual victimization among 372
homeless and runaway youth in Seattle. High rates of both childhood sexual abuse and street sexual victimization were reported, with females experiencing much greater rates compared with their male counterparts. Early sexual abuse in the home increased the likelihood of later sexual victimization on the streets indirectly by increasing the amount of time at risk, deviant peer affiliations, participating in deviant subsistence strategies, and engaging in survival sex.

In a comprehensive literature review, Blinn-Pike, (2002) examined previous studies to determine the connection between childhood maltreatment and adolescent sexual behavior. The authors used explicit inclusion criteria that included a clear definition of maltreatment involving physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or all, and limited their search criteria to empirical studies published between 1980 and 2000. The search yielded 15 published articles and, based on their review, Blinn-Pike, (2002) concluded that a causal link between child maltreatment and adolescent sexual behavior could not be determined because of conflicting results in the literature and methodological limitations such as cross-sectional designs and retrospective methods of data collection.

Finkelhor, (1990) reported that notwithstanding the difficulties they face, some sexually victimized children and adolescents do not appear to develop later problems. Kendall-Tackett et al., (1993) concluded that about one out of three children with a history of Sexual Abuse do not show significant observable impairment following the abuse. Several authors have called for a next wave of research investigating the factors that promote wellness in children or adults with a history of SA (Briere & Elliott, 1994; Leventhal, 1998; Polusny & Follette, 1995). Analyses of abuse-related variables have found that SA of a longer duration or of greater severity (involving penetration) is linked to greater behavioral difficulties (Black, Dubowitz, & Harrington, 1994; Caffaro-Rouget, Lang, & van Santen, 1989; Cohen & Mannarino, 1988; Finkelhor & Browne, 1986; Friedrich, 1988).
Although it is well established that sexual abuse is associated with higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems, findings have been less consistent. Some studies such as Cavaiola and Schiff (1988); Green (1999); Kendall-Tackett (1993); Meyerson (2002); Naar-King (2002), indicate that abused children and adolescents have higher levels of psychopathology than non abused youth, but other studies such as Cohen (1996); Kumar (1996) reported that abuse was not related to symptomatology or suicidal behavior. Even when differences were observed, abused children had higher symptom levels on only a subset of measures and in many instances they did not differ on symptoms like depression or oppositional behavior that consistently differentiate abused and non abused youth in clinical samples, reports Kendall-Tackett et al. (1993).

Sexual abuse severity also has been associated with subsequent sexual risk behavior, including more sexual partners (Merrill, Guimond, Thomsen, & Milner, 2003) and greater likelihood of sex with someone just met, earlier age at first intercourse, and a higher frequency of STD diagnoses (Walser & Kern, 1996). Although these studies suggest that more severe sexual abuse is associated with more sexual risk behavior, they provide only limited information regarding whether specific aspects of the abuse predict such outcomes. Needed is more fine-grained research to determine whether characteristics of the abuse experience are associated with sexual behavior outcomes in adolescence.

### 2.5 Academic Interest and Sexual Behaviour

In recent years, adolescent sexuality has become a source of increasing social concern because of its link to adolescent pregnancy, the risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, and to the possible negative impact of early sexuality on other aspects of adolescent development (Hofferth, 1987). To date, an extensive body of research has accumulated on the correlates and predictors of adolescent sexual activity. A number of studies have indicated
that domains such as socioeconomic status (SES), family structure and relationships, pubertal maturation, and various personality and behavioral characteristics are related to the timing and frequency of adolescent sexual activity (Chilman, 1986; Hofferth, 1987).

An additional correlate of sexual activity is cited by several researchers is the adolescents’ investment in their own education. Typically, a negative association has been reported between academic involvement and adolescent sexual activity (Chilman, 1986). The reason for this negative association however, is not clear. One hypothesis is that a greater investment in education decreases the likelihood of early sexual activity by providing an alternative reward structure or an alternative set of activities (e.g., Miller & Sneesby, 1988). Such a position is consistent with social control theory (Hirschi, 1969).

According to this model, strong bonds to conventional institutions reduce the likelihood that an individual will engage in norm-breaking or deviant activities. Bonds consist of attachment to conventional others (who would disapprove of deviant activities), involvement in conventional activities (which reduce the time and opportunity for deviant activities), investment in conventional institutions (having a stake in the system that one would not wish to jeopardize through deviant activity), and belief in conventional values and rules (which proscribe deviant behavior). Clearly, the adolescent’s school constitutes such a conventional institution. In contrast, adolescent sexual activity, although common, violates social norms regarding appropriate adolescent behavior and in this sense represents a form of social transgression or deviance (Jessar & Jessar, 1977). Thus there is a theoretical basis for the hypothesis that academic interest is related to the probability of adolescent sexual activity.

### 2.5.1 Review of Empirical Research

Robert Rector and Kirk A. Johnson (2005) reported that teens who abstain from sex during high school years are substantially less likely to be expelled from school; less likely to
drop out of high school; and more likely to attend and graduate from college. When compared to sexually active teens, those who abstain from sexual activity during high school years (e.g., at least until age 18) are 60 percent less likely to be expelled from school; 50 percent less likely to drop out of high school; almost twice as likely to graduate from college.

Billy, Lansdale, Grady, and Zimmerle (1988) reported that early involvement in sexual activity decreases adolescents’ academic performance and involvement by drawing them into more immediately rewarding activities that may take time away from academic pursuits. Adolescents who lose their virginity may spend a greater amount of time thinking about and participating in sexual activities. If so, such behavior could reduce the time that these adolescents spend in academic activities.

In a sample of White metropolitan adolescents, Alwin (1986) used structural equation modeling to examine the relationship of educational plans and academic grades in school to sexual activity. He found that boys with higher educational plans were less likely to report being sexually active later in adolescence than boys with lower educational plans. Academic grades in school, however, did not predict sexual activity for boys, and neither plans nor academic grades in school predicted sexual activity among girls. On the other hand, early sexual activity negatively predicted later educational plans for both boys and girls.

Billy and his associates (Billy et al., 1988) examined the relationship between adolescent non virginity and later school performance and educational plans among White adolescents residing in a metropolitan area. Billy et al. (1988) found that early sexual intercourse negatively predicted the importance that girls attached to attending college 2 years later. In addition, early sexual intercourse negatively predicted later school performance among boys. The influence that educational variables had on later sexual activity was not examined.

The Alwin et al. study (1986) and the Billy et al. study (1988) indicated that sexual activity predicts educational investment for girls, with no evidence of a reverse effect. One explanation for this discrepancy is that the sample in this study included only adolescents who resided in metropolitan areas. Perhaps, sexual activity and educational investment are more compatible for girls who live in metropolitan areas than for girls who live in rural areas because sexual activity may be perceived to be less deviant in urban settings. Indeed, researchers have found that girls who live in metropolitan areas are more sexually active than girls who live in rural areas, suggesting that sexual activity might be perceived as less deviant among girls living in metropolitan areas (Devaney & Hubley, 1981).

Christine McCauley Ohannessian and Lisa J. Crockett (1993) reported that for boys, none of the educational variables significantly predicted sexual activity. However, sexual activity significantly predicted later participation in academic activities. These results are similar to those found in the Alwin et al. study (1986) and the Billy et al. (1988) study. Sexual activity was found to predict later educational investment for boys in both of these studies. In the Alwin study, initiation of sexual activity was found to predict boys’ educational plans, and in the Billy et al. study, initiation of sexual activity predicted boys’ academic grades in school. Only one educational variable, educational plans, was found to significantly predict sexual activity for boys (Alwin, 1986).

A review of health risk behavior studies and reports found student health risks such as intentional injuries, substance use, sexual behavior, and poor physical health were directly and negatively linked to educational outcomes, education behaviors, and student attitudes about education (Symons, Cinelli, James, & Groff, 1997).
A meta-analysis of naturalistic studies on academic performance and delinquency found that high academic achievers are much less likely to engage in delinquent acts than their low-achieving peers. Academic performance negatively predicted delinquency independent of socioeconomic status (Maguin & Loeber, 1996).

Data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health found that being at risk for academic failure was associated with every health risk behavior studied. The authors state that school failure should be recognized as a health and education crisis (Blum, Beuhring, & Rinehard, 2000).

Huzinga and Jakob-Chien (1998) reported that the academic underachievement and school problems are significantly associated with violence, delinquency, sexuality and substance use.

Similarly, higher academic performance and better school behaviors predict lower rates of risk behaviors (Maguin and Loeber, 1996). Early problem behaviors among youth are also one of the strongest predictors of later problem behaviors (Moffitt, 1993). Many youth who are incarcerated report previous school problems and drug use (Dryfoos, 1998). These findings are consistent across both gender and age (Thornberry, 1995).

The Add Health Data (2005) reported that teen sexual abstinence remained a strong independent predictor of academic success even when educational desires and expectations were held constant. In other words, when abstinent teens were compared to sexually active teens from identical socioeconomic backgrounds and with identical educational expectations and desires, the abstinent teens were dramatically more likely to attend and graduate from college. While educational expectations are important, teen abstinence continued to have an independent effect on predicting academic success.

Robert Rector and Kirk A. Johnson et.al (2005) reported that teen abstinence is likely to contribute directly to academic capacity. Human attention and motivation are finite; when
greater energy and interest are invested in sexual activity, the drive for academic performance is likely to diminish. Sexually active teens may become preoccupied with the present; long-term academic goals may have diminished importance. In addition, teenage sexual relationships are inherently short-term and unstable. The collapse of intimate relationships is likely to result in emotional turmoil and depression which, in turn, will undermine academic performance. Sexually active teens may be more likely to associate with peers who have less interest in academics; the influence of these peers may diminish the teens’ own focus of academic performance. Overall, the practice of sexual abstinence is likely to serve as a protective barrier which insulates the teenager from disruptive and negative influences and enables the teen to better focus on immediate academic performance and longer-term life goals.

Pearson, Jennifer. and Muller, Chandra (2004) reported that students’ positions within the educational system influence their sexual behavior. Findings suggest that while adolescents with high scores are more likely to postpone sexual activity, they do so because their cognitive abilities position them in more advanced courses in which they perform well.

Halpern, Joyner, Udry, and Suchindran (2000) reported that students that perform well in school demonstrate integration into a conventional institution, and their behavior may reflect adherence to conventional norms and values about adolescent romantic relationships. They suggest that this link may be partially explained by the relationship between intelligence and sexual debut. The results of their study reveal that adolescents with high academic ability scores are more likely to delay sexual initiation.

Novilla, M. Lelinneth B.; Dearden, Kirk A.; Crookston, Benjamin T.; De La Cruz, Natalie; Hill, Susan; Torres, Scott B (2006) reported that the likelihood of engaging in sexual activity is associated with age, low academic performance, substance abuse, violence,
depression, and suicidal tendencies. The more frequent the occurrences of these risk factors, the higher the chances of engaging in sexual activity.

Choi, Yoonsun (2007) studied the relationship between academic achievement and problem behavior by using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent health and reported that the academic performance is a significant predictor of aggressive and non-aggressive delinquent offences, gang initiation, sexual behaviors and substance use. The relationship does not vary by race and ethnicity.

Bailey JA (2008) reported that the prevalence of sexual risk behaviour was significantly lower among participants in college than among those who were not in college. Correlational analysis confirmed these findings and showed that sexual risk behaviours were negatively related to high school grade point average and positively related to having used drugs and having had risky sex in high school. College attendance was no longer associated with condom use or casual sex, but it continued to predict a lower probability of engaging in high-risk sex (odds ratio, 0.5).

Quatman (2001) reported that there is a negative correlation between dating frequency and academic achievement in high school students. The study also found that the dating behaviour and academic motivation are negatively correlated as well.

Schvaneveldt, Miller, Berry, and Lee (2001) reported that the younger the age at which one has sexual intercourse is negatively correlated with lower academic performance and goals. Students who are sexually active perform lower in academics than students who are not sexually active.

Early sexual involvement may cause young people’s priorities to shift, perhaps increasing their interest in early marriage and parenthood at the expense of their commitment to an extended education. These represent plausible developmental mechanisms linking adolescents’ investment in school to their sexual activity. They have, however, very different
implications for the understanding of adolescent development. Consequently, it becomes important to disentangle these processes: To determine whether Academic excellence correlates significantly with sexual behavior. To date, little research has addressed this issue. Most of the studies of educational investment and sexual activity have been cross-sectional in design. Although they have demonstrated a negative relationship between educational variables and sexual activity, such studies cannot address antecedent-consequent relationships (Miller & Simon, 1974; Miller & Sneesby, 1988).

Only a few prior studies have examined the relationship between educational variables and adolescent sexual activity over time. These prior longitudinal studies provide some support for the hypothesized processes, although there were inconsistencies concerning which educational variables related to sexual activity, particularly for boys. The one consistent finding seemed to be the negative relationship between early sexual activity and later educational plans among girls. Importantly, the previous studies have suggested that the linkages between educational variables and sexual activity may differ for girls and boys. It should be noted, however, that the influence of educational variables on later sexual activity was examined only in one study (Alwin, et al 1986). In addition, in the Alwin study the educational variables were measured retrospectively, introducing the problem of recall bias and potentially confounding the issue of antecedent-consequent relations.

Because educational variables have been found to be negatively associated with sexual activity in previous cross-sectional studies on adolescents from metropolitan areas, the present study is conducted to determine if this relationship was valid also for adolescents from rural areas. As expected, a consistent inverse relationship between the educational variables and sexual activity was hypothesized both for girls and boys.
2.6 PARENTING STYLE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Identifying correlates of adolescent risky sexual behavior provides important groundwork for research that can identify causal influences on adolescent risky sexual behavior, and for development of interventions that can promote healthy sexual development and prevent risky behavior in adolescents. Although the grievous consequences of risky sexual behavior are clear, the factors that influence these risks are not quite as apparent. There is a large and varied body of work on factors that are hypothesized to influence risky adolescent sexual behavior, including the community, religious practices and beliefs, the media, peers, biological factors, family characteristics, parent process variables, and adolescent attitudes and beliefs (Fisher, 2004). Of these diverse factors, parent factors are arguably among the most important potential influences on adolescent sexual behavior (Luster & Small, 1994). Indeed, although adolescence is a period during which extra familial influences such as peers, media, and the community becomes increasingly important, parents remain a large influence on youths’ lives (Steinberg & Morris, 2001). Thus, comprehensive understanding of parent factors relevant to adolescent sexual development and behaviour has important implications for our efforts to impact the negative consequences of risky sexual behavior.

Families are an incredibly important influence on the behavior of any child in many ways, and this has been found time and time again to be the case with adolescent sexual behavior (Fisher et al., 2004). According to Miller, Benson, & Galbraith, (2001), the very characteristics of the families that make up the context in which adolescents live relate to adolescents engagement in risky sexual behavior. For instance, Inazu & Fox, (1980); Taris & Semin, (1997); Ramirez-Valles, (1998); Kotchick, Shaffer, Forehand, & Miller, (2001) reports that low family socio-economic status has been repeatedly linked to risky adolescent sexual behavior. Numerous studies have also demonstrated that living with both biological
parents is related to increased age of sexual debut (e.g., Inazu & Fox et al., 1980; Newcomer & Udry, 1987; Taris & Semin et al., 1997; & Ramirez-Valles et al., 1998; Upchurch, Aneshensel, Sucoff, & Levy-Storms, 1999). The presence of older siblings, especially those who are sexually active or pregnant, has been found to relate to increased risk of adolescent pregnancy (Miller, Benson, & Galbraith et al., 2001; Rodgers & Rowe, 1988; Rodgers, Rowe, & Harris, 1992; Wight, Williamson, & Henderson, 2006).

Studies on family communication have found no significant impact or mixed results at best, especially for males (Boyce-Rogers, 1999; Darling and Hicks, 1982; DeGaston et al., 1996; Kirby, 1999; Miller et al., 1998; Romo et al., 2002; Romer et al., 1999). Many males reported less frequent parental communication, compared with females (Romer et al., 1999). Parent–son sexual discussions generally occurred sporadically and infrequently due to the sensitive nature, that often leads parents to wait until after they suspected that their son was sexually active. Sexual messages delivered by parents also may differ for males and females (Darling and Hicks, 1982; Dittus et al., 1997). Males have been found to receive more sexual messages, compared with females (Darling and Hicks, 1982), with less stress on responsibility, consequences, and values for boys (Dittus et al., 1997; Romo et al., 2002). Most studies included only maternal discussions (Miller et al., 2000; Romo et al., 2002). Father–son discussions generally were not included. Thus, a better understanding of paternal influences is needed (Miller and Moore, 1990).

2.6.1 Review of Empirical Research

Luster & Small et al., (1994); and Hovell, (1994) reported that parental control and monitoring have been repeatedly linked to lower levels of risky adolescent sexual behavior, usually, by reducing the amount of opportunity available to engage in pre-marital sexual behavior.
Wight, Williamson, and Henderson et al., (2006) found that higher levels of parental monitoring were related to less sexual behavior in males and a later age at first intercourse, fewer sexual partners, and more consistent condom use in females.

Similarly, Rodgers et al., (1999) reported that parental monitoring was linked to less risky adolescent sexual behavior, but parents’ over-controlling psychological behaviors were actually related to an increased the risk of sexual behavior among daughters.

Findings by Upchurch et al., (1999) indicated that when teens perceived too much psychological control on the part of parents, they were more likely to have an earlier sexual debut. Thus, it appears parents must walk a fine line by closely monitoring the lives of their children while not attempting to exert too much psychological control.

Parental warmth or support has also been found to relate to adolescent sexual behavior (Miller, Benson, & Galbraith et al., 2001). Luster and Small et al., (1994) reported that highly supportive parents had adolescents at much lower risk for having more than one sexual partner and inconsistently using contraception. In another study, they also found that parental support could be used to categorize sexually active and inactive teens (Small &Luster, 1994).

Upchurch et al., (1999) found that more parental support was linked to a later age of adolescent sexual debut.

Rodgers et al., (1999), on the other hand, found no direct relationship between support and adolescent sexual risk, but she did find, however, that the lack of parental support may decrease the relation between parental communication and adolescent behavior.

The significant relationship among parent-child relationship quality, closeness, or connectedness and adolescent sexual behaviors has also been related to each other. Inazu & Fox et al., (1980) found that mother-daughter closeness was highly related to daughters’ abstinence.
Davis and Friel (2001) reported, that the parent-child relationship quality, closeness, or connectedness is related to a later age of first intercourse for daughters.

Lauritsen, (1994) reported that the feelings of closeness of male adolescents for their families have been found to relate to a lower likelihood of engaging in intercourse during the previous year.

Jaccard, Dittus and Gordon (1996) found that for both males and females, a close mother-child relationship was protective against pre-marital intercourse, frequency of intercourse, and inconsistent contraception use. They later found that adolescent satisfaction in the mother-child relationship was related to a later sexual debut (Jaccard, Dittus, & Gordon, 1998; Jaccard & Dittus, 2000).

Miller, Norton, Fan and Christopherson (1998) reported that a high quality parent-child relationship was related to less risky adolescent sexual behavior.

Ramirez-Valles et al., (1998) reported that parent-child connectedness is related to reduced risky adolescent sexual behavior by increasing adolescent involvement in other activities. Overall, it appears that closeness and high quality parent-child relationships are related to reduced risk of adolescent risky sexual behavior.

Kotchick, Dorsey, Miller, & Forehand, et al., (1999) reported that the open and receptive mother-adolescent sexual communication has been found to relate to lower levels of risky adolescent sexual behavior. On the other hand, Lehr, DiLorio, Dudley and Lipana (2000) found that mother adolescent open communication had a curvilinear relationship such that both the highest and the lowest levels of open communication were related to earlier sexual debuts than the average level of open communication. The authors hypothesize that the increased risk in the extreme groups could be due to different mechanisms; for example, high levels of open parental communication might reflect permissive parental attitudes or might indicate parents responding to a perception that adolescents have or are ready to
engage in sexual behavior. Lower levels of open communication, on the other hand might indicate an inappropriately lax and uninvolved or overly strict and highly controlling parental-child relationship, both of which have been associated with higher rates of risky sexual behavior, as was mentioned above.

Wight, Williamson and Henderson *et al.*, (2006) found a similar U-shaped relationship between levels of adolescent-reported comfort discussing sexual topics with both parents for males and with fathers only for females.

Laura D. Pittman & P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale (2003) examined the relationship between parenting style and adolescent functioning in a sample of 302 African American adolescent girls and their mothers who lived in impoverished neighborhoods. Parenting style was found to be significantly related to adolescent outcome in multiple domains including externalizing and internalizing behaviors, academic achievement, work orientation, sexual experience, and pregnancy history. Specifically, teens whose mothers were disengaged (low on both parental warmth and supervision/monitoring) were found to have the most negative outcomes.

Brent C. Miller Maria C. Norton Xitao Fan Cynthia R. Christopherson (1998) analyzed biological and social antecedents of adolescent sexual intentions and behaviors, including age, pubertal development, quality of parent/adolescent communication, and adolescent sexual values. Analyses were based on longitudinal data collected in 1991, 1992, and 1993 from 473 families. The study found that parent/adolescent communication quality was related positively to adolescent sexual abstinence values, abstinence values had a strong negative effect on sexual intentions, and sexual intentions had a significant positive effect on sexual behaviors. Parent/adolescent communication quality was related directly to sexual intentions measured 1 year later among females only.
Loretta Sweet Jemmott, John B. Jemmott, III (1992) examined Family structure, parental strictness, and sexual behavior among 200 Black male adolescents who completed an anonymous questionnaire. Adolescents who lived with both of their parents were less likely to report fathering a pregnancy as compared with adolescents who did not live with both of their parents. Parental strictness was related to sexual behavior, but the relation differed depending on whether the perceived strictness of the mother or the father was examined. Adolescents who perceived that their mothers were stricter than did other adolescents reported less frequent coitus and with fewer women. Adolescents who perceived that their fathers were stricter than did other adolescents reported using condoms more consistently in the past year.

Cheryl B. Aspy, Sara K. Vesely, Roy F. Oman, Sharon Rodine, LaDonna Marshall and Ken McLeroy (2006) studied the role of parental communication and instruction concerning sexual behavior in a community-based sample of 1083 youth aged 13–17. The Youth Asset Survey was administered along with items measuring demographics and youth risk behaviors. After controlling for demographic factors, multivariate analysis revealed that youth were much less likely to have initiated sexual intercourse if their parents taught them to say no, set clear rules, talked about what is right and wrong and about delaying sexual activity.

Daniel Wight, Lisa Williamson and Marion Henderson (2005) reported that both family structure and processes have been associated with young people's sexual behavior. Low parental monitoring predicts early sexual activity for both sexes (with some reverse causation), and for females it also predicts more sexual partners and less condom use.
DiLorio (1999) studied the sexual behavior of African-American adolescents within the context of the family and reported that the number of sexual issues discussed with fathers did not result in lower rates of sexual initiation among males.

Dittus (1997), on the other hand, considered sexual initiation among African-American youth more generally. He hypothesized that adolescents that live with their fathers would be less likely to have sex early compared to adolescents with non-resident fathers. He initially found that the children of resident fathers delayed sexual initiation; however, this relationship disappeared once perceived parental disapproval of premarital sex was controlled. Dittus et al. (1997) suggested that when adolescents are aware of their parents’ attitudes about premarital sex, they are more likely to adhere to their parents’ values.

Miller et al., (1997) reported that adolescents who perceived their mothers’ disapproval of their having sex or who talked with their mothers about contraception before first intercourse are less likely than others to become sexually active or to fail to use condoms.

In order to predict adolescent sexual attitudes, it is necessary to isolate the factors that contribute to attitude formation. Langer and Warheit (1992) proposed the Pre-Adult Health Decision-Making Model (PAHDM) to account for how adolescents form attitudes and make decisions about sex based in part on input from parents. While other influences affect adolescents, parents have been identified as a major source of sexual information and attitude formation (Dittus et al., 2004). Pre-adolescents actually prefer to receive sexual knowledge from their parents than from other sources (Kaiser Family Foundation, 1999). In most studies parental communication about sex has been found to positively correlate with adolescent sexual knowledge or attitudes (Dittus et al., 2004; Kotchick, Dorsey, Miller, & Forehand, 1999) and to negatively correlate with adolescent sexual risk-taking behavior (Dittus et al., 2004; Kotchick et al., 1999). Mothers, in particular, are important sources of adolescents’
sexual knowledge, as they communicate about sexuality with their children substantially more than fathers (e.g., DiLorio et al., 1999; Miller, Kotchick, Dorsey, Forehand, & Ham, 1998; Raffaelli, Bogenschneider, & Flood, 1998).

The quality of adolescents’ family relationship has implications for their health. For example, studies have found that family conflict is associated with lower adherence rates in diabetic adolescents and also with participation in risky behaviors (Turner RA, Irwin CE. Autonomy, 1993). Good family communication regarding sexual risk behavior has been positively associated with a delay in sexual activity (Dittus P, Jaccard J. 2000; Miller BC. 1998; Whitaker DJ, Miller KS, May DC, Levin ML. 1999).

Burgess (1973) and Delameter and MacCorquodale (1979) reported that parents' and children's sexual standards correspond more closely where their relationship is characterized by openness, understanding, love, and respect. Given that adolescents generally regard their parents' sexual standards as more conservative than their own (Reiss, 1967; Zelnik and Shah, 1981); indeed, parents and older people are more conservative in their sexual attitudes (cf. Fisher, 1986; Harding, 1988), and that adolescents' attitudes and behavior are in close correspondence (Delameter and MacCorquodalei et al., 1979; Taris and Semin, 1995, 1997), then it would be reasonable to expect that close, understanding relationships with parents would be associated with less sexual experience.

Parents may not merely affect their children's sexual behavior by having discussions about sex-related matters and maintaining close relationships. Especially in the case of young adolescents, parental supervision and control may be effective. There is a widespread belief that the lack of parental control is (at least in part) responsible for adolescent's involvement in underage sex (Taris and Semin et al., 1995). Newcomer and Udry et al., (1987) cite diminished parental control over adolescent behavior during marital disruption or separation.
as a possibly important reason for increased levels of sexual activity among adolescents from disrupted or one-parent homes.

Given this belief, it is surprising to note that relatively little research addresses the relation between parental supervision and control on the one hand, and adolescent sexuality on the other. Among the relevant studies in this field are Jessor and Jessor (1975), who report that non virgins tended to perceive less parental control during their adolescent years than virgins; Hogan and Kitagawa (1985), who demonstrate among a sample of black adolescent females from Chicago that perceived parental control of early dating was negatively related to rates of teenage pregnancy; and Barnes and Farrell (1992) who found that their measure of adolescent "deviance" (which included "having sexual relations with someone" as one of their more serious deviant behaviors) was positively associated with the amount of parental monitoring of the adolescent's behavior. Finally, Inazu and Fox (1980) did not find a significant relationship between parental supervision of their daughter's dating and her sexual experience. Thus, while there seems some reason to assume that parents are able to control their children's sexual behavior by setting rules and supervision, there is still a need to replicate and reexamine the relations between supervision and control on the one hand, and adolescent sexual behavior on the other.

2.7 RELIGIOUS ADHERENCE AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOUR

Religion is a part of the human belief system and survey studies reveal that 90% of the world population identifies itself with a religion (Shafranske, 1996). One intuitive meaning of “religious” is spiritual, in the sense of being other-worldly, indifferent to material necessities, (Beit-Hallahimi & Argyle, 1997), increased respect for the inner, contemplative practice of traditional religious systems (Hill, 2000; Wuthnow, 1998), and the defense of
patterns of beliefs and values (Geertz, 1964). One of the functions of a religious belief system and a religious world view is to provide an ultimate vision of what people should strive for in their lives (Pargament & Park, 1995) and the strategies to reach those goals (Emmons & Paloutzian, 2003) such as religious commitment and rituals, devotion and self-sacrifice.

Religion plays a positive role in the development and maintenance of moral behavior and altruistic motivations such as helpfulness, tolerance, patience, honesty and obedience to God; hence, it is claimed that religiousness is associated with being a “better person” in numerous ways (Batson, 1983; Hood, Spilka, Hunsberger, & Gorsuch, 1996). Religious people are typically more conservative and are more opposed to abortion (Bryan & Freed, 1993), divorce (Hayes & Hornsby-Smith, 1994), pornography (Lottes, Weinberg, & Weller, 1993; Noon, Haneef, Yusof, & Amin, 2001), homosexuality (Marsiglio, 1993), nudity in advertising (Alexander & Judd, 1986), and premarital and oral sex (Donahue, 1995; Haerich, 1992; Janus & Janus, 1993; Jensen, Newell, & Holman, 1990; Wellings, Field, Johnson, & Wadsworth, 1994). Many studies in different countries have observed that religious involvement is negatively correlated with all types of deviance (Benson, Donahue, & Erickson, 1989; Donahue, 1995; Ellis, 1985; Francis & Mullen, 1993).

2.7.1 Review of Empirical Research

Lisa J. Crockett of the University of Nebraska and her colleagues report that the longer a girl keeps her virginity, the more likely she is to be attending church frequently (Lisa J. Crockett, C. Raymond Bingham, Joanne S. Chopak, and Judith R. Vicary, 1996).

Robert H. Durant of the Medical College of Georgia and colleagues reported that Hispanic adolescents with no religious affiliation or infrequent religious attendance are significantly more likely to be sexually active than those who are more religious (Robert H. Durant, Robert Pendergast, and Carolyn Seymore, 1990).
Examining female and male adolescent sexual practices, Mark Regnerus of the University of Texas at Austin finds a big difference between those who attend and never attend church (Mark D. Regnerus, 2007).

Regnerus also finds significant differences in values: 83 percent of adolescents who attend church more than once a week support waiting until marriage to have sex. Two-thirds of adolescents who attend church weekly also support waiting, while only 49 percent of those who attend two to three times a month, and 35 percent of those who never attend, support waiting until marriage for sexual intercourse (Mark D. Regnerus et al., 2007).

A study by Karin L. Brewster of the University of North Carolina and colleagues reveals the larger significance that religious attitudes and practices of a community can have on the sexual behaviour of female adolescents. She finds that the likelihood of female adolescents’ sexual activity is inversely related to their community’s percentage of religious believers. Also, concerning non-black adolescent females, the likelihood of non marital sexual activity goes down as the percentage of church members in the community rises (John O. G. Billy, Karin L. Brewster, and William R. Grady, 1994).

Regnerus (2005) found that religious denomination correlated with the frequency with which parents discussed sexual issues, with Black Protestants and Mormons discussing sexual topics significantly more often than any other religious denominations. Furthermore, higher parental church attendance were related to lower frequency of conversation about sexual topics, although parent reported religious salience, or the importance with which parents viewed religion, was related to more frequent discussions of the morality of adolescent sexual behaviour.

Rostosky (2004), reported that involvement in a more conservative religious denomination, more frequent church attendance, and adolescent religiosity are all related to higher adolescent age at first intercourse. Interestingly, he notes that the relation of religion to
adolescent sexual behaviour is likely more complex than a simple bivariate relation. More specifically, church attendance has been found to relate to decreased sexual behaviour only if the adolescents’ peers also attended church, and findings tended to be stronger for girls than boys. Maternal religiosity has also been found to bear a relationship to adolescent sexual behaviour, distinct from that of adolescent religiosity.

Meier (2003) has noted that sexual attitudes appear to mediate the relationship between religiosity and coital debut, especially among boys. The study found no evidence that adolescents reduced their religiosity after experiencing virginity loss, suggesting at best a very modest risk of reverse causation. Nevertheless, no attempt was made to examine these relationships by racial categories.

Durant and Sanders (1989), have investigated the effects of religious attendance on the frequency or consistency of sexual intercourse, with uneven results. A cross-sectional study of unmarried, sexually active girls found a modest inverse association between attendance and the recent frequency of sex. More frequent attendance was linked with fewer months of sexual activity.

According to the study of Zelnik (1981), lower scores on a composite measure of religiosity were associated with a greater likelihood of having had more than two sexual partners among white girls, but not for African American girls More recent research, however has detected such a link among African American girls (Mc Cree. 2003).

Chandy, Blum, & Resnick, (1996) reported that specifically among youth who have been sexually abused, religiousness or spirituality might promote resistance to expected risk behaviours.

Studies of Ball, Armistead, & Austin (2003) shown that the more frequent youth attend church or religious services, the less likely they are to be sexually active, and Nonnemaker (2003), reports that the more likely they are to have never had sex to remain
virgins. According to the study of Hardy & Raffaelli, (2003), Murry, (1994) and Rostosky, Wilcox, Wright, & Randall, (2004) the more religious adolescents become, the more they are to delay their first sexual experience.

Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. (1980) reports that youth ages 11 to 25, who were not sexually active scored significantly higher than sexually active youth on the importance of religion in their lives and reported more connections to friends whom they considered to be religious or spiritual.

Crosby, R. A., DiClemente, R.J., Wingood, G.M., Rose, E., & Levine, D. (2003) reported in a study of youth ages 12 to 17, that 26% of teens who said that they attended religious services only “a few times a year” or “almost never” still identified “morals, values and/or religious beliefs” as the factors that most affected their decisions about whether to have sex.

Stanton, B., Romer, D., Ricardo, I., Black, M., Feigelman, S., Galbraith, J. (1993) reported in a study by the Rollins School of Public Health, that 64% of the adolescents surveyed via a four-item scale religiosity assessment reported high religiosity scores. Female adolescents who had higher religiosity scores reported significantly higher self-efficacy in communicating to their male partners about sex, STIs, HIV, and pregnancy prevention. These adolescents were more likely to initiate sex at a later age, refuse unsafe sexual encounters, and possess more positive attitudes about using condoms. A clear relationship was indicated between religiosity and its effect on sexual behaviours, attitudes toward sex, and the ability to negotiate safer sex.

John M. Wallace (1998) reported after a study on the nationally representative samples of high school seniors to examine the relationship between religion and behavioural predictors of adolescent morbidity and mortality. Relative to their peers, religious youth are less likely to engage in behaviours that compromise their health (e.g., carrying weapons,
getting into fights, drinking and driving) and are more likely to behave in ways that enhance their health (e.g., proper nutrition, exercise, and rest).

Lisa M. Edwards , Richard J. Fehring , Keyona M. Jarrett , Kristin A. Haglund (2008) reported that adolescents who viewed religion as very important, had frequent church attendance, and had more traditional attitudes on sexuality were less likely ever to have sex compared with adolescents who were less religious. Those with frequent church attendance and high traditional attitudes had fewer lifetime and recent sex partners. Unassimilated religious youth were less likely ever to have sex, had fewer lifetime and recent sexual partners, and a later age of sexual debut. Females were less likely to have had sex, had fewer recent and lifetime partners, and had a later age of coital debut than males.

Thornton, Arland, and Donald Camburn (1989) Reported that there is a causal interconnections between adolescent sexuality and the religious affiliation and participation of adolescents. Young people who attend church frequently and who value religion in their lives have the least permissive attitudes and are less experienced sexually. The theoretical arguments presented here support the traditional hypothesis of an effect of religious participation on adolescent sexuality, but the study also posits that sexual behavior and attitudes significantly influence religious involvement. This causal model is estimated on the basis of data from a sample of young men and women and their mothers. The empirical analysis supports the theoretical arguments in that significant causal effects in both directions are found in the data.

Attention to God Locus Of Control may help to elucidate relationships between religiosity and sexual risk. Religiosity has been associated with sexual risk behaviour; however the nature of the relationship remains unclear. For example, studies have found church attendance to be associated with less risky sexual attitudes (Belgrave, Van Oss Marin, & Chambers, 2000), delayed sexual activity (Brewster, Cooksey, Guilkey, & Rindfuss, 1998;
Cooksey, Rindfuss, & Guilkey, 1996; Donahue & Benson, 1995; Ku et al., 1993), increased condom use with current partner (Cooper, Peirce, & Huselid, 1994), and fewer sexual partners (in adolescents 16–19 years in Bachanas, 2002; Leigh, Weddle, & Loewen, 1988).

On the other hand, at least six recent studies have noted no effect of religiosity on sexual debut for African American adolescent boys (Bearman and Brückner 2001; Billy, Brewster, and Grady 1994; Cvetkovich and Grote 1980; Day 1992; Ku, Sonenstein, and Pleck 1993; Perkins, Luster, Villarruel, and Small 1998), while at least a pair of studies found that, after controlling for conservative sexual attitudes, more religious African American boys were actually more likely to have had sex than their less religious counterparts (Ku et al., 1998; Rostosky, Regnerus, and Wright 2003).

However, the findings in some of these studies have not been consistent (e.g., no association found for 12–15-year-olds in Bachanas et al., 2002; associations found for some outcomes but not others in Cooper et al., 1994) and other studies have observed no relationship at all (e.g., Reitman, 1996). These inconsistencies can likely be attributed to the use of varying definitions of sexual risk behaviours and reliance on single-item measures of church attendance. As pointed out in a recent review (Rostosky, Wilcox, Wright, & Randall, 2004), few inquires have attempted to measure other aspects of religiosity and, with the exception of one study (Zaleski & Schiaffino, 2000), have tended to rely on single-item measures of religiosity (e.g., personal importance, involvement in religion, or religious denomination). More importantly, none have attempted to explain the cognitive mechanism of the relationship between religiosity and sexual risk behaviour. Instead, studies have focused on measures of religiosity that are only indirectly linked to behaviour rather than variables that are likely to directly affect behaviour such as beliefs that are influenced by religious involvement. The current study is expected to be a contribution towards the
understanding of the correlation between the strict religious adherence and the sexual behaviour in adolescence in the present context.

2.8 EXPOSURE TO MEDIA AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

If adolescents are exposed to sexual content due to media usage such as television or movies, they would be more likely to undergo the potentially negative consequences of that exposure. Sexual content is described as the talk or behavior involving sexuality, sexual suggestiveness, or sexual activities/relationships. The connection to media and adolescent sex behavior is linked because more sexual content on media came at a time when rates of adolescent pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections are unacceptably high. (Morris, Gary, 1993).

Indian middle class adolescents report spending 2-3 h per day watching TV (Abrol, 1991; Mayuri and Mohite, 1992a; Phatak and Singh, 1986), with 75% of young adolescents reporting that they spent their evenings in televiwing (Wadkar, 1998). Young adolescents report that they watch TV for entertainment and not for intellectual stimulation (Wadkar et al., 1998); they prefer watching adult-oriented programming such as movies, film song sequences, soap operas and dislike educational programs (Jaiswal and Jaiswal, 1992; Phatak and Singh, 1986), and they prefer TV to print media (Sethi, 1997).

Studies have found that sexually related talk and behavior occurs from 8 to 10 times per hour in prime-time programming with 67% of all prime-time shows with some sexual material. Kissing and physical flirting are the most frequent behaviors and intercourse is sometimes depicted or implied. In addition, about 80% of all movies shown on network or cable television stations have sexual content. For music videos, 6 out of 10 included sexual feelings and impulses through lyrics and displays of provocative clothing and sexually
suggestive body movements. Adolescents now have greater access to R- and X-rated movies through pay TV channels and video tape rentals. (Norton, Bonny, 2001)

Youth and adolescence are crucial stages in life when individuals actively and consciously begin to engage in sexual identity construction and among media the Internet has emerged as an important medium for representing the sexual self to others (Stern 2002, Subrahmanyam 2004). The Internet has also been cited as a widely used resource among young people for sexual health information (Kanuga and Rosenfeld 2004, Clement and Brennan 2005). Since parents and schools in the context of the present study are often reluctant to discuss sexual topics openly, the anonymity and confidentiality of the Internet offers an attractive and convenient alternative source of information on sexual identities and practices (McKenna, 2001).

The impact of sexual media influence is beyond sexual acts. Adolescents perceive ideas about what it is like to be a man or woman and believe that the depictions of intimacy and sex are realistic. Media programming of sex often fails to imply the negative consequences of these acts such as STDs or pregnancies. Adolescents still engage in sexual acts even though they have knowledge about AIDS and STDs and generally do not take precautions (Rollin, Lucy, 1999)

Although exposure to mass media has become an important part of everyday life, one may be surprised to find that the role of mass media in theories of sexual behavior is still uncertain (e.g., Garfalo, 1981; Thornton and Voigt, 1984). There has been little effort made by criminologists to include media in existing theories pertaining to the family, school, and peer group, or to formulate theories exclusively for explaining the relationship between media and adolescent deviance.

The role of media influence is complex and does not involve simply ‘absorption’ or ‘mimicry’ (Kitzinger, 1999; Batchelor, 2003); however, several studies have shown that the
media has an important part to play in shaping the knowledge and attitudes of young people, and can influence discussion around sexuality (Davis and Harris, 1982; Thomson and Scott, 1991; Kehily, 1996; Currie, 1997; Forrest, 1997; Millwood Hargrave, 1999).

2.8.1 Review of Empirical Research

L’Engle, Brown and Kenneavey (2006) found that more exposure to sexually-related media and media that conveys an approval of adolescent sexual behavior was related to higher levels of intention to engage in sexual behavior and a greater amount of sexual behavior in general. This effect persisted even after controlling for other contextual factors including parents, peers, school, and religious influences.

Brown (1996) reported that young people are heavy consumers of sexually-oriented media including TV, both broadcast and cable channels, videos, movies, magazines, and, more recently, the internet. Content analyses have also demonstrated that broadcast television contains a high, growing and increasingly explicit dose of sexual messages, and that a low proportion of such messages display or model either restraint or contraceptive use (Kunkel, 1997; Greenberg, 1997).

Brown & Newcomer, (1991) reported that young people who have had sexual intercourse do watch shows with more sexual content.

Kelly Ladin L’Engle, Jane D. Brown, and Kristin Kenneavy, (2006) reported that adolescents who are exposed to more sexual content in their media diets, and who perceive greater support from the media for teen sexual behaviour, report more sexual activity and greater intentions to engage in sexual intercourse in the near future. Even after considering influences from other important socialization sources, such as family, religion, school, and
peers, media influences were significantly associated with sexual intentions and behaviors in this diverse sample of early adolescents.

Much of the media that adolescents are exposed to include sexual imagery but rarely portray consequences of risky sexual encounters or healthy sexual messages (Pardun CJ, L’Engle KL, Brown JD, 2005). For example, a recent study found that 83% of the top 20 Nielsen-rated teen television shows contained some sexual content, with only 12% of the sexual content addressing sexual risks or responsibilities (Kunkel D, Biely E, Eyal K, 2003). Other studies of teen television shows, movies, music, and magazines confirm that there is an abundance of sexual content across a variety of media frequently used by teenagers (Lowry DT, Shidler JA. 1993).

Strouse J, Fabes RA. (1985) reported that the sexual content in the media, along with peers, may dilute the positive impact of school-based sexual health programs and more traditional sexual values espoused by adults in the other contexts of adolescents’ lives.

Kunkel D, Biely E, Eyal K, et al. (2003) reported that the majority of sexual content in the media depicts risk-free, recreational sexual behaviour between non married people. Media programming rarely depicts negative consequences from sexual behaviour, and depictions of condom and contraception use are extremely rare. Media users are more likely to adopt behaviours depicted by characters that are perceived as attractive and realistic, and who are not punished but rewarded for their behaviour (Bandura A, 1986). So messages about sexuality in the media may be especially compelling to adolescents.

Content analysis has been performed on print media, television and movies, music, and computerized media to determine the types of messages delivered through these sources with results showing adolescents being exposed to both implicit and explicit sexual content (Carpenter, 1998; Durham, 1998; Flowers-Coulson, Kushner, & Bankowski, 2000; Kehily, 1999; Strong & DeVault, 1994). While neither prior research nor the general public appear
to dispute the sexual content of the media, the perceived influence on adolescents and their sexuality appears to warrant further examination.

Based on an extensive literature review regarding the influences of sexual content in the media, Malamuth and Impett (2001) state that individual personality factors may also be important, as research suggests that the type of media people select and find gratifying is predictably related to their personalities and other individual differences.

The gender of the adolescent has also been shown to be associated with media influence. For example, Baran (1976) examined the influence of perceptions of sexuality on television and satisfaction with sexuality. While no direct influence of television on sexuality was found, Baran did find that males were more likely to report higher levels of satisfaction with their first sexual experience and lower levels of satisfaction with their virginity. Brown and Newcomer et al (1991) found that males were less likely to be virgins than were females, and that while females were more likely to watch television, sexual status (virgin or non-virgin) was related to the amount of sexual content viewed on television.

In a qualitative, multi-method study, Steele (1999) also found that gender differences might be present in the selection of media to be viewed or listened to. Adolescent girls also appear to be affected differently by print media and are more likely than young males to read and have positive attitudes toward magazines. Girls use these magazines as discussion starters and to supplement sex education classes, whereas boys have reported that they consider the seeking and sharing of advice unmasculine behavior (Kehily et al., 1999). Girls have also been reported as more likely to seek media showing romance and are therefore more likely to be exposed to sexual content (Donnerstein & Smith, 2001). Based on content analysis research, Durham (1998) concluded that girls are likely to struggle to balance the messages sent by the media in regard to appearance, behavior, and social power dynamics.
Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss, (1987); and Walsh-Childers and Brown, (1993), reported that greater exposure to sexually oriented genres, such as soap operas and music videos, has been related to adolescents expressing more liberal attitudes about sex (e.g., with stronger endorsement of dysfunctional beliefs about relationships, and with a greater acceptance of sexual harassment).

Buerkel-Rothfuss and Strouse, (1993); and Carveth and Alexander, (1985) reported that greater exposure to these genres has been linked to adolescents’ assumptions about the prevalence of sex and of certain sexual activities frequently depicted on TV. For example, undergraduates who frequently view soap operas offer higher estimates of the numbers of real people who divorce or sire illegitimate children than do less frequent viewers.

Brown and Newcomer et al., (1991); Strouse et al., (1995); and Strouse and Buerkel-Rothfuss et al., (1987) reported that heavier consumption of sexually oriented genres has been linked to a greater number of sexual partners and to an earlier age of 1st intercourse.

In a study, Kalof (1999) exposed 44 undergraduates to either a sexually stereotyped Michael Jackson music video or to a nonsexual music video. Group differences emerged for 1 of the 4 dimensions of sexual attitudes assessed, such that students in the experimental group were more likely to endorse adversarial sexual beliefs than were students in the control group.

Exposure to several sexual scenes drawn from prime-time soaps and dramas was found to increase teens’ acceptance of sexual improprieties in one study (Bryant and Rockwell, 1994), but to have no effects on their beliefs in another (Greenberg et al., 1993).

According to studies commissioned by the Kaiser Family Foundation collectively labeled "Sex, Kids, and the Family Hour," there was a 400 percent increase from 1976 to 1996 in sexual references during the evening television viewing time period commonly referred to as "family hour." It was determined that by 1996 children were exposed to about
eight sexual references per hour during this time slot (Liebert, Robert m., and Sprefkin, Joyce n, 1988).

In Media, Children, and the Family, Jennings Bryant and Steven Rockwell reported the results of their studies that investigated the effects of exposure to sexual content on television. They found that such exposure affected adolescents' moral judgment. They qualified the results, however, by saying that parental discussion and clear expression of personal values mitigated the effects on adolescents (Hoffner, Cynthia, 1996).

Rebecca L. Collins; Marc N. Elliott; Sandra H. Berry; David E. Kanouse; Dale Kunkel; Sarah B. Hunter (2004) reported that Watching sex on TV predicts and may hasten adolescent sexual initiation. Reducing the amount of sexual content in entertainment programming, reducing adolescent exposure to this content, or increasing references to and depictions of possible negative consequences of sexual activity could appreciably delay the initiation of coital and noncoital activities.

Despite data showing that adolescents are frequent media users and consumers of numerous unhealthy media messages about sexual behavior, mass media influences are rarely included in ecological models and are rarely considered as important contexts for adolescents’ sexual socialization. Survey studies, which avoided the artificiality of laboratory experiments, have not produced uniform results. Many survey studies have found various degrees of association between media exposure and self-reported aggressive or sexual deviant behavior (e.g., McLeod et al., 1972; Atkin et al., 1979; Comstock and Paik, 1991), but some studies either did not find a significant association (e.g., Pfuhl, 1970), or were not certain about the presence of a significant association (e.g., Milavsky et al., 1982).
2.9 PEER INFLUENCE WITH SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Becoming a member of a peer group is one of the primary developmental tasks of adolescence (Coleman and Hendry, 1990; Erikson, 1968). Peer groups influence adolescent socialization and identity by allowing young person’s to explore individual interests and uncertainties while retaining a sense of belonging and continuity within a group of friends (Erikson et. al., 1968; Hartup, 1983; Steinberg and Silverberg, 1987). In a contemporary society, peer groups have become an increasingly important context in which adolescents spend time. Modernization has led to more and more age segregation-in schools, in the workplace, and in the community.

Today's teenagers spend far more time in the exclusive company of their peers than their counterparts did in the past (Steinberg, 1996). How much time one spends with friends as opposed to adults will play a great part in the development of the adolescent into the mature adult they will become some day. Soaring divorce rates and the unprecedented emergence of women in the paid labor force have greatly reduced time families spend together making peer groups a viable alternative, even more so than normally would be expected. Moreover, the rapid growth of the teenage population as experienced in the 1990's has led to a rise in adolescent peer groups simply because the sheer increase in the number of peers that young people have has increased. (Steinberg et al., 1996).

Peers are important agents of socialization, influencing many domains of psychosocial and cognitive development (Hartup, 1996; Hartup & Stevens, 1997; Parker & Asher, 1997). In adolescence, affiliation with antisocial friends is one of the strongest correlates of delinquency and substance use (Elliott, Huizinga, & Ageton, 1985; Loeber, Stouthamer-Loeber, Van Kammen, & Farrington, 1991; Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992).

It is often recognized that adolescent sexual behaviour depends on dyadic relations that include multiple forms of intimate interaction (e.g., companionship, support) and provide
the opportunity for sexual behavior. There has been limited acknowledgement in studies of adolescent sexual behavior that the peer group is an environmental context that may promote a range of behaviors, such as dating and alcohol use (Dunphy, 1963; Eder, 1985; Kandel, Davies, & Baydar, 1990; Zani, 1993).

Researchers who have proposed a biosocial model, for example, have identified personal attributes correlated with adolescent sexual behavior, such as hormones (testosterone), physical maturation/puberty, and temperament and personality, as well as social experiences correlated with sexual behavior, such as social controls (e.g., religion, church attendance) and friends’ behaviors (Halpern, Udry, Campbell, Suchindran, & Mason, 1994; Smith, Udry, & Morris, 1985; Udry, 1988; Udry et al., 1995; Udry & Talbert, 1988).

2.9.1 Review of Empirical Research

A substantial research literature demonstrates the impact of perceptions of peers' behaviors and attitudes on young people's sexual activity. Sexual activity has been shown to relate to a number of peer measures including peer pressure (Lewis and Lewis, 1984), perceived approval of sexual behaviors (Thomson, 1982), perceived peer norms about safe sex practices (Winslow, 1992), peer acceptance and rejection (Feldman, 1995), and participation in a deviant peer network (Benda and Di Blasio, 1994; Newcomb, 1986; Udry and Billy, 1987). One of the most studied links is between peers' perceived level of sexual activity and teenagers' own sexual practices (Billy and Udry, 1985; Chilman, 1983; DiBlasio and Benda, 1990; Newcomb et al., 1986). The consistent finding is that young people who believe their peers are sexually active are more likely to be so themselves.

Collins and Sroufe (1999) and Furman and Wehner’s (1994) reported in the developmental perspective of theory of romantic views that the higher friendship quality in early adolescence would predict earlier onset of romantic relationships. This theory highlights
the progression of relationships throughout life and the importance of the quality of relationships with friends in the formation of romantic relationships. In addition, Sullivan’s (1953) classic theory proposes that intimacy with friends and increasing sexual interests give rise to the initiation of romantic relationships.

Dishion, Andrews, Kavanagh, & Soberman, (1996) reported that interpersonal dynamics between antisocial friends are linked to an escalation in deviant behaviours. In particular, observations of positive reinforcement of deviant talk within peer dyads (e.g., discussing aggressive or illegal activities) are linked to escalations in substance use, delinquency, violence, and risky sexual behaviour in adolescence and early adulthood (Capaldi, Dishion, Stoolmiller, & Yoerger, 2001; Dishion et al., 1996; Dishion, Capaldi, Spracklen, & Li, 1995; Dishion, Eddy, Haas, Li, & Spracklen, 1997).

Beal, (2001); Musher-Eizenman, (2003); Prinstein, (2001) reported that Youths’ perceptions of their friends’ attitudes and behaviors are associated with adolescent substance use, sexual initiation and participation in oral sex (Prinstein, 2003; Romer and Stanton 2003), and violence and delinquency (Prinstein et al., 2001; Rappaport and Thomas 2004). Perceptions of friends’ beliefs and conduct are also associated with several positive behaviours such as delayed sexual initiation (DiLorio, 2001), condom use (DiLorio et al. 2001; Romer and Stanton et al., 2003) and smoking cessation (Maxwell 2002).

Studying selection, longitudinal research on friendship dyads reports that behaviour among stable adolescent friendship pairs grows more similar for sexual intercourse (Billy and Udry et al., 1985) and substance use (Kandel et al., 1978).

Collins, (2003) and Furman & Wehner, (1994) reported that young people who had more intimate friendships in early adolescence formed their first romantic relationships and sexual activities sooner. Young people with more intimate and satisfying friendships formed
expectations that relationships would be positive and satisfying and, thus, feel competent to form intimate relationships with the other sex sooner.

Additionally, Eder (1985) reported that female friends influenced involvement in romantic relationships by discussing and encouraging interests in the other sex. Higher quality friendships with more intimate interactions also may have influenced the development of romantic relationships by providing a context within which to discuss and explore romantic interests.

Results are consistent with Bingham and Crockett’s (1996) finding that adolescents’ high quality peer relationships were associated with earlier onset of sexual intercourse. In contrast, there was no direct effect of teacher reported peer acceptance in early adolescence on the age of first romantic relationship. Yet, greater peer acceptance was associated with more alcohol use at age 16, which, in turn, predicted the number of sexual partners by age 19.

Bearman and Bruckner (1999) found that a youth’s peer network might exert a greater influence on sexual initiation than a single friend (e.g., a best friend). From a social network perspective, youth who believe that most of their peers have had sex are more likely to be more motivated to begin their own sexual activity, to start at an earlier age, and to gain their friends’ respect and acceptance if they too became sexually active (Kinsman et al. 1998; Sieving, 2006).

Nonetheless, a third of the studies reviewed by Buhi and Goodson (2007) found “no statistically significant association between the perception of peers’ sex behaviours and sexual behavior outcomes”. Furthermore, research suggests that gender may moderate the relationship between peer norms and youths’ sexual behaviors.

Research exploring the association between peer norms and sexual behaviors for boys and girls, respectively, suggests that the effect is stronger for girls. Sheeran (1999) reported that Compared to boys, girls assign greater weight to their social relationships and are more
likely to comply with peer norms to avoid rejection, leading to greater sexual risk-taking behaviors (e.g., inconsistent condom use), decreased self-esteem Salazar (2005), and sexual power imbalances in condom use negotiation. Consequently, the role of gender merits particular attention when exploring the association between peer influences and sexual behaviors.

2.10. CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE PROBLEM

Behaviour is the product of the complex interaction of factors in two domains, namely individual and environmental. The relative priority of their effects upon the behaviour depends on various circumstances, which cannot be determined easily. Definite conclusions on cause effect relationship can be made only in controlled experimental conditions. Through a correlational study, one can only assume/predict the possible effect on any one factor, on the basis of the correlation found among the factors.

The problem under study is a complex one, and its genesis is multi factorial in nature. As such, it is difficult to isolate the effects of independent causes. Comprehensive understanding of the problem calls for the coverage of a vast array of factors, including life setting, gender, cognitive ability/standard, childhood sexual abuse, and environmental factors that influence the course of development. In sexual behaviour, both individual and environmental factors are significant contributors. However, the causal efficacy of these factors in sexual behaviour remains inconclusive. Specific conclusions on the formation of sexual behaviour cannot be made solely on the basis of correlations found among the variables. If the factors are found to covary with sexual behaviour, it can be assumed that some associations exist among them. In the manifestation of the sexual behaviour, factors like religiosity, peer group influence, media influence, and parental influence and behaviours are preceding events. Their correlations, if found, can be utilised to presume some amount of cause effect relationship.
With this perspective in mind, the present investigation takes into consideration, variables relating to two broad categories: those attributable to the environment in which the adolescent develops and those attributable to the adolescents. Considering the fact that very few surveys in the current population have been conducted on the sexual behaviour of adolescents, the study was designed as having two phases, the first phase being a survey on the sexual behaviour and the second, a detailed investigation based on the selected correlatives.