Summary
Depression is one of the most common and most serious mental health problems of contemporary society. It can obstruct an individual from performing his day to day activities normally. Depression is also experienced by among individuals who are able to perform their day to day activities relatively normally – this may be referred to as non-pathological or subsyndromal depression. Non-pathological or subsyndromal depression experienced by normal people may lead to the emergence of MDD symptoms in later life. However its management is easier than that of full-blown pathological depression. Thus understanding the phenomena of subsyndromal or non-pathological depression takes us towards the preventive approach.

This study has focused on university students, as college age is the age of transition and there are added anxieties about many psychosocial factors at this stage. The growing competition in education, examination stress, career uncertainties, interpersonal relations, problems emanating from important domains of life, give rise to discontent and restlessness among youth. As per WHO data, every 40 seconds a life is lost through suicide worldwide. Suicide rates tend to increase with age, but there has recently been an alarming increase in suicidal behaviors amongst young people aged 15 to 25 years old. High levels of depression have also been observed in this group.

By understanding factors relating to depression in the normal sample, aspects of behaviour which need to be nurtured or discouraged would become clear and strategies for prevention may be contemplated. Factors which were selected for study by the researcher were Emotional Intelligence, Anger Expression and Peer Relationships.
The major objective was to study how Emotional Intelligence, Anger Expression and Peer Relationships predict Depression among students. Emotional Intelligence describes abilities different from, but complementary to, academic intelligence or the purely cognitive capacities measured by IQ. It is becoming more and more clear that emotional intelligence plays a vital role in successfully handling the actual problems of life. Unlike IQ, Emotional Intelligence is not fixed at birth, it can be developed considerably. The operational definition of EI subscribed by the present researcher was the ability or skill of an individual to perceive, understand, express, label, manage and regulate emotions of oneself and that of others. Mayer & Salovey (1997) proposed that EI includes 4 types of abilities, i.e., (a) Perceiving emotions, (b) Using emotions, (c) Understanding emotions, & (d) Managing emotions. These four dimensions of EI were brought under three heads viz. (a) Perceiving & Understanding emotions, (b) Expressing & Labeling emotions, and (c) Managing & Regulating emotions by Taksic (2000a). Scale constructed by Taksic was used by the present researcher.

Anger is a fundamental emotion that everyone experiences from time to time. Anger can be constructive or destructive. When well managed, anger or annoyance has few detrimental health or interpersonal consequences. At its roots, anger is an indication to a person that something in the environment is not right. It captures attention and motivates the person to take action to correct that wrong thing. How a person ends up handling the anger signal has very important consequences for his/her overall health and welfare. Anger is also a critically important part of what might be called the self-preservation and self-defense instincts. People who are incapable of getting angry are also incapable of standing up for themselves. It is important then that people learn how to express anger appropriately. Anger can be described as a
state emotion, or as a trait personality characteristic. Spielberger et al. (1985) proposed a model for anger expression which includes four dimensions viz., (a) Anger-in (how often angry feelings are experienced but not expressed), (b) Anger-out (the extent that an individual engages in aggressive behaviors when motivated by angry feelings), (c) Anger-control (a tendency not to become angry even in anger provoking situations), and (d) Anger-total (a configuration of all the anger dimensions). In this investigation, these four dimensions of anger expression have been studied.

Another important factor which was studied by the researcher is Peer Relationships. Peers are people who are alike in social characteristics and age or maturity level. Peer groups provide a source of information and comparison about the world outside the family. Peers can be a source of belongingness and acceptance as well as a source of stress. In this study, the negative aspects of peer relations have been emphasized, on the basis of the type of attachment a person has with his peers or friends. The model of attachment style given by Brennan, Clark, & Shaver, (1998) has explained attachment in terms of two broad dimensions viz. Anxiety (fear of rejection and abandonment) and Avoidance (discomfort with closeness and discomfort depending on others). Peer relationships were studied on these two dimensions.

Therefore, a total number of 10 variables were studied in relation to Depression, i.e., Emotional Intelligence, components of Emotional Intelligence being (i) Perceiving and Understanding emotions, (ii) Expressing and Labeling emotions, and (iii) Managing and Regulating emotions, components of Anger Expression being (i) Anger-In, (ii) Anger-Out, (iii) Anger-Control and (iv) Anger-Total, and Peer Relationships with two components, viz. (i) Peer Attachment Related Anxiety and (ii) Peer Attachment Related Avoidance. Alongwith the study of predictors of
Depression in the total sample these predictors were also studied in groups formed on the basis of gender, family structure and urban-rural status. In order to study whether any of the predictor variables were exercising their effect in terms of interaction, three-way ANOVA was also applied.

Thus, correlational as well as factorial research design was used by the researcher. Correlational design was used for the prediction of depression by the 10 variables and for the assessment of the interaction effects among the predictor or independent variables, factorial design (2 x 2 x 2) was used.

On the basis of previous investigations and theoretical outlines, the following hypotheses were formulated by the researcher.

1. a) Perceiving and understanding emotions has negative predictive relationship with Depression.
   b) Expressing and labeling emotions has negative predictive relationship with Depression.
   c) Managing and regulating emotions has negative predictive relationship with Depression.
   d) Total Emotional Intelligence has negative predictive relationship with Depression.

2. a) Anger-In has positive predictive relationship with Depression.
   b) Anger-Out has positive predictive relationship with Depression.
   c) Anger-Control has negative predictive relationship with Depression.
   d) Anger-Total has positive predictive relationship with Depression.

3. a) Peer attachment related anxiety has positive predictive relationship with Depression.
b) Peer attachment related avoidance has positive predictive relationship with Depression.

4. Different factors predict Depression among male and female students.

5. Different factors predict Depression among students living in joint and nuclear families.

6. Different factors predict Depression among students belonging to urban and rural areas.

7. Interactional effect of Emotional Intelligence, components of Emotional Intelligence, Anger expression and Peer Relationships explain variance in Depression among students.

8. Male and female students differ in terms of –
   a) Depression
   b) Emotional Intelligence
   c) Components of Emotional Intelligence
   d) Anger expression and
   e) Peer Relationships

9. Students from joint family and nuclear family differ in terms of –
   a) Depression
   b) Emotional Intelligence
   c) Components of Emotional Intelligence
   d) Anger expression
   e) Peer Relationships
10. Students from rural region and urban region differ in terms of -
   a) Depression
   b) Emotional Intelligence
   c) components of Emotional Intelligence
   d) Anger expression
   e) Peer Relationships

The sample was comprised of 242 students taken from various faculties or departments of Aligarh Muslim University viz. MBA, Engineering, Arts, Social Sciences, Commerce, Science etc. Out of these 130 were males and 112 were females, 150 were living in a joint family and 92 were living in a nuclear family, and 165 belongs to urban areas and 77 belongs to rural areas. The age range was 18-25 years with average age of the sample being 21.44 (SD = 2.48). Although strict random sampling is almost impossible in social science research because often individuals who should be in the sample do not consent to participate or withdraw in the midst of the research, an attempt was made to draw out the sample through random procedures. Many subjects did not consent or were not available therefore they had to be excluded. We took all precautions to ensure that sample was drawn objectively and systematically.

The following measures were used for assessing the subject’s level of Depression, Emotional Intelligence, Anger Expression and Peer Relationships.

1. Beck’s Depression Inventory-II (BDI-II): constructed by Beck, Steer and Brown (1996) had been used to assess the respondents’ level of depression. The scale assesses depression as experienced during the course of past two weeks. It is a 21 item self report measure.
2. **Emotional Intelligence, Skills & Competence Questionnaire (EISCQ):** by Taksic (2000a) was used to assess Emotional Intelligence. It was constructed using Mayer & Salovey model of Emotional Intelligence. EISCQ consists of 45 items divided into the three subscales. (i) Perceive and Understand Emotion scale has 15 items, (ii) Express and Label Emotion scale has 14 items, (iii) Manage & Regulate Emotion scale has 16 items.

3. **Anger Expression (Ax) Scale:** constructed by Spialberger, Johnson, Jacobs, Krasner, Oesterle, and Worden (1985) was used to measure Anger Expression. The Anger Expression (Ax) scale comprised of 20 items and yields four different scores. Four dimensions of anger are measured by this scale, namely Anger-In, Anger-Out, Anger-Control and Anger-Total.

4. **Experiences in Close Relationships – Revised (ECR-R):** by Fraley, Waller & Brennan (2000) is a revised version of Brennan, Clark & Shaver’s (1998) Experiences in Close Relationships (ECR) Questionnaire and was used to measure peer relationships. It has two dimensions i.e. Attachment Related Anxiety and Attachment Related Avoidance. ECR-R Questionnaire comprised of 36 items and the first 18 items being related to Attachment-Related Anxiety and items 19-36 comprise Attachment-Related Avoidance.

Since an important concern of the study was to find out how Emotional Intelligence, Anger Expression and Peer Relationships predict depression among students, regression analysis was applied. Total Emotional Intelligence, Expressing & Labeling emotions, Managing & Regulating emotions, Anger-Total, Anger-In and Anger-Out emerged as significant predictors of depression in the total sample {Table-1(a) & 1(b)}. 

179
Predictors of Depression were studied separately in male and female sample. Total Emotional Intelligence emerged as a common predictor in both male and female students {Table-2.1(b) and Table-2.2(b)}, i.e. as Emotional Intelligence increases, the level of depression decreases and vice versa. Managing and Regulating emotions, Expressing and Labeling emotions and Anger-In were predictors of Depression in females {Table-2.2(a)}, while in male students, Anger-Total and Anger-Out were predictors of Depression {Table-2.1(a) and 2.1(b)}.

Predictors of Depression were also studied in individuals living in joint families and nuclear families. Total Emotional Intelligence and Anger-Total emerged as common predictors of Depression in both joint and nuclear families {Table-3.1(b) & Table-3.2(b)}, i.e. as Emotional Intelligence increases Depression decreases and vice versa; and as Anger-Total increases Depression also increases. Anger-In emerged as predictor of Depression among students living in joint families but not in nuclear families, Expressing and Labeling emotions and Anger-out were predictors of Depression among students living in nuclear families.

Students belonging to urban region and students belonging to rural region were also studied separately. Most of the predictors were common to both groups viz. Total Emotional Intelligence, Anger-Total and Anger-Out {Table-4.1(a), 4.1(b), 4.2(a) & 4.2(b)}, i.e. as Emotional Intelligence increases, Depression decreases; but as Anger-Total and Anger-Out increase then Depression also increases. Managing & Regulating emotions also emerged as a predictor of Depression among students belonging to rural region {Table-4.2(a)}.

In psychological studies, some variables may not have an independent significant impact on a phenomenon. However, they may interact with other variables
to produce a significant effect. This aspect was also taken into consideration by the researcher. Therefore, three-way analysis of variance was also carried out to obtain information in this regard. In regression analysis, Peer Attachment Related Anxiety, Peer Attachment Related Avoidance, Anger-Control and Perceiving & Understanding emotions did not emerged as significant predictors, however, they were found to have significant interaction effect on Depression by interacting among themselves and also with other variables, namely, Total Emotional Intelligence, Expressing & Labeling emotions, Managing & Regulating emotions, Anger-In and Anger-Total.

In order to acquire further in-depth information with reference to variables like gender, family system and urban-rural dimension, inter-group differences were studied among males and females, students living in joint and nuclear families as well as urban and rural regions by computing mean scores on Depression, Emotional Intelligence and its components, Anger Expression and Peer Relationships (Table-24).

Male and female students were found to differ significantly on Depression as well as on some dimensions of Emotional Intelligence and Anger Expression. Males were found to have higher Depression (falling under the mild category on BDI-II) as compared to females (normal range on BDI-II). Females were found to have higher Perceiving & Understanding emotions and Managing & Regulating emotions as compared to males. Male students were also found to be high on Anger-In, Anger-Out as well as Anger-Total as compared to females.

It was also concluded that individuals living in a joint family have lower Depression (their level of depression comes under the normal range of BDI-II) than students living in a nuclear family (their level of depression comes under the category
of mild depression on BDI-II). No difference was observed on any dimension in subjects coming from rural and urban background.

Some factors which did not emerge as independent predictors in this study, viz. Perceiving & Understanding emotions, Anger-Control and dimensions of Peer Relationships, were found to exercise their effect in terms of interaction with other variables.

It is important to note that Perceiving & Understanding emotions is repeatedly being associated with elevated levels of depression. While Total Emotional Intelligence and all other components of Emotional Intelligence have been found related to reduced depression, this component did not have any predictive value independently but in terms of its interaction effects with Anger-In, Anger-Control, Anger-Total, Peer Attachment Related Anxiety and Peer Attachment Related Avoidance, it was found to raise depression. If we observe the concept closely we find that it is primarily a cognitive activity namely, perceiving and understanding. It does not involve any action like regulating, managing and expressing. Thus merely perceiving and understanding emotions are apparently not enough, appropriate activities which communicate, control and regulate emotions are essential for healthy reactions and outcomes. It may be pointed out that this relationship of Perceiving and Understanding emotions was true of non-pathological depression but in studies conducted with major depression negative relationship of Perceiving and Understanding emotions had been observed. Most definitely this factor needs to be studied more comprehensively.

It is also important to note that Peer Relationships reported in earlier studies was with major depression and our sample does not fall in this pathological category, therefore, it may be concluded that Peer Relationships are significant predictors of
major depression, with non-pathological depression their predictive value is not significant. But the interaction of these variables with Emotional Intelligence and some of its components as well as with Anger-Control points to its importance.

It is also pertinent to note that theoretically Anger-Control is a factor which is likely to have a negative predictive relationship with depression but on the other hand, anger does have a communication value and if those situations which should reasonably provoke anger are not doing so, it may not be a healthy behavior. Its role in reduced anger is seen in interaction with some other variables. This is indicative of its importance to some degree but it was not found to have an independent role in prediction of depression.

Another noteworthy factor is that by and large most of the variables which are associated with major depression, are also found to have a predictive relationship with non-pathological depression, namely, Total Emotional Intelligence, Managing & Regulating emotions, Expressing & Labeling emotions, Anger-In, Anger-Out, and Anger-Total. This provides further support and rationale to our approach of studying non-pathological depression with the objective of finding factors which will be able to prevent depression.

Mainly two factors have emerged as predictors of Depression namely, Emotional Intelligence and Anger. The important fact to note is Emotional Intelligence (which is related to lower levels of depression) can be fostered while anger (which is related to elevated depression) can be managed and reduced. Therefore it is a positive picture in the sense that changes brought about in a particular direction can prevent or reduce the likelihood of depression. Some skills and strategies have also been suggested for developing Emotional Intelligence and managing Anger.
Although at the time of initiating and planning a study, researchers make all possible efforts to ensure that there are no loop holes and shortcomings, as the research progresses and particularly as it comes to an end, there is a feeling that many things should have been different.

The first important point which comes to the mind is that since underlying objective of the research was to study factors contributing to non-pathological depression with a view to intervene forestall major depression it would have been desirable to have a sample of those experiencing severe depression also. Taking both categories of sample would have been better.

Although it is true that for individual research projects sample must necessarily be limited but having a larger sample with subjects from other institutions would have added to the goodness of the study. It had not been ascertained whether they were suffering from any other physical or mental pathology. The aspect of control would have been stronger and results more dependable.

Considering the role of genetic factors in depression, family history of depression should also have been noted. Studying differences in those with family history of depression and those without family history would have been an informative variable.

Although the dimensions of Peer Relationships did not emerge as independent predictors in our sample which comprised of those experiencing non-pathological depression, in studies of major depression their role had been found to be significant. Further some they were found to exercise influence in terms of interaction with other variables. This aspect needs to be taken up in future studies.
One factor that should have been included was parental attachment. In view of the sense of security and self-worth which emanates from parents, this factor should have been included.

Since the two factors which predicted depression namely, Emotional Intelligence and Anger are amenable to management i.e. Emotional Intelligence can be increased and anger can be reduced, action research which studies these aspects at pre and post intervention stage should be designed.

One factor that manifested itself in a very interesting way was Perceiving & Understanding emotions which was found to enhance or elevate depression as part of its interactional effect with other variables. In view of the extremely significant negative relationship of Emotional Intelligence with depression, and the negative relationship of other components of Emotional Intelligence also in a similar direction with depression, this exception is noteworthy. The predominance of behaviors rather than cognitive in reduction of depression needs to be explored very systematically.

Like all other individual researches, this research also is like a drop in the vast ocean of knowledge but it does have some relevance. Today when depression is a mental health concern at the international level, findings which bring to light factors that can be managed by proper guidance need to be identified. Both Emotional Intelligence and Anger which emerged as very significant predictors are amenable to change and through proper skills and exercises, we may augment Emotional Intelligence and reduce anger. Perhaps more researches are needed to build up a strong and more reliable theoretical base but this study is definitely a pointer in this direction.