CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

“An Educated Citizen is an asset to the Nation”

‘The destiny of India is now being shaped in her classrooms. In a world, based on Science and Technology, it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. On the quality and number of persons coming out of our schools and colleges will depend on our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction whose principle objective to raise the standard of living of our people’.

...Dr. D.S. Kothari

1.1 The Education System

Education is an essential human value. It is to humanize humanity. In fact, man becomes ‘man’ through education. Education fashions and models him for society. Human life can be glorified only through education. Educationalists believed in the inner potentialities, capacities and inherent qualities of a child. The work of education is to make the child aware of his inner powers. The main task of education is to develop the child to the fullest extent. Thus, education is a process of overall development. Without the help of education, man cannot achieve his success and development.

Education, on one hand, develops full personality of an individual by making him intelligent, learned, bold, courage, strong and good at character apart from its contribution to the growth and development of the society in particular and nation in general. Education alone is – the medium – to transfer from one generation to another, the spiritual values, moral ideals, aspiration of the nation and its cultural heritage in order to that they can be preserved, purified and
utilize to the ideas of the people into higher achievements. Not only an individual but also the society immensely benefited with the choice attainments through education.

Education is a conscious purpose to train the children for fulfilling the responsibilities of adult life. Since, the children have to enter a complicated society when they grow adults; education gives them training for adult life. It develops in them, thinking and reasoning power to fit them to rise to the occasion, when they are forced with the pressing problems of home, community and world. An individual needs training to use his own reason so that thereby he may learn to live orderly life or moral life. True education means training the individual to discriminate between ‘good and evil’, both on the level of physical responses as well as mental response. In short, education is the training of the intellect, body and spirit; it is training in co-operation, love and sympathy. It is training in correct responses to environmental conditions.

Education is as old as the human race. Its importance has been realized since times immemorial and it continues right up to this day. It has been accepted as one of the primary needs of every civilized person. This is the only reason why philosophers and leaders of human thought have so eloquently sung its praises in all ages.

Education is important both – the individual and the society. The working of society is impossible without education or educated persons. In fact, human life begins with education. The fulfilment of needs of human life is possible only through education.
By education man forms a proper attitude towards life. Education shows us many ways by which we can solve the problems of life. Life is full of struggles. Man makes his life successful by proper education. Thus, Education is the cleverest and straight road to achievement, the more the human beings become educated, the finer persons they turn out to be, the better families they establish, the healthier they are, the better work they do and the more progressive and stable are their communities.

Education is not only essential because it performs vital economic functions like job preparation and human capital formation, but it is also required for a number of other reasons like character building, personality development and development of scientific attitude etc.

Education in narrower sense is confined to school and college instruction. It believes that education starts when the child enters the school and ends with the departure from the school or college. The amount of education received by the child is measured in terms of passing the examination and securing a job.

Education in its broader sense includes all knowledge and experience, which tries to develop the child as an integrated and full-blooded human being. As such, education is not teaching of 3 Rs (Reading, Writing and Arithmetic), but it is training of 4 Hs (Head, Heart, Hand and Health). It is not limited to school instruction only. It is sum total of experiences that the child receives inside and outside the school by different persons and through variety of subjects in the laboratory, library, play ground and in the home and society.
In modern times also, education is a great irresistible force, which has taken the entire world in its fold. Education is an activity or a process, which transforms the behaviour of a person from ‘instinctive behaviour’ to ‘human behaviour’. Man instead of acting impulsively, acts rationally.

Therefore, education is one of the most important sub-systems of a society. This sub-system is strategically very important because it generates both finite and infinite power. The quality of power helps in shaking the pattern of society. Where educational institutions turnout capable, intelligent, mentally alert and self-sufficient pupils, society becomes strong and productive.

The human beings living on this planet are the products of millions of years of evaluation. Over a huge proportions of those cones – actually, until relatively recently- adaptation challenges were confined to simple necessities like the provision of adequate food, shelter, clothing, safety and means of transmitting the primitive wisdom and skills of the earlier generations to the later ones. The rate of progress in technology and in the comprehension of nature during this vast period has been insufficient to outstrip to any significant degree, the necessarily slow organic-changes wrought by evolutionary processes. Now all that has changed; the dizzying pace of cultural progress, we are. The students live in a world that is quite different from the one into which they were born. There is nothing really comparable to these discontinuous in the history of these species.
In the present era of globalization, privatization and liberalization, the entire social scenario of the whole world is turned into a global village but the social attitudes, value patterns, conduct and behaviour of the people have been radically changed in the inverse direction. Today, we live in a money worshiping society which is full of competition with values of consumerism, individualism, materialism and hedonism; sadism and masochism have significantly increased and sensitivity toward others’ suffering has considerably decreased. Feelings of envy and jealousy towards others are spreading in each society with impersonal relationship, alienation, non-consciousness and unmindfulness, which have damaged the person himself. All these have created anxiety, frustration, stress, tension, maladjustment with so many personal and social problems and have disturbed the mental health of the individual to a great extent. The mental health, positive psychology, psychological well-being, qualitative living, excellence in living, feeling wellness is the synonyms which are used interchangeably.

Today’s children are in enigma. Their growth and development are modulated, moderated and determined, disillusioned, disturbed and damped. They are in a real predicament. If these external forces are in tune with their in-built skills and aspirations their growth becomes natural and exciting otherwise it gets community. Some of its compulsory aspects like work exercise, social service, scouting, guiding etc., are not found in their implementation.

Today the examinations are faced more by the parents than by their children. In most cases, for better or worse, it is the parent who
influences the destiny of his children; while some children adapt other buckle and break. Too much pressure causes behavioural problems. Examination also causes stress. The fear of examination is a common feature with children. This over attention and undue anxiety often results in pressuring the children to study hard and in cutting down their time for play and recreation.

1.2 Adolescent age

Adolescence is a period of growing independence and self-definition, during which a person begins to form an adult identity. Forming this identity involves developing feminine or masculine identities, achieving autonomy from parents and greater identification with peers. This is the period where the students have to make many important decisions about their education and career, which is going to affect their later life. Psychologists believed this to be a period of stress and storm. However, recent studies have proved that this period need not be a period of stress and storm, if proper guidance is given to the students. This discussion will help us the various aspects of the growth and development of adolescents. So we will be able to direct our students in the right direction.

The term, ‘adolescence’ comes from the Latin origin ‘adolescere’ which means to grow into maturity. In this sense, adolescence is a process rather than a period, a process of achieving the desirable growth, attitudes, beliefs and methods for effective participation in society as the emerging adult. Adolescence marks intensive changes among the adolescent girls – physically, psychologically, physiologically and sociologically. Society, particularly Indian society, enforces them to act in a particular manner through code of conduct.
Adolescent period is the most crucial period of individual’s development, which begins at 12-13 years with the onset of puberty and ends at 19-20 years with the assumptions of adult responsibilities. It is characterized by the changes in physiological, psychological and sociological aspects of individuals. Hall (1904) views adolescence as a period of storm and stress marked by vacillating and contradictory emotions. According to Gilmore et. al., (1966) lack of experience, egocentrism and curiosity to experiment with new and sometimes risky social roles in order to establish unique identity, place adolescents in high risks for developing certain emotional and social problems.

Adolescence marks intensive changes among the adolescent girls—physically, physiologically, psychologically and sociologically. Society, particularly Indian society, enforces them to act in a particular manner through code of conduct. It is very difficult to point out the exact range of the adolescence period in terms of chronological years. In our country, in comparison to western countries, the period of adolescence starts early as Indian children achieve puberty earlier, because of the favourable climatic and cultural factors. The adolescents can be referred as teenagers—the individuals having chronological age between 13 to 19 years.

The socio-economic status, personal factors, school and community environment will show some affect on their growth and development. Consequently, in an effort to cope up with these changes, they develop problems. The optimum development of a girl and a boy at the stage depends upon successful accomplishment of the developmental tasks during infancy and childhood. At the same time, society lays down a code of conduct in the form of rules and
regulations to be followed by them at this age. The adjustment problems of the individual play a decisive role in his total development. Such problems often have their roots at home and school.

According to Anantharaman and Parthasarathy (1991), the social, behavioural and learning problems of pupils manifest themselves in Indian schools. The primary task of the school is to assist children and adolescents by providing experiences, guidance, instruction and discipline in learning facts and developing skills, attitudes and habits essential for them to function effectively as members of the society in which they live. Children spend a sizable portion of their time in school and it influences their total personality affecting the values they ascribe to themselves, their relation to others, their potential for work, productivity and ability for adoption.

1.3 Different problems at Adolescent Stage

Problems of life arise out of problems of adjustment. Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its needs and circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. Since the circumstances are often changing, adjustment problems pervade through the life. But the adjustment problems of college life have some special focus. Because, college environment poses an entirely a new situation on one hand and on the other hand, adjustment in the college life has an important role in determining one’s future. For better adjustment in college environment, one has to modify, adopt or alter individual or collective patterns of behaviour so as to bring them into conformity with social patterns as with those provided by the cultural environment.
Adolescence is a period of growing independence during which a person brings to form an adult identity. Forming this identity involves developing feminine or masculine identities, achieving autonomy from parents and greater identification with peers. This is the period where the students have to make many decisions about their education and career, which is going to affect their later life. Psychologists believed that this is a very crucial period of one’s life, which shows intensive growth and change in nearly all aspects of child’s physical, mental, social and emotional life. The growth achieved, the experience gained, responsibilities felt and the relationships developed at this stage destiné, the complete future of an individual, since this is very important stage of development to be understood by the secondary, higher secondary and professional institution teachers.

Besides the demands of one basic need, society also demands a particular mode of behaviour from members. Here adjustment also needs one’s conformity to the requirement of one’s culture and the society. In this way, adjustment does not only cater to one’s own needs but also to the demands of the society. Therefore, in defining adjustment in its comprehensive way, we can conclude that Adjustment is a condition or state in which one feels that one’s needs have been (or will be) fulfilled and one’s behaviour conforms to the requirements of a given culture.

1.4 What is stress?

Stress lies within us. It arises as a result of our reactions to worldly events. Once we stop reacting, we will no longer get stressed.

– Lord Buddah
Stress is an agitated physiological state in which the electrical transmission of information along neurons is heightened to the point that the nervous system may collapse or bodily functions may perform poorly. In general, it is the term applied to the pressures people feel in life. It results from an imbalance between environmental demands and personal adequacies to meet these demands. For some individuals ‘stress’ refers only to a crises or calamity while others perceive the day-to-day life problems and mild irritations as ‘stress’. The situations causing stress and the experience of stress itself are highly subjective. Stress is a contributing factor in causing numerous emotional and behavioural difficulties including depression, anxiety, temper, tantrums, suicide attempts, child abuse, physical assault, destructive expression of anger, feelings of bitterness and resentment, irritability, impatience and stuttering.

Tension and Stress have become a part and parcel of today’s life. The 20th century has been branded as the age of ‘stress and anxiety’. Stressful circumstances are encountered everyday and at every stage of human development. From the very trauma of birth itself, right through adolescence, the young meet unavoidable sources of stress. From weaning and toilet training as babies to the process of formal education and living social skills, stress is encountered in varying dynes.

Stress is a concept that has been linked to various aspects and operations. For some it is stimulus, sometimes more, sometimes less complex, for others it is an inferred inner state and for still others it is an observable response to stimulus or situation. Thus, the role of the term is confusing and hence requires a clear definition.
According to Chaplin (1982) Stress is a state of strain whether physical or psychological. Ann (1982) felt that stress ensures when situations are ‘bad’ from a personal point of view and it is essentially in the eye of the beholder. Whiten (1983) defines stress as any circumstances that threaten or perceived to be threaten a well being and thereby tax our adaptive capacities. He further felt that stress may be either physical or psychological or both overlapping and / or interacting. Brown (1985) felt that stress is an unfavourable perception of the social environment and its dynamics that threaten social and psychological well being. Jonathan et.al., (1986) suggested that stress is naturally accepting mind-body response to demanding and / or emerging situations either of chronic or episodic nature.

Definitions of stress have focused on stimulus- as external negative force impinging on an individual; response – as an individual’s emotional and/or physiological response to external or internal environmental events and interaction elements – as person, environment problem, resulting from perceptions and appraisal of one’s internal and/or external environments (French, Rodgers and Cobb, 1974).

Selye (1974) the pioneer of stress research was the first to conceptualize the psycho-physiological responses to stress. Selye (1976) considered stress as a non-specific response to any demand made upon organisms. He labelled three phases of defence reactions that a person establishes, when stressors as the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). Selye called the defense reactions ‘General’ because stressors had effect on several areas of body. ‘Adaptation’ refers to
stimulation of defers designed to help the body adjust to deal with the stressors. And ‘Syndrome’ indicates that individual pieces of the reaction occur more or less together.

Academic stress is inevitable in any educational institution. In optimal limits it mobilizes the potentialities of the students to perform more effectively. However, increasing amounts of academic stress for prolonged periods may create over-whelming frustration and anxiety in the students which may in turn adversely affect their morale, academic achievement, mental health, study habits and adjustment styles. A large number of studies on the problem point out the existence of academic stress in the students. The source of academic stress may vary from institution to institution and individual to individual. Excessive academic stress may lead to a burnout, which is characterized by emotional exhaustion, feeling of low accomplishment and depersonalization of students.

Thus, stress is a condition stream on ones emotions, thought processes and physical conditions. When it is excessive, it can pretend once ability to cope with environment. Stress is the general term applied to the pressures. Stress is many-faceted process that occurs in all response to event that disrupts or threatens to disrupt our physical or psychological functioning. Though stress is not an unknown or a rare phenomenon to students, academic stress is a relatively new area of empirical research while a large number of studies on student burnout have been initially directed towards educational institutions, government and private. Only recently academic stress in the students especially of the Intermediate course (+2) attracted the attention of the educationalists and psychologists, as early adolescence is one of the critical transitional periods.
1.5 Concept of Adjustment

We think of adjustment as psychological survival in the same way as biologist uses the term adaptation to describe physiological survival. Adjustment is the process by which a living organism maintains a balance between its need and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs.

The term ‘adjustment’ broadly refers to manage environmental and internal demands and conflicts among demands. The term ‘adjustment’ used interchangeably with the concepts such as mastery, defence, coping and adaptation. A working definition refers that - it was any response to external life strains that serves to prevent, avoid and control external distress. Several investigators attempted to classify the adjustment styles of individuals to environmental situations, but no single and unanimously accepted method has yet emerged.

The problem of adjustment has been existence on earth. Since the appearance of human race adjustment is a relative term, opposite of adjustment was maladjustment. Life presents a continuous chain of struggle for adjustment. The process of adjustment in students starts right from the birth of the child and continuous till his death. Adjustment is both internal as well as external. It is a multidimensional approach. It is an acquired one. It is a balanced state between the needs of the individual and their satisfaction. It not only depends on physiological process but also on psychological process. Adjustment is a ladder to adopt learns and accommodates our needs interests in a hierarchy manner.
The concept of adjustment was originally a biological one and was concerned with adaptation to physical environment for survival. Adaptation to physical adoption is of course of person’s important concern, but he has also to adjust to social pressures and demands of socialization that are inherent in living interdependently with other persons. There are also the demands from a person’s internal nature, his physiological needs like hunger, thirst, sleep, elimination etc., and psychological needs like need to belong, to get esteem, to self actualization etc., influence the psychological functioning and adjustment of the person.

Every one who are alive has troubles and problems, the most important consideration in determine personal effective is not the amount of trouble or misfortune (within limits) a person encounters but now how he responds or adjust to challenges of life.

Adjustment is the process by which living organism maintains a balance between its need and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs. It is the interaction between a person and his environment.

Adjustment as a process is of major importance for psychologists, teachers and parents. To analyze the process, we should study the development of the individual longitudinally from his birth onwards. The child, at the time of his birth is absolutely dependent on others for the satisfaction of his needs, but gradually with advances, he learns to control his needs. His adjustment largely depends on his interaction with external environment in which he lives. When, the child comes into the world for him is a big buzzing and blooming confusion. He cannot differentiate among the various objects of his
environment but as he matures, he comes to learn to articulate the details of his environment through the process of sensation, perception and conception. The child in his infancy can respond and think about only concrete objects of his environment. The process of abstraction comes afterwards. The young children lack the capability of self-control of the instinctive impulses.

Adjustment is a lifelong process starting from birth of the child. Though the home can develop many good habits, which may help in the future adjustment of the child, the school too have pivotal role in guiding the child. Moreover, there are many conditions in the school, which may lead to the child’s maladjustment.

Some of the definitions are given below for the clear understanding of the term adjustment:

- Adjustment is a recurrent process by which a person varies his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment.

- Adjustment is a process and not a state ... adjustment is continuous throughout life. Living, thus, is a process of adjustment.

- The Education System must make its contribution to the development of habits, attitudes and qualities of character which will enable the citizen to bear worthy by responsibilities of democratic citizenship.

- Adjustment is the interaction between a person and his environment. An individual is adjusted if he is adjusted to himself and to his environment”.

1.6 Adjustment Styles

We think of adjustment as psychological survival in the same way as biologist uses the term adaptation to describe physiological survival. Adjustment is the process by which living organism maintains a balance between its need and the circumstances that influence the satisfaction of these needs.

Life represents a continuous chain of struggle for existence and survival. In struggling to achieve something if one finds that results are not satisfactory, either changes one’s goal or the procedure. This special feature of the living organism is termed as adjustment. Adjustment is the interaction between a person and his environment.

Anything, which appears to their senses bright, they take hold of it. Their development is purely on instinctive level. The nature of adjustive process is decided by a number of factors, particularly, internal needs and external demands of the child. When a conflict occurs between internal needs and external demands, in such conditions, there are three alternatives:

i. The individual may inhibit or modify his internal need or demand.

ii. He can alter the environment and can satisfy his demands and

iii. He can use some mental mechanism to escape from the conflicting situation and may be able to maintain the balance of his personality.

Piaget (1952) studied the adustive process from different angles. He used the term accommodation and assimilation to represent the alternation of oneself or environment as a means of adjustment. A person, who carries his values and standard of conduct without any
change and maintains these in spite of major change in the social climate, is called assimilator. The man who takes his standards from social contexts and changes his beliefs in accordance with the altered value of the society, is called accommodator.

Freud, Adler and Jung (1963) have made very significant findings regarding adjustment process. The concept of adjustment is as old as human race on the earth. Systematic emergence of this concept starts from Darwin. In those days the concept was purely biological and he used the term adaptation. The adaptability to environmental hazards goes on increasing as we proceed on the photo genetic scale from the lower extreme to the higher extreme of life.

Man among the living beings has the highest capacities to adapt to new situations. Man as social animal not only adapts to physical demands but also he adjusts to social pressures in the society. Adjustment is an important characteristic of living organism. Every individual develops of his own, unique way of treating various societal and natural constraints. It seems to be influenced by the various psychological factors and reflected in terms of behavioural activity.

Adjustment consists in the reduction of inner needs, stresses and strains and in this sense; adjustment would be a unique pattern depending upon the personality and needs of the individual. As each individual differs, his needs differ and consequently his adjustment differs. Understand in this way, adjustment would be that harmonious relationship of an individual to his environment which affords his comfortable life devoid of strain and conflict. This may be considered as the psychological view of adjustment.
A well adjusted person is free from inner conflicts.

A well adjusted person is one who has learned to apply his intelligence to the effective solution of his problems of living.

A well adjusted person has the necessary maturity to accept responsibility for himself.

1.7 Study Habits

A habit is an automotive learned behaviour pattern that enables an individual to handle specific types of environmental situations easily. The student who has acquired good study habits has developed a behaviour pattern, which enables him/her to sit down and begin working on his or her assignment with a minimum concentration. Habit permits him to attend to routine patterns connected with sitting down to work without having to give them much thought. (Tussing, 1962)

Study habit may be defined as the complex of reading behaviour of a person, resulting from the varying degree of interaction, of a number of variable factors, when he seeks graphic records for acquiring information or knowledge.

According to Kundu (1989), study habits are regularity regarding hours and routine characterizes most of the high achievers though it cannot be regarded as the general failures. In preparing for examination, greater reliance is placed on test books and self prepared text cramming except for a few key phrases, is not recommended and the subjects seem to depend more on their own powers of expression, Organization and presentation.
The efficient acquisition of knowledge depends upon the methods of acquiring study habits. It is important and desirable that a probe into the pattern of study habits of students be made, Kohli (1977) pointed out that in the academic field, study habits are of particular theoretical and practical importance. The difference between the Indian and Euro–American students in their study habits; the Indian student needs to be spoon–fed, but the Euro–American student prefers independent study under the supervision of his master.

For achieving good study habits, one must have the desire to learn with full working abilities and talents. All these are fulfilled in his assignment work, in classroom interaction, for examination purpose. Besides, he must have good memory, self-discipline in studying and a skill in assimilation. The skill of finding what you want will develop and increase as long as you nourish it. Skill of fixing it up in one’s mind requires the development of good study habits.

1.8 The concept of Mental Health

The prospect of mental health lies in adequate adjustment to life situations. It can confidently be said that mental health of the future depends upon those who influence the lives of young people. The place of the greatest importance in this is influence being held by parents. Next to them is that of teachers.

Mental health is an important aspect of one’s total health status. It is a quality of emotional well-being which provides the individual with effective living concerned with the everyday living conditions or situations. Harmonious adjustment and integrated living play a major role in the health status of the individual. The basic factors on which
mental health of any individual depends upon the heredity, physical health status, happy home, an adequate school and healthy community influences.

Mental health is that – a state of mind in which one is free to make use of his natural capabilities in an effective and satisfying manner. If we accept this definition we will most likely view mental health as a determinant of academic achievement. According to Menninger (1963) – mental health is the adjustment of human beings to the world and to each other with maximum of effectiveness and happiness. It is the ability to maintain an even temper and alert intelligence, socially considerate behaviour and happy disposition.

Mental health is a normal state of wellbeing, a positive way, but a quality of life. It is a condition which is characteristic of the average person who meets the demands of life on the basis of his own capacities and limitations.

Goldendson (1984) defined mental health as “a state of mind characterized by emotional well-being, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms and a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life. Thus, the basic determining factors of mental health status are happy home, an adequate school and healthy community. It is also influenced by the way of our basic needs are satisfied specially in our childhood.

The chief characteristic of mental health, it is evident, is adjustment. The greater the degree of successful adjustment, the greater will be the mental health of the individual. Lesser mental health will lead to lesser adjustment and greater conflict. The healthy
individual can interpret any new situation and adapt it to suit himself, or adapt himself to suit it. He maintains a healthy and benevolent attitude towards life. He is aware that difficulties come to everyone in life, so that running away from them is cowardice. They can be solved only by squarely up to them with courage.

1.9 Need for the study

Adolescence is the most important period of human life. A major part of a country’s population ranges between the ages 13-21 years. The country’s success in various fields of life depends on the proper guidance of adolescents.

Every teacher and parent must know about the nature and changes emerging in transition period from childhood to adulthood. They must also know the various problems fraught with developmental characteristics to deal effectively with problems of adolescents. It is also necessary for them to be familiar with casual factor of the problems of adolescents. So that proper individual, educational and vocational guidance may be provided for adequate adjustment in the society.

Some amount of academic stress is essential in mobilizing the potentialities of the individuals to work more efficiently. But increased amount for a prolonged period will have deleterious effects on the physical and mental health and academic achievement of the students. The common symptoms include diminished pleasure in learning, addiction to drugs or alcohol, smoking, irritability, fatigue, depression, insomnia and physical problems ranging from migraine and back pain to ulcers. A general survey of related literature shows adaptation of
various resources or strategies by students in an effort to cope with the academic stress at work. Some of them may be adequate and other causing further stress and pushing the student into a vicious circle of academic stress and maladaptive behaviour.

In a developing country like India, we cannot afford to waste out precious resources, in the name of academic stress. Something needs to be done to save the students from its oppressive grip so as to enable them to function in a congenial environment and deliver the best of their potentialities.

At this juncture, identification of the chief sources of academic stress, adjustment styles, study habits and mental health of the students assume enormous importance. Students have different personal characteristics. Similarly with differences in accumulated experience in the learning process over a period, they may be expected to differ in their perceptions and experiences of academic stress. In addition to these, many studies have emphasized the inverse relation between academic stress and mental health and academic success.

Hence, it has been felt that a study of academic stress and adjustment styles among a sample of student-teachers (teacher trainees) would be worthwhile in our efforts to ensure an education of high quality to our young generation.

1.10 Importance of the study

If the educational endeavours are to succeed in deriving optimal benefit from the input, the capabilities of pupils need to grow constantly unhampered through the encounter of the individual with his environment. Adolescents who have emotional and social problems
cannot fit into normal situations. If one is not able to fit into normal situations, he/she cannot achieve at the expected level. The main aim of schooling gets spoiled. They become a problem to themselves as well as to the home, school and community. So understanding of academic problems and adjustment problems of adolescents is needed to help them to solve their problems. It is under this background, an attempt has been made to study the academic stress and adjustment styles to those problems of stress among adolescent boys and girls in relation to their study habits and mental health.

There are parents who want their children to opt for a particular professional course and pressure them to be in their footsteps; the results are exhaustion and stress leading to psychological disorders. Parent’s expectations are highly unrealistic and fastidious and they encumber the students. The push to get higher grades is a regular occurrence, particularly at adolescence when children are susceptible to the imposition of subjects much against their interest and aptitude.

Parents should inspire and educate children on the importance of learning new things and not set percentages as targets. They should emphasize more on weighing the marks instead of merely counting them. “Parents have to get it into their head that the end, just the end, does not justify the means”, says Elizabeth Daniel (1998).

It is argued that the results of the study would help those concerned with academic stress and the mental health of the students in removing or minimizing the extent of stress from the identified sources. Knowledge of reactions to academic stress or adjustment / coping strategies resources of the students would provide a fund of information for counselors, parents and teachers to plan for
strengthening the personnel resources. In a way the study would also help gain feedback regarding academic stress of students compared to their counterparts in other parts of the world in the light of different educational climates.

Accordingly, it has been planned to undertake a study of the sources of academic stress among a sample of students of general course and professional course students (after Intermediate level), the method the student use to cope with and the factors associated with academic stress and coping.

The management of the problem of academic stress requires a study of all dimensions and implications in detail and the plan strategies for prevention of the problem initially at the school level and further manages at the individual level or in a group setting. We need to have school psychologists to handle usual psychological and academic problems in the school. As a preventive measure, the student must undergo stress management programmes especially during the vulnerable periods. They should be made dynamic, having better stress tolerance, problem solving abilities, proper self-evaluation and goal setting. High quality education is essential in developing human potential and maintaining mental health is also equally important.

Hence, the present study is aimed at identifying the various academic stress areas that are causing, and different adjustment styles to cope with these problems of stress by the adolescent teacher training (D.Ed) students. The other purpose of this study is to find out the effects of gender of the students, subjects studied, caste to which they belong, religion background and the nature of the home where the
students live with, on the academic stress and the coping of the D.Ed. students. Thus, this study may probe into the causes for the unnecessary failures and the consequent feeling of inadequacy.

1.11 Resume of the succeeding chapters

Chapter – II - presents the review of related literature.

Chapter – III - deals with the method of investigation i.e. statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypotheses, variables studied and limitations of the study, tools and techniques used, method of investigation for data collection and the statistical techniques used in the analyses of the data.

Chapter – IV - deals with the results and discussion.

Chapter - V- deals with the summary, major findings, conclusions educational implications, recommendations and suggestions for further research.