CHAPTER – I
INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

The new media are an emerging and powerful medium of communication. The new media as the fourth wave of communication after print, radio, television and cinema has brought ripples among the people’s lifestyles world over. “To reach an audience of 50 million homes; it took the radio 38 years, it took the television 13 years, it took cable 10 years but the new media did it in 4 years” (Madhusudhan, 1999.176a). The new media have brought about the death of distance due to its distinctive technology of surpassing time and geographical boundaries. The convergence of technology with the connection of Internet has altered the one to many model of traditional mass communication with the prospect of many to many communication networks. The emerging dimensions of the new media industry are altering the cultural landscape all over the globe. This further has a bearing on socio-economic communication. A host of neo-cultural elements are influencing the daily lives of the people globally such as food habits, mind-set, fashion and life styles. Computer and smart phones are inevitable gadgets amidst urban and rural environment.

The ‘netizens’ and the ‘digital communicators’ population is remarkably multiplying day by day. The communication technology revolution has fostered a parallel world namely ‘virtual world’. The post Y2K era can be considered as a ‘virtual and digital generation’. New media bridges the gap cut across the geography, time, and culture. A good number of researchers have studied the impact of new media on varied populace. How media has influenced the child development is a question being probed by the researchers ever since its advent. This question raises multidisciplinary research issues. Sociologists, Psychologists, Educationists and Communication researchers have and are filling the gap of knowledge as to how media have had and continue to impact on the school children’s cognition, behavior, family atmosphere and academic performance. Frequency of connectivity surpassing the timeframe and geography has had a significant impact in the emerging neo-liberal society. The present study evaluates the impact of new media on secondary
school children with special reference to Mysore city. The salient features of the new media, sustainable development of adolescents in India, adolescents and new media, social significance of the study, statement of the problem and objectives of the study are furnished in this chapter.

1.2 Salient Features of New Media

The new media technologies are basically digital, networkable, compressible and interactive. Broadly speaking, the Internet, websites, computer multimedia, video games, augmented reality, CD-ROMS and DVDs constitute the gamut of ‘new media’. Practically, the term ‘new media’ refers to on-demand access to content anytime, anywhere, on any digital device, as well as interactive user feedback, and creative participation. The new media are also known for real-time generation of new and unregulated content. The new media entered the world during the fag end of 20th century. The world also witnessed a different kind of parallel relationship between social changes and computer design. Andrew L. Shapiro (1990) argues that the “emergence of new, digital technologies signals a potentially radical shift of who is in control of information, experience and resources”. W.Russell Neuman (1991) suggests that whilst the “new media” have technical capabilities to pull in one direction, economic and social forces pull back in the opposite direction. The people have witnessed the evolution of a universal interconnected network of audio, video and electronic text communications that have blurred the distinction between interpersonal and mass communication and between public and private communication.

Neuman (2003) identifies the characteristics of new media as follows:

- Alter the meaning of geographic distance.
- Allow for a huge increase in the volume of communication.
- Provide the possibility of increasing the speed of communication.
- Provide opportunities for interactive communication.
- Allow forms of communication that were previously separate to overlap and interconnect.

Lev Manovich identified eight propositions of new media such as: association of cyber culture with new media. Computer technology oriented
distribution platform of new media, new media as digital data controlled by software, new media mix between cultural conventions and the conventions of software, new media as the aesthetics carrying modern communication technologies, faster execution of information services by the new media, new media as metamedia and new media as parallel articulation of similar Ideas. These features have led to the creation of remarkably similar images and spatial structures.

Frank Biocca (2000) stated that there is no single new media device but there is a family of intelligent information technologies. The characteristics of computer include: a) computer medium is evolving more rapidly than traditional media, b) computer involves a family of intelligent information technologies, c) computer involves different configurations of input and output devices, d) computer involves new interaction algorithms and techniques, e) computer combines multisensory content, various types of interface and various transmission systems for delivering information services, f) computer interfaces, content and transmission systems continuously evolve, and g) cyberspace expands rapidly. This features make computer a powerful media of communication.

Scholars like Douglas Kellner and James Bohman have stated that new media particularly the Internet, provides the potential for a democratic postmodern public sphere, in which citizens can participate in well informed, non-hierarchical debate pertaining to their social structures. Lister et al. (2003) have observed the positive and negative impact of new media technologies on people and stated that the effects of media were determined by the technology themselves, rather than the complex social networks. It appears that the Internet generation will be born into a world of information abundance. The Internet has become an informal university to the mankind. There is an incredible growth of web usage during 1984-2013. The household’s worldwide have become increasingly connected to the Internet at home and on the go. Scholars have also pointed out that with technological advances and an increasing number of startups focused on mobile apps, Internet and mobile device usage continues to skyrocket.

The rise of new media has allowed the people to express themselves through blogs, websites, videos, pictures and other user-generated media. New media have brought about the globalization of all kinds of transactions according to Flew
Globalization is termed as more than expansion of activities beyond the boundaries of particular nation. The electronic communication has also killed the distance and enhanced the social relationships across the globe. Volkmer (1999) has noted that the new media have brought about a new trend of the globalized public sphere as a geographical expansion form a nation to worldwide and changed the relationship between the public, the media and state.

The virtual communities transcending geographical boundaries created by new media have eliminated the social restrictions through online communication. Howard Rheingold (2000) observes: “People in virtual communities use words on screens to exchange pleasantries and argue, engage in intellectual discourses, conduct commerce, make plans, brainstorm, gossip, feud, fall in love, create a little high art and a lot of idle talk”. The new media offer multi-services and connect like-minded person’s world over.

Manovich (2001) states that mass media corresponded to the logic of industrial mass society, which values conformity over individuality while the new media follows the logic of the postindustrial or globalized society whereby every citizen can construct his/her own custom lifestyle and select her ideology from a large number of choices. Interactivity has become a new way of life because of new media intervention. The digitalization of media has brought about media convergence that facilitates user-to-user interactivity and interactivity between user and information. The convergence of new methods of communication with new technologies shifts the model of mass communication to ‘many to many’ communication. Mankind has benefitted through interactive new media as people can express their thoughts and activities in more than one way with the help of technologies.

The concept virtual reality propelled by new media helps interactivity and comprehension more meaningfully. The new media industry has expanded one-to-one and one-to-many dialogue with consumers with the Internet medium. Interactive websites and kiosks have become popular in modern times. Scholars have defined new media industry as cook, creative and egalitarian. The new media industry is occupied by the young generation. The studies have revealed that the amount of time young people spend with new media has risen dramatically. The 3-18 year-olds
devote about 8 hours of time on infotainment and edutainment services across the globe. Active social and political mobilization is gaining momentum through the new media world over. There is a well established connection between the amount and degree of voter engagement and turnout according to Owen (2011).

The young generation of students in schools, colleges and universities are attracted by the online sources which facilitate active involvement, communication and mobilization. In particular, the social media have provided a deliberative space to discuss and encourage political participation, both directly and indirectly, note Halpern and Gibbs (2013). The new media networked information will continue to grow at a rapid pace in future. The number of access points into the Internet is expanding in number, variety and mobility. It is estimated that members of the Internet generation normally spend as much as 20 years of their lives in front of Internet.

The new media have brought about remarkable changes in the attitudes, behaviors and transactions all over the world. In fact, globalization processes and technological developments have changed the experience and sensibility of people about time and space. The individual and collective perceptions have been increasingly structured within national and global frames and shaped by new media technologies. Lipscomb noted that new media technologies allowed people not only to witness and share events in a more direct and personal manner, but also to produce memory themselves, through various devices. The social media have moved into the real world. The new media have created a new information age which has spread its influence to all walks of life including education.

The new media have transformed the social surroundings astoundingly. Even ordinary people possess a deeper understanding of life, environment and other aspects of business with the help of new media. This tendency will increase in the future since the new media have created an ‘information society’ which tends to erase the distinction between subject specialists and ordinary people. The globalization of knowledge has become an inevitable historical process and functions as a rearrangement of world systems.
1.3 Sustainable Development of Adolescents in India

According to the Census Report of India – 2011 adolescents numbering over 200 million comprise nearly one fourth of the total population. Adolescents in the age group of 10 – 19 years of age constitute 25.0 % of India’s billion person population according to the UN ‘Adolescents in India’,. Ramya Bhaskar (2007) states: “The Indian adolescents hail from a wide array of background such as affluent, poor, migrants, school-going, drop-outs, sexually exploited, working adolescents and married parents. The specific issues related to the adolescents also vary on the basis of sex and age representing different stages of growth and development. In fact, biological factors of age and sex cut across all the background characteristics of the adolescents.” Behavioral scientists have noted that adolescence is a crucial period in the life cycle of human development, marked by rapid physical and psychological developments resulting in attitudinal and behavioral changes among the adolescents, which are substantially influenced by their respective social, educational, economic and cultural milieu. In India, school curriculum emphasizes more on subject learning, thus neglecting other components of human development particularly life skills, problem solving, developing competence and dealing with psycho – social difficulties due to certain constraints. The Constitution of India has guaranteed several safeguards and provisions for the development of human resources in India including the adolescents.

The Government of India, ministry of Human Resources Development plan and execute several developmental programmes for the benefit of lower and higher education. Following are the outline of the policy initiatives for the development of the adolescents in India.

National Nutrition Policy, 1983

The National Nutrition Policy had focused on the development of the adolescent girls in relation to the importance of their role as mothers and housewives. Adolescent boys did not find any mention in the policy. There was no scope for the development of adolescent boys and that the need for the well being of adolescents, as a group had not been recognized by the policy makers and bureaucrats.

The main emphasis in the National Educational Policy of 1986 was on the eradication of illiteracy especially for the 15 to 35 years age group of citizens and universalization of primary education. The adolescents group partly formed part of children who were to be provided primary education and also part of adults who were participants of adult literacy activity. However, the policy did not recognize the adolescents as a group per se, which led to overlooking their special needs. To some extent, the employment – related educational needs were addressed through vocational education at the higher secondary level.

National Health Policy, 1999

The policy expressed the concern for the health of special groups such as adolescent girls, albeit only with regard to their nutritional needs. The adolescent girls were clubbed with pregnant women and children, instead of treating them as a distinct group with specific needs and problems. The pregnancy and maternity related health needs of adolescent girls were primarily focused by the policy makers and bureaucrats.

Draft National AIDS Policy, 2000

The policy was definitely a vital aspect of the national health strategy. Since unprotected sex was a major source of AIDS and adolescents formed a significant portion of the sexually active population, the policy ensured special care and protection to the adolescents. Experimentation, lack of knowledge, peer pressure and a false sense of boldness made adolescents particularly vulnerable to STDs including AIDS.

National Population Policy, 2000

The policy viewed adolescents as a section of population which needed to be addressed and were the subject of one of the 12 strategic themes. The policy recognized the earlier invisibility of adolescents and was specifically referred to in the sections on information, nutrition, contraceptive use, STDs and other population related issues. Developing health package for adolescents and enforcing the legal age at marriage was also addressed.
Draft National Youth Policy, 2001

There was no government policy specifically for the empowerment of adolescents. However, this policy provided adequate space for the development of youth in India. The issues and concerns of youth were specifically addressed by the policy. It intended to cater to the welfare of Indian adolescents. The thrust areas of the policy included empowerment, gender equity an inter-sectoral approach to the youth welfare in the country. This policy actually made a distinction between the age of adolescence (13 - 19) and the age of attainment of maturity (20 – 30 years), marking a shift towards distinguishing between these different phases of human development.

National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001

The policy had recognized the girl child as a separate category and adolescent girls were the primary beneficiaries of this policy. The adolescent girls were mainly focused by this policy which heralded a new era of empowerment of women in India.

Specific Programmes for Adolescents

There were no comprehensive programmes or schemes addressing all the needs of adolescents in the post-independency era in India. A number of government departments had interventions that impacted the lives of adolescents in India. Some of these policies and programmes were generic in nature and so affected the adolescents considerably. An effort had also been made to provide a glimpse of some of the major government programmes / schemes run by government for adolescents in India.

The Adolescent Girls Scheme (Kishori Shakthi Yojana), 2003

The programme was subsequently renamed as Kishori Shakthi Yojana in order to improve the nutritional and health status of adolescent girls (11 – 18 years), providing literacy and numeracy skills through the non–formal system, training and equipping adolescent girls with home- based and vocational skills and promoting awareness and encouraging them to marry after 18 years. This revamped scheme was expected to provide flexibility to states to adopt a need based approach,
depending on the situation in each state in order to promote the well being of adolescent girls in India.

**The Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission, 2003**

This programme aimed at providing safe drinking water and sanitation facilities in all schools in India. The adolescent boys and girls were the major beneficiaries of this programme.

The Ministries of Youth Affairs and Sports, Social Justice and Empowerment, Human Resource Development, Rural Development and so on also launched several programmes for the betterment of the living standard of the youth including adolescent in India. The Nehru Yuva Kendras established health awareness units to generate awareness, educate and adopt health and family welfare programmes among the masses including adolescents throughout the country. Youth organizations were established in order to effectively implement the youth welfare programmes through Nehru Yuva Kendras. Youth coordinators were also appointed all over the country to implement youth welfare programmes including scholarships and hostels for rural and tribal adolescents.

The Mahila Samakhya Programme also catered to the educational, health and developmental needs of the adolescent girls and young women all over the country. Under this programme Mahila Shikshan Kendras (women educational centres) were established in Karnataka, Gujarat, Utter Pradesh, Andra Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Assam and other states of Indian Republic. The Kishori Melas and other educational programmes were also organized to create opportunities for education and self development of adolescent girls in the country. The adolescents also formed a part of National Literacy Mission and Sarva Shiksha Abiyan which sought to adopt a mission mode towards the objective of providing quality centered elementary education to children between 6 to 14 years of age. The Department of Health also launched a series of educational and health programmes for the youth including the adolescents.

The Department of Rural Development also launched several programmes called Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment (TRYSEM), Jawahar Rojgar Yojana (JRY), Prime Minister’s Rojgar Yojana (PMRY), Swarna Jayanthi
Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), etc., to provide vocational training and employment oriented programmes for the benefit of rural and tribal youth including the adolescents.

The U.N. report on ‘Adolescents In India (2005) states: “Although many programmes improving the lives of women and children overlap to include adolescents, few are geared exclusively to a group that India is even reluctant to identify. But the specific needs of adolescent girls persist, particularly if they are not recognized. These issues spawn a wide spectrum from nutrition necessities, to maternal mortality, to STDs, to drug abuse, to sanitation, to employment opportunities”. The report identifies roadblocks that must be navigated.

The social immobility, economic backwardness, inadequate vocational education and employment guarantee programmes have made the rural and tribal adolescents weak and vulnerable. Proper social, educational, economic and cultural promotion activities with a special focus on adolescents in India are not implemented especially in the post-independence era. The adolescents in India have no major say in the economic, political and ritual activities due to several constraints. The poverty plays an important role in Indian society at every stage. The Constitutional safeguards for the empowerment of youth in India are not properly implemented and monitored. The welfare and development of adolescents in India should be viewed at not merely in terms of material needs but equally or even more so in relation to non-material needs such as the right to live with human dignity, self respect, equality and freedom. A large majority of the adolescents in India belong to below the poverty line even now. There is no scientific and systematic evaluation of developmental programmes implemented by the government for the benefit of adolescents. In spite of the implementation of various welfare and development programmes during the last six decades, a wide gap exists in the conditions of backward and forward sections of adults in Indian society. In the age of liberalization, privatization, and globalization, the youth in general and adolescents in particular have become the worst victims of circumstances socially and economically.

The Constitution of India also deals with the growth and development of youth including adolescents in terms of several protective and welfare measures. The

Professional journals have also devoted considerable space and time for the discussion and evaluation of the problems and prospects of adolescents. Empirical studies are also conducted on socio-economic influence, behavioral and adjustment patterns, problems of adolescents, age at maturation, gender differences, parent-adolescents relationship, peer-adolescent relationship, family environment, educational environment, environment-centered stress and other factors associated with the welfare and development of adolescents in India and abroad. A brief introduction to these prominent factors is as follows.

**Socio-Economic Influence**

‘Status’ is nothing but the recognition given to an individual by the society. Socio-economic status is a broad term which includes the basic needs, civic amenities, infrastructural facilities, sources of income generation, occupation, economic status, educational status and living standards of the family concerned. The economic endeavor entails cherishing of things because of their material value and the pursuer. By virtue of the resources and opportunities, an individual carves for himself a place in society recognized as economic status. Thus economic status stratifies modern population according to the amount and source of income which is usually derived from a set of occupational activities, the ownership of property or both. All these factors play a very important role in defining the status of the members of a particular family.
Socio-economic status also shapes the personality of the adolescents. The members of the family are accorded a degree of respect, prestige and influence by the society taking into account these social and economic factors. Socio-economic status, therefore, is an indication of one’s position of respect, prestige and influence in a given social structure. The socio-economic status is obviously a deciding factor as far as the personality of the adolescent is concerned. The adolescents who are blessed with a better socio-economic status are bound to grow well educationally and otherwise as compared to their counterparts who are socially and economically under-privileged. The adolescence can also develop better behavioral and adjustment patterns if they are free from personal, social and economic constraints.

**Problems of Adolescents**

Adolescence is a complex period with its developmental maturity. The developmental changes that occur in adolescence cause varying degree of disturbances and certain new problems which center around the biological, emotional and environmental aspects of the adolescent’s personality. The adolescents face a number of crises and challenges of behavioral and adjustment processes. Irrespective of the status and environment majority of the adolescents undergo physical and emotional trauma which are associated with distress and victimization. There are various kinds of behavioral and adjustment problems encountered by the adolescents with parents, siblings, peers, friends, teachers and other members of the society. There are numerous manifestations of the severity and breadth of the problems besetting adolescents, families, educational institutions, governments and communities.

Adolescents also face several problems while trying to build successful personal, family and community lives since they live in a so called ‘problem age’. The teen years represent a period in an individual’s life of finding several problems in relation to developing suitable behavioral and adjustment problems mainly due to lack of care, maturity, guidance, counseling and supportive opportunities and resources. The physical and psychological characteristics of adolescents and the nature of developmental tasks which they are expected to perform also pose certain challenges and problems of adolescent development in India.
The ecology of human development is composed of multiple levels of organization, including the biological, psychological, social, educational, economic, cultural and environmental. There are ubiquitous individual differences in adolescent development which are related biological, cognitive, psychological, and socio-cultural factors. When multiple biological, psychological, cognitive, and social changes of adolescence occur simultaneously, there is a great risk of behavioral and adjustment problems occurring in the personality of adolescents. The most optimal behavioral and adjustment patterns occur among adolescents who are properly encouraged by their parents, siblings, peers, friends, teachers and other well wishers in the environment.

**Gender Differences**

The existence of pervasive gender role stereotyping and its effects on human beings are investigated in different parts of the world. There are basic gender differences which affect the individual identity. The concept may have some pan-cultural universality but gender based social relationships continue to exist with reference to adolescents in modern society. It is true that the adolescent experience is not the same for females as it is for males in regard to biological development or emotional developments. Investigations have dealt with gender issues in adolescence all over the world. Research reveals many important gender based differences with respect to adolescence.

Ramya Bhaskar (2007) notes: “Adolescent girls experience considerably differing social worlds within both the family and larger social context. Adolescent girls experience many inconveniences such as depression, poor body image, eating disorders, lower self-esteem, and lack of self confidence. The passage to womanhood for adolescent girls is often a journey toward silence and disconnection. Adolescent girls also seem to be influenced by conventional thought that women should be concerned about others at all costs. There are differences between the sexes in the struggle to define identity within the family and society. Adolescent girls have more problems than boys. Boys and girls face different challenges and have different emotional needs during adolescence. Adolescent girls are usually found to be nurturers while adolescent boys are more assertive.” Adolescent girls also face the additional developmental tasks more so than adolescent boys.
Adolescent girls need to learn to express anger and to be more assertive while adolescent boys need to learn to be more cooperative and express emotions in a proper way.

**Parent-Adolescents Relationship**

One of the most significant and intimate relationships among humans is that between parent and child. The parent-child bond is unique both in its biological foundations and in the psychological meanings. Parent-adolescent bondage actually ensures the survival and progress of the adolescents. It also provides a frame work within which the child may find roots, continuity and a sense of belongingness. ‘Fathering’ is an important feature of socialization and ‘Mothering’ symbolizes emotional support, inter personnel sensitivity and patronage. The loving and accepting parents provide a healthy atmosphere for the adolescents to exercise their potentials, develop their capabilities and make their destinies in a meaningful way. Considerable research has focused on the parent adolescent relationship all over the world. A considerable amount of scientific investigations primarily dealt with the family relationships of the adolescents. Research also revealed that the parent-child relationship may change during the adolescent years. There has been increased interest in patterns of adolescent – parent relationships including adolescent – parent conflict and conflict resolution.

The quality of an adolescent’s relationship with their parents is a key component to healthy adolescent development. Secure bonds between parents and their adolescent children allow young people the freedom to grow and explore. Parents’ expectations and parent’s experience of their children’s transition to adolescence and their feeling about this developmental transition are also systematically investigated by the behavioral scientists. Considerable research has focused on changes in the parent-child relationship across the period of adolescence. The amount of time that children spend with parents decreases quite dramatically during the adolescent years. The emotional closeness with parents also tends to decrease. The conflict between parents and adolescents seem to increase during early adolescence and then decrease by late adolescence.
Environment Centered Stress

The term ‘stress’ refers to a situation that causes people to react in a particular way. A stress situation is one where extreme changes in temperature occur and that noxious substances are injected into the body. Stress also reflects the physical, social and cultural conditions likely to be discomforting for most people living within a specified group. Stress situations might include inter-personal conflicts, group clashes, social conflicts, battle conditions, rapid economic change, a difficult but important life situation, intense competition, loss of a beloved one, natural disasters, acute illness or injuries, failures and so on. Stress has also been generally defined as an external force or situation that acts upon an individual which may result in unhealthy behavior and reactions. Stress is also the state manifested by a specific syndrome which consists of all the non-specifically involved changes within the biological system. Adolescence is indeed, is a period of ‘storm and stress’. There is no exact measure that will compare the stresses of an adolescent which are conspicuous signs of tension in adolescents.

The lengthiness of adolescence, the myriad changes, the uncertainty about the future, the anxiety over choices and other real life situations also bring about stressful conditions and period to the adolescents. Family centered changes and developments such as divorce, illness or death also bring about stressful thoughts and reactions among the adolescents. They also tend to be stressed as a result of the parent’s stress. The parents are required to avoid such stressful impact on their children who are keenly in tune with everything that occurs in their home environments.

Adolescents experience environment related stress symptoms such as excessive crying, withdrawal, aggression or regression. Some of the key physical symptoms such as insomnia or excessive sleep, eating or weight disorders, restlessness or fatigue, muscle twitching, nail biting, nightmares, stuttering or stammering and difficulty in concentrating on academic and developmental tasks are found among the adolescents. Behavioral symptoms such as regression, failure in school, cruelty to animals or people, stealing, running away, destroying things, lying or cheating, excessive day dreaming, perfectionism, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, sexual misconduct and so on are also found among the adolescents.
Relational and self esteem symptoms such as withdrawal or unwilling to try, feeling of hopelessness, making unhealthy attempts, excessive fears, loss of friends, avoiding people, acting in an irresponsible way, maintaining distance from the mainstream of life and so on.

Studies have also revealed that all is not well as far as adolescents in India and abroad are concerned. Adolescents have also become victims of circumstances especially in a developing country like India. They are subjected to series of disorders and diseases mainly due to lack of care, guidance and counseling. Prominent among the behavioral and adjustment problems of adolescents include unhealthy food habits, unhealthy dietary patterns, eating disorders, reduction of reading habits, drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, sexual misconduct, aggressiveness, neuroticism, desensitization, gullibility, indiscipline, indecency, violence, rebelliousness, high risk behavior, attention deficit, mental stress, unhealthy life styles, strained human relations, suicidal tendencies, moral bankruptcy, low self esteem, poor body image, lack of interaction with parents and siblings, disruption of societal institutions, anti-social activities, displacement of healthy activities and the like.

There is also strong evidence that constructive parental and teacher support, guidance and counseling would help adolescents cultivate reading habits, acquire cognitive skills, improve vocabulary, develop communication skills, emulate role models, cultivate pro-social behaviors, increase good mannerisms, maintain cordial human relations, enrich problem solving ability, enhance academic competence, gain social identity, earn leadership qualities and grow as healthy citizens of the society. A substantial amount of research has been done and a considerable body of knowledge has accumulated concerning the behavioral and adjustment problems of adolescents in particular and growth and development of adolescents in general. The extent to which one ought to be concerned about the welfare and development of adolescents is duly emphasized in the findings and recommendations of the studies conducted by various researchers all over the world. We need to know more about what factors influence the personality of adolescents, what preventive measures are effective in preventing the unhealthy behavioral patterns of adolescents and what kind of healthy practices are required to improve the behavioral and adjustment patterns of adolescents in future.
Sustainable adolescent development is the need of the hour and that the intervention of parents, teachers, policy makers, practitioners, bureaucrats and researchers should be properly planned and executed in order to promote healthy behavioral and adjustment patterns of the adolescents and develop the personality of the adolescents who are the future nation builders. Present generation of scholars have developed this line of thinking in series of investigations that demonstrate the factors associated with the personality of adolescents in particular. Few researchers in India have assessed the role of parents, teachers, siblings, peers, educational institutions, media institutions, social work agencies and others in the personality of adolescents. They have commonly held that adolescent development demands adequate policies, plans and initiatives in a developing country like India.

1.4 Adolescents and New Media

The proliferation of new media propelled by the internet has altered the state of the affairs of the media completely in India. A sprint of new media technologies has re-oriented the media habits of children and other young generation. Taking stock of the empirical studies the rapid development of new media has both promising and startling consequences. The new media revolution has given the children the world at their fingertips. The Internet, computer and mobile technologies have created new vistas of learning to the young generation all over the world. The luxury status enjoyed by new media is changing and will become soon accessible to the lowest common denominator. The use of new media has become a basic necessity for students who have acquired mental maturity much before the physical maturity. The school going students are eager to explore the world of new media technologies. The advent of new media technologies has changed the lives of children and adolescents.

New media at present are indeed an omnipresent aspect of the lives of young people. The adolescents multi-purpose needs in modern society are fulfilled by the new media services considerably. A great majority of adolescents spend longer hours of the day at home and outside, watching television, playing video games, surfing the net or using mobile and other forms of new media gadgets. The contemporary researchers across the globe have expressed great concern on the impact of new media on adolescents’. In reality, the technological breakthroughs in
the new millennium have completely changed the new media landscape, writes Chintana Monthienvichienchai (2009).

Lievouw and Livingstone (2006) have stated that accounts in which technological innovation is the cause and society is the effect. The technological developments and social practices are entwined. The new media have brought about a new digital era according to Bill Gates of Microsoft (2007). The distinctive characteristic of new media is interactivity. The ongoing development and new invention of media technologies also offer exciting ways of communication for children and adolescents. The young people grew up surrounded by, or submerged in the world of computer networks and information technologies.

There are millions of websites created on the World Wide Web. They are designed with different purposes and audiences including adolescents. The children and adolescents can communicate in real time with their counterparts though chat rooms and instant messaging. They play games with their counterparts in the other side of the world. They have gained new friends and hone soft skills according to Biggins (2007). The computers, Internet, mobile and other gadgets have opened a new way into the world of knowledge and activities. Scholars have also cautioned that children and adolescents must be given immunity from the negative effects of new media. The parents must become new media literates to place certain checks and balances and protect the young audience.

New media technologies offer several opportunities to the young audience to build the electronic network that connects people and information via computers. The new media have brought about globalization according to Fleur (2003). Rice (1984) defined new media as communication technologies that enable or facilitate user-to-user interactivity and interactivity between user and information. The Internet replaced the ‘one-to-many web of communication’. The new media have enabled the people to produce individual online media including images, text and sound of their choice. The children and adolescents have also learnt the basic skills of computer use which has become part of their curriculum. The Internet has provided adequate social space for children, adolescents and others. The Internet offers new opportunities for inter personal relationship. Baym (2006) has suggested that anonymity and its associated lessening of social risk may allow people to be
more honest and take greater risks in self disclosure than they would offline. The Internet provides anonymity to the users and enables them to reveal more about them besides internet also provides scope for individual to have multiple identities.

Studies have reported that new media technologies have enabled the children and adolescents to grow up with digital media technologies such as computers, Internet, videogames, iPods, cell phones and other electronic gadgets. Experience reveals that the younger generation is very technology savvy, very adept and enthusiastic about using the new media for personal and academic purposes. Today the new media including Internet are used to seek information, exchange ideas and make decisions. The new media have become a part of young generation’s lives as schools, books and television. The new media have created a new virtual world where the audiences enjoy freedom of expression.

The mobile phones have well established as a technology which has bridged the social divide in modern society. The next generation mobiles are expected to become further miniaturized, converged and interactive with each new development and model. The use of mobile by the children and adolescents has been observed by scholars. The mobile phone penetration is increasing at a remarkable speed all over the globe. Even though the advantages of mobile phones to children and adolescents are many and obvious, there are many different and often valid viewpoints or discourses expressed as to their disadvantages, harms and potential and actual abuses. There is a need for examination of all issues related to mobile phones. This would help users, society at large and its institutions to examine measures to optimize the advantages, and minimize the disadvantages of this useful and ubiquitous technology, observes Weerakkody (2009).

The video gaming habits of children and adolescents are increasing in modern times. But the video game console market is still very low compared to cell phones and PCs in India, The young audience use computer to play video games. Gustin et.al (2002) reported that video games were overwhelmingly the primary use of the computer (91%) and the primary purpose of Internet usage was fun and games (75%). The users play games and also use game consoles and hand-held gadgets. Studies have revealed that on an average the mime children spent playing games ranged from two hours per week to eight hours per week. The boys spend
substantially more time playing video games than do girls, according to a recent study. Scholars have identified the major concerns of video games namely physical health, displacement of activity, video game addiction, educational impact, social involvement, pro-social behavior, gender stereotyping and violence in video games. The parents are required to take advantage of new technological tools to protect their children, suggest Walsh et al. (2006)

The adolescents have grown up in the digital era. India is in the forefront in respect of new media applications. The children are introduced to new media in their very young age since they cannot escape from the digital media according to Sunderaj (2009). The adolescents are also exposed to new media which are informal centers of learning in modern times. The Web is accessible to the world to the greatest possible extent. The young students require guidance and supervision of their parents and teachers to avoid harmful effects of new media. The urban-rural gap and male-female gap also exist in the use of new media according to review of literature. The new media are known for positive and negative effects. The parents, educators and manufacturers have to be sensitive to these issues and change their mind set in order to make new media true instruments of people connectors, communications and collaborations devices in the new millennium, state past researchers.

Studies have reported that Internet is a powerful communication tool which connects adolescents to others. They use e-mail, chat rooms and instant messaging to connect with other people. Girls use the Internet for education and boys use the Internet for entertainment and games according to empirical evidence. The participatory quality of new media makes the adolescents active gainers of knowledge and recreation facilities. In reality, the adolescents and other young people experience various ways of learning through their consumption and production of digital contents. The new media enable the young generation to learn soft skills, team work skills and creative methods of learning. They also develop a sense of personal identity and establish social relations across the world.

The new media have created a new electronic generation which is more democratic, imaginative, responsible and skilled by nature. They have overthrown traditional hierarchies of knowledge and power. The new media have also attracted
the adolescents better than other traditional media of communication. The economic status and educational progress of family members matter most from the point of view of new media habits of young generation of students. The new media habits have also impacted other activities of the young generation. The children and adolescents use the new media for multi purposes.

The new media have created networked societies which provide linkages that benefit the mankind including the young generation. The new digital media have revolutionized the lives of young people. Other activities are also replaced by computer-based activities. The surfing of Internet is more interesting than television to the PC owners. The youngsters normally consume a wider variety of media for longer states Tungate (1999). In particular, the adolescents are attracted by the new media power as a prominent source of information, education, entertainment and advertisement. The new media offer even more possibilities of multitasking. The children, adolescents, parents, teachers and other stakeholders of human resources development need to be sensitized on issues concerning the positive and negative impact of new media. Adequate studies are required to create suitable checks and balances and safeguard the interest of young generation.

1.5 Social Significance of the Study

The new media were developed as powerful sources of communication during 1975-2000. The new media are a ubiquitous feature of modern society. The new media have considerably changed people’s lives in terms of reaching, disseminating, creating, and evaluating a huge amount of information easily and quickly, communicating with many different kinds of people separated by space and time, and reallocating time for their daily activities. The New media, computer and mobile technologies have been used by all sections of society including the students since they have outstripped reading and other media habits of people. The children, adolescents, women and other sections of the society are affected by the new media both positively and negatively in modern society. Many researchers in various fields, such as education, psychology and sociology, have studied the impact of the new media on people and society and reported the advantages and disadvantages of using the new media.
According to the latest new media survey, the penetration of new media is highly remarkable since they have killed the distance. The studies have also revealed that all educational institutions in the world have new media access regardless of level, region, or poverty concentration. As new media use among the users is dramatically rising, the researchers need to know what impact the new media has on the community of users in modern society. Students’ access to new media is encouraged by schools and teachers. The new media exposure among the students is on the rise. For effective learning, new media use patterns should be guided in the right manner by the parents and teachers. New media could be misused dangerously if its power is manipulated otherwise. New media is a live medium. The power of convergence of various information technologies is realized through new media. More research is needed in this field to get positive impact of this powerful tool in the hands of students.

The past studies have reported both positive and negative impact of the new media on the daily lives of users in modern society. There have been some concerns about the negative impact of the new media on students concerning violent and sexual content and a displacement effect in such areas as social relationships, including interaction with family and friends, physical activity and other leisure-time activities, such as reading and playing. During the last one decade, quite a few conferences have been organized on new media exposure among various users in modern society. Research journals have also focused the attention of the global community on the impact of new media in the daily lives of the people. The attitude of people towards new media, the access to new media, the influence of new media and other aspects are also examined by the researchers. Research articles are published on new media exposure in Indian and foreign journals. There is a widespread interest about the impact of new media on people including the high school students.

The past studies have hardly identified the ways and means of preventing unhealthy new media exposure among the school going students with respect to Indian society. Hence, it is essential to know how new media use will influence the school going students in terms of physical, educational, social and psychological development to confirm or reconsider the results from the previous studies. As the numbers of school going students who use the new media grow, the impact of the
new media on students’ daily lives as well as how and why students use the new media should be examined. After examining the available literature on the impact of new media on school going students, it is apparent that the investigations carried out in Karnataka particularly in Mysore city on the access, uses, and impact of new media with special reference to high school students are limited. Hence the problem “Impact of New Media on School Going Children: A Study of Select Secondary Schools in Mysore City” was chosen for the present study.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

The new media have attracted the attention of users regardless of demographic features across the world. The new media have won over the hearts of billions of children and adolescents as prominent means of education and entertainment. Studies have revealed that new media exposure among children and adolescents is remarkably high. Scholars have also noted that most children between the age groups of 3-18 spend longer hours of the day at home and outside, watching television, playing video games, surfing the net or using other forms of new media gadgets. Several conferences have focused the attention of policy makers, administrators, academicians and other stakeholders of human development and media management on the impact of new media on society. The conferences and research projects have also addressed many of the questions, hopes and fears regarding the role of new media in the lives of today’s children who are the future builders of nation.

An evaluation of the available literature points that the impact of new media on the lives of the people including the high school students suffers from series of limitations. Therefore, the primary tasks of the present study were concerned with identifying reasonably representative sample of high school students who are directly associated with the new media so as to assess their views on the impact of new media which assumes profound academic significance in the new millennium. This subject was chiefly evaluated because:

- New media today are an omnipresent aspect of our children’s lives.
- New media have become common mans universities in the present times.
Most children between the age groups of 3-18 spend longer hours of the day in the company of new media.

Control and possession over the flow of information is directly proportional to the scale of power and development in the new millennium.

The emerging technological innovations have phenomenally altered the digital media landscape.

The altered digital landscape has opened the new vistas and platforms of various opportunities for young generation.

Dissemination of information besides possession among the users is crucial in the globalised village as we have marched into knowledge – based society.

The new media occupies a desirable status in the processes of individual development and cooperative development in the globalised society.

The high school students are becoming more connected to the virtual world through new media in the study area.

The new media exposure among the high school students is multiplying and the student’s face to face interpersonal communication is minimized.

The increasing new media exposure among the high school students has brought a chain of positive and negative impact in the lives of school going children.

A research on the uses, access and effects of new media with special reference to the high school students in a historical city like Mysore is significant and emerging.

1.7 Objectives of the Study

With the aforementioned prologue the research on “Impact of New Media on School Going Children: A Study of Select Secondary Schools in Mysore City” proposes to:

1. To understand the relationship between demographic features and new media exposure among the respondents.

2. To assess the communications media association among the respondents.
3. To analyze the new media use pattern of the respondents.

4. To study the preferences of new media services of the respondents.

5. To examine the attitude of the respondents towards new media.

6. To evaluate the impact of new media exposure on the respondents; and

7. To explore the possibilities of safeguarding and promoting the personal and academic interests of the respondents.

1.8 Presentation of the Study

The salient features of the study such as salient features of new media, sustainable development of adolescents in India, adolescents and new media, social significance of the study, statement of the problem and objectives of the study are furnished in the first chapter which deals with the introduction.

The second chapter, namely – review of literature deals with the review of the studies conducted by the past researchers which have a bearing on the present study under different headings namely – socio economic influence, uses and gratification framework, uses and gratification methodologies, pioneers of media uses and gratification typologies, new media access studies, new media use pattern studies, new media uses and gratification and inferences of review of literature are furnished.

The third chapter namely – research method enumerates the research design, hypotheses of the study, study variables, locale of the study, sampling procedures, tools of primary data collection, secondary data collection, statistical analysis, reliability and validity of data and definitions of the terms used in the study are amplified.

The fourth chapter presents the profile of the respondents, communication media association of the respondents, new media access and use pattern of the respondents, preferences of new media services of the respondents, attitude of the respondents towards new media and impact of new media exposure on the respondents.
The fifth chapter namely the conclusion presents the findings of the study, testing of hypotheses, limitations of the study, implications of the study and suggestions for future research. The last section of the thesis indicates the bibliography, questionnaires and appendices besides select photographs.

1.9 Summary

The proliferation of new media propelled by the internet has altered the state of the affairs of the media completely in India and elsewhere. The sprint of new media technologies has influenced the adolescent life of school children across the world. The new media is a relatively new and unexplored territory in a developing country like India from research point of view. Taking stock of the empirical studies the rapid development of new media has both promising and startling consequences. The new media revolution has given the children the world at their fingertips. The new media have changed the academic atmosphere in general and the lives of the children and other young generation of users in particular. The consumption of the new media by young users is steadily increasing in Mysore city. The ‘new media’ pursuit in communication studies is apparent both from the point of view of profession and discipline. The current study evaluates the new media access; new media use patterns, uses and impact of new media among the high school students of Mysore city. It is pertinent to note the suggestions and recommendations of the researchers’ that the new media use have binding towards constitutional standard, professional guiding principle and ethical values in order to protect the interest of the young generation of new media users.