Chapter-1

Introduction
"In your knowledge is like milk, it has a shelf life stamped right on the carton. The shelf life of a degree in engineering is about 3 years, if your are not replacing every thing you know by then your career is going to turn sour fast”.

Lovis Ross CTO, Ford Motor Co.

We all fondly remember our childhood experiences and how we grew from the stage of a young child dependent on others to an adult who does so many things. Before entering to the stage of adulthood children enters the stage of adolescence. All of us undergo this stage, which poses many challenges and is full of excitement. At the same time it demands adjustment on many fronts. It is a period when rapid physiological change and demands for new social roles takes place. The adolescents, due to these changes often face a number of crises and dilemmas. Adolescence is the period of development from pubescence of adulthood. It is the period when the child moves from dependency to autonomy. It is a period demanding significant adjustment to the physical and social changes, which distinguish childhood behaviour from adult behaviour.

Very noticeable changes in intellectual development take place during adolescence and career development process take place. The adolescent becomes able to think in more abstract and logical terms for career development. The quality of thinking in terms of great ideals also emerges during the period. The three main characteristics of adolescent thought are as capacity to combine several factors and find solution to a problem, ability to see that what effect one factor will have on another factors and ability to combine and separate factors in a probabilistic
manner. However, the above characteristics of adolescent thought may not apply to each and every child. Important variations have often been seen in individuals of the same culture.

The adolescence brings a change in the habitual pattern of behaviour, attitude and personality. There are marked changes in the adolescent's social interest. Adolescents use new set of values in selection of friends and social grouping. The choice of friends depends more on similar interests and values. The peer group influences the attitudes, values and behaviour more than the child's own family. Interest in world affairs, politics and government often develops during this period. Some of the recreational interests during adolescence are sports and games, scholastic and extracurricular activities. There is genuine desire to help others and engaging in benevolent activities like collecting funds for a cause, arranging charity show etc. This also helps the adolescent to learn to adjust in variety of situations. It must be noted that along with these changes adolescence also brings in negative syndrome like being self-centred, showing off, emotional immaturity, stubbornness, irritability, unsatisfactory relationship with the family and other unattractive personality traits.

Each teenager is an individual with a unique personality and special interests, likes, and dislikes. In general, however, there is a series of developmental tasks that everyone faces during the adolescent years. A teenager's development can be divided into three stages - early, middle, and late adolescence. Early adolescence 12-14 years the main development in this age are struggle with sense of identity, moodiness, improved abilities to use speech to express oneself, more likely to express feelings by action than by words, close friendships gain importance, less attention
shown to parents, with occasional rudeness, realization that parents are not perfect; identification of their faults, search for new people to love in addition to parents, tendency to return to childish behavior, peer group influences interests and clothing styles, increasing career interests, mostly interested in present and near future and greater ability to work. Middle adolescence: 15-16 years, intellectual interests gain importance, some sexual and aggressive energies directed into creative and career interests, greater capacity for setting goals and interest in moral reasoning. Late adolescence: 17-19 years more defined work habits, higher level of concern for the future, thoughts about one's role in life, ability to set goals and follow through, acceptance of social institutions and cultural traditions and self-regulation of self esteem

Adolescence is a phase, which makes a person enter into the adult world. Growing into an adult a child makes us experience the problems in various domains such as personal, social, educational, vocational and career related. Through guidance and counseling services adolescents can be helped to solve these problems. With the help of career counseling and vocational guidance they can be helped with insights into the various career opportunities and educations choices that are available. Personal and social counseling can help them in resolving their problems.

The career development in the India has paralleled other factors critical to the nation's growth. It is just within the past few years that the career selection strategies selected by school level. To assess the impact of holistic approach of career and life planning course of adolescent depends on confidence about the career exploration process, limited self-knowledge and limited occupational information. Most of students have a variety of developmentally based needs concerning their career, including decision-
making and exploration. However, in today’s world, “fashioning a work identity” may well be translated into “fashioning an identity.” In the Indian culture, we are what we do. More frequently we are asked “What do you do?” rather than “Who are you?” For the young, this decision is critical in determining the outcome of their lives.

Whenever we go to a new place we want to know about the details of that place. In that case a guide can help us to move smoothly around that place and help us in solving our problems. Adolescence is a phase, which makes a person enter into the adult world. Growing into an adult a child makes us experience the problems in various domains such as personal, social, educational, vocational and career related. Through guidance and counseling services adolescents can be helped to solve these problems. With the help of career counseling and vocational guidance they can be helped with insights into the various career opportunities and educations choices that are available. Personal and social counseling can help them in resolving their problems.

Adolescence is defined as a phase of life characterized by rapid physical growth and development, physical, social and psychological changes and maturity, sexual maturity, experimentation, development of adult mental processes and a move from the earlier childhood socio-economic dependence towards relative independence. This is also the period of psychological transition from a child who has to live in a family to an adult who has to live in a society. Adolescents have very special and distinct needs, which can no longer be overlooked. It is also essential to invest in adolescents, as they are the future of the country. They need to be helped to help themselves and to be helped to do it alone. By addressing their needs one would not only be contributing to the socio-
economic development of the country but also to other societal concerns like social harmony, gender justice, population stabilization and improving the quality of life of our people. It has often been said that in India there is no phase such as ‘adolescents’ – from a child one becomes a young adult.

Adolescents have often been viewed as a group of people with problems, disturbances and rebellion. However, the reality is somewhat different. Wherever positive stimulation and a congenial environment have been provided, adolescents have risen to the occasion and done us proud. They yearn ‘to right all wrongs’, ‘fight for justice’, and ‘do the right thing’. They are keen to be recognized as useful productive and participating citizens of society. Their contribution in the struggle for independence, the environment movement, national literacy campaign and campaigns against plastic bags and firecrackers are only some examples. However, where the right environment has not been provided they have taken to violence and have been drawn into petty and serious crime. Adolescents are imbied with idealism, striving for justice and truth. The time has come for us, as a nation to seriously think about providing the right stimulus; role models and environment for adolescents, in order for them become assets for nation building. They have the potential; now is the time to provide them with the opportunities.

The Working Group debated at length about the age parameters for the group of adolescents. Adolescents are most often subsumed with youth or with children or with young adults. Different policies and programmes define the adolescents’ age group differently. For example, adolescents in the draft Youth Policy have been defined as the age group between 13-19 years; under ICDS adolescent girls are considered to be between 11-18 years; the Constitution of India and labour
laws of the country consider people up to the age of 14 as children: whereas the Reproductive and Child Health programme mentions adolescents as being between 10-19 years of age. Internationally and as is with most UN agencies like WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA etc. the age group of 10-19 years is considered to be the age of adolescents. It is observed that the age limits of adolescents have been fixed differently under different programmes keeping in view the objectives of that policy/programme. It is felt that it would be most appropriate to consider adolescence as the age between 10-19 years.

Adolescents account for one fifth of the world’s population and have been on an increasing trend. In India they account for 22.8% of the population (as on 1st March 2000, according to the Planning Commission’s Population projections). This implies that about 230 million Indians are adolescents in the age group of 10 to 19 years. The term adolescent means ‘to emerge’ or ‘achieve identity.’ Adolescence is defined as a phase of life characterized by rapid physical growth and development, physical, social and psychological changes and maturity, sexual maturity, experimentation, development of adult mental processes and a move from the earlier childhood socio-economic dependence towards relative independence. This is also the period of psychological transition from a child who has to live in a family to an adult who has to live in a society. Adolescents have very special and distinct needs, which can no longer be overlooked. It is also essential to invest in adolescents, as they are the future of the country. They need to be helped to help themselves and to be helped to do it alone. By addressing their needs one would not only be contributing to the socio-economic development of the country but also to other societal concerns like social harmony, gender justice, population stabilization and improving
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There are several learning arenas for adolescents. They are home, work, family, school and community, and all these arenas can have aspects that range from beneficial to harmful. Learning through work or learning through doing should be encouraged. What adolescents learn through work are much needed life skills and experience of the world they have to live in. Such beneficial work options should be identified and adolescents should be enabled to combine such work with appropriate schooling. Adolescents have traditionally been viewed as potential victims of social evils. Little wonder that researches and books on them are mainly from the schools of social work and sociology, and are associated with drugs, criminality and problems of sexuality and sexual behaviour. A holistic and more positive way of looking at the issues of this age group is missing in the researches undertaken so far.

Within these constraints, a situational analysis attempted in Kanpur city for adolescents based on a realistic and reliable assessment of the situation with following objectives:

- To find out the profile of respondents.
- To assess the preference of career choice among adolescent boys and girls.
- To compare the career preference among boys and girls.
- To analyze the impact of socio-economic factors on career choice.