Chapter 5
Discussion and Conclusion
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study has been undertaken to look into the impact of parenting practices and coping behaviour on the adjustment patterns among adolescents. To better grasp the effects of these on adjustment, it becomes imperative to understand adolescent as a group, and its sub-classification into different demographic groups. Division of adolescents has been done on the basis of age, gender and class of study. Parenting practices and coping, thereby is studied to observe its impact also on the adjustment of different sub-groups of adolescents, and also to compare the adjustment potential of the sub-groups with each other. The attempt has been to understand the complex process of adjustment in a more comprehensive way.

The first objective of the study was to examine the relationship between dimensions of parenting practice, coping behaviour and different dimensions of adjustment. *Inter correlation matrix* shows that parental acceptance was significantly correlated with all the dimensions of adjustment and coping behaviour. Parental concentration was significantly correlated with coping behaviour and again coping itself was significantly correlated with all the dimensions of adjustment. All the dimensions of adjustment were also related to each other.

However, when *regression analysis* was applied on the different dimensions of parenting practices - parental acceptance, parental concentration, parental avoidance, coping behaviour, along with demographic variables namely; gender, age and class of study, the results found parental acceptance
and coping emerges as significant predictors for total adjustment and its sub
dimensions - home, health, social, and emotional adjustment.

Moreover, on parental acceptance when the percentage of total variance
of adjustment and sub dimensions were compared it was found that the parental
acceptance contributed maximum of 69% on home adjustment, while on health
adjustment, social adjustment, emotional adjustment and total adjustment,
parental acceptance contributed only 3.5%, 51.4%, 2.8% and 4.4%
respectively. This indicates that parental acceptance among adolescents brings
adjustment in adolescent's home life. This is also coherent with the studies of
various psychologists who found parental warmth and acceptance to predict
children's positive social behaviour. According to Dornbusch et al., (1987);
Steinberg et al., (1972) high degree of parental warmth and support, firm limit
settings, open communication, and high level of supervision have long been
believed to be the ideal parenting style. In another supportive study Milensky,
Avidan et al., (2007) have investigated adolescent's adjustment as a function of
maternal and paternal parenting styles. Authoritative mothering and paternal
parenting was found to relate to higher self-esteem and life satisfaction and
psychological adjustment (authoritative parenting practice has been taken as
high on acceptance, responsiveness and warmth for the child, as mentioned
above in chapter 1). Steinberg L, et al., (1989) has also examined the relation
between authoritative parenting-acceptance, psychological autonomy, and
behavioural control and school achievement. Results indicated that
authoritative parenting facilitates adolescents' academic success, and the
development of a healthy sense of autonomy and more specifically, a healthy psychological orientation.

On coping behaviour when the percentage of variance of adjustment and its sub dimensions were compared it was evident that the coping behaviour contributed maximum of 66.9% on total adjustment, while it contributed on home adjustment, health adjustment, social adjustment and emotional adjustment only 5%, 55.3%, 2% and 42.3% respectively. So, while the impact of coping on the different aspects of adjustment, considered separately, had not come out so visibly, coping otherwise appears very crucial on the overall adjustment. Previous studies on coping similarly had brought out the significance of coping in facilitating and adapting to life stress (Compass, 1987). Adequate coping during adolescences predicts good future outcomes including higher level of ego development and positive adjustment in life (Mullis and Chapman, 2000; Printz, Shermis, and Webb, 1999; Recklitis and Noam, 1999; Seiff-Krenke and Klessinger, 2000). Moreover, it has been observed that a close and warm relationship with parents were found to be associated with positive outcome including aspects such as self esteem, coping and adjustment with stressful events (Brofenbrenner,1979). This has been further supported by Mc Intyre Julie Guay and Dusek Jerome B. (1995) who studied the relation between parental rearing practices and coping dispositions and have found out that those who reported their parents as warm and nurturing coupled with close monitoring and age-appropriate demandingness used more social support and problem-focused coping than those who reported their
parents using other parental rearing styles. Similarly, in another study, Holahan, Charles I (1995) has applied an integrative predictive model to examine interrelationships between parental support, adaptive coping strategies and psychological adjustment among late adolescents. Adolescents with high parental support were better adjusted and less distressed than were those with low parental support was associated with psychological adjustment both directly and indirectly through a higher percent of approach coping strategies. Ohannessian, Christine Mc Cauley et al.,(1994), have reported that subjects who had high levels of self worth, high levels of peer support and good coping technique appeared to be somewhat protected from the potentially harmful effects that maladaptive family functioning may have on emotional adjustment.

With regard to find out whether demographic variables influences on parental acceptance, parental concentration, coping, adjustment and its sub dimensions mean comparisons were carried out. The result showed significant differences between male and female groups. The female adolescents scored more on parental acceptance than the male adolescents group with M = 45.48 and M = 39.25 for female and male adolescents group respectively. Moreover the present study has also revealed the role of parental concentration on female adolescents. That is, on parental concentration the mean of female adolescents was M = 31.26 while on male adolescents M = 30.10, significant at 0.05 level. This is however, a contradictory result which emphasized that although parental acceptance is responsible for the adjustment among female adolescents, it is also the presence of parental concentration which is
contributing in the adjustment of females. This concept however vary from
culture to culture, for instance, Chao 2001 in her study has revealed that
authoritarian parents predicts satisfaction with the overall parent child
relationship among Chinese adolescent (Quoss and Zhao, 1995). The
explanations of these findings may be that the normative task in adolescence
could be the same for both boys and girls to develop a healthy balance between
autonomy and ties with parents but it is more of a challenge to disengage from
the parents for the girls than it is for boys. In our culture, boys experiences
more conflict with their parents and are less likely to accept parental
regulations as appropriate. Whereas, girls are more emotionally dependent on
their parents. Sexual roles and gender differences lay different paths for boys
and girls in developing autonomy. Moreover, Shilkret and Nigrosh, 1997,
has carried out a study on college women whose parenting style, guilt
and college adjustment was being studied. The results revealed that
authoritative parenting was generally associated with good outcomes
(adjustment and guilt), while authoritarianism and neglectful were associated
with poorer outcomes. Indulgentness was equal to authoritativness on all
adjustment. (Indulgent parenting practice has been taken as low on control and
high on acceptance for the child as mentioned above in chapter 1). Moreover;
indulgent parents were seemed to be as consistent as authoritative ones. For
females, parents are more apprehensive and protective about them and
encourage dependency and close family ties. Also, according to Desai, 1975
personal adjustment of an individual is a function of the satisfaction of needs
that is social need, need to be loved, need to be independent etc. The satisfaction of needs is different for boys and girls, hence leading to differences in adjustment levels.

Similarly, on coping behaviour, one can also see that female adolescents are more influencing than the male adolescents group with ($M = 86.20$) and ($M = 74.29$) respectively. Similar results have come up when the mean comparison were carried out for adjustment and its sub-dimensions between male and female groups. Here also female group has found to be more adjusted on all areas of adjustment - home, health, social, and emotional adjustment than male groups. In fact, female adolescents group was the significantly most adjusted in the area of home with ($M = 13.33$). The adjustment of the females thus could be seen clearly on account of the strong parental acceptance of female adolescents which along with their significant overall coping potential facilitates their effective adjustment at home. This has been in coherence with other studies for instance Ohannessian et al., (1996) have found out that for girls, parental acceptance significantly predicted girls' self-worth, perceived attractiveness, and social and school competence. In yet another study, by Shulman (1993), he emphasized on the role of social support in individual coping. He concluded that the availability of family and peers combined with support of a youngster's independence contributes to individual adaptive coping. He further emphasized that the contribution of close relationships to coping differs for males and females.
Mean comparison was further carried out on another demographic variable that is age. Three different age groups of adolescents were compared to see the effect of parenting practices and coping behaviours on them. Amongst them parental acceptance and coping made significant difference among all the three groups. But the affect is highest among late adolescents with \( (M = 48.10) \) on parental acceptance and \( (M = 93.77) \) on coping, and early adolescents’ parental acceptance \( (M = 30.93) \), coping \( (M = 56.18) \) while mid adolescent’s parental acceptance \( (M = 48.07) \), coping \( (M = 90.78) \) respectively. The late adolescents group showed highest adjustment level as it scored lowest on adjustment and its sub dimensions (a reverse relationship existing between adjustment and the independent variables - parenting and coping, by the use of adjustment inventory). Further, late adolescents were reported to be most adjusted in home with \( (M = 12.11) \). This finding supports the earlier study of Deborah Lamble (2007), who held that secure attached relationships with parents foster appropriate social behaviour by promoting high levels of emotional awareness, empathy, positive expressiveness, and low levels of negative dominant expressiveness among late adolescents. In another supportive study by Cliff McKinney, Bisa Donnelly and Kimberly Renk (2008), concluded that perceived parenting, positive and negative perceptions of parents, and emotional adjustment as reported by late adolescents are all correlated significantly.

When mid adolescents group was compared with late adolescents group, no significant difference emerged out except that of coping. However when this
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group was compared with early adolescents group, it showed more score on parental acceptance and coping. Moreover, mid adolescents group have also been reported to score higher than the early adolescents group on adjustment and its sub-dimensions. This indicates that with each succession in age the capacity to adjust improves among adolescents.

Mean comparison was also done on another demographic variable that is class of study of adolescents. Here also, three group of adolescents were drawn on the basis of their grades; 9th and 10th, 11th and 12th and undergraduate adolescents. These adolescents groups were compared to see the effect of dimensions of parenting practices and coping behaviours on them. It was found that parental acceptance and coping made significant difference among all the three groups. But the affect is highest among undergraduate adolescents with parental acceptance (M = 48.10), coping (M = 93.77), while mean for (9th and 10th) parental acceptance (M = 30.93), coping (M = 56.18) and (11th and 12th) adolescents’ parental acceptance (M = 48.07), coping (M = 90.78) respectively. When the adjustment of these different groups were tested on the basis of their above mean scores, the undergraduate in comparison to (9th and 10th), and (11th and 12th) adolescents group emerged to have highest adjustment level, as it scored lowest on adjustment and its sub dimensions. Further, undergraduate adolescents have been reported to be most adjusted in home with (M = 12.11). Thus, it may be concluded that parental acceptance leads to adjustment among adolescent’s home environment. This finding is in accordance with other studies for instance, Maureen and Kenneth (1995) has reported an association
between secure parental attachment and adjustment for first year college students. In yet another study by Slicker (1998), the relationship of parenting styles to behavioural adjustment in graduating high school seniors was investigated. Parenting style has come out to be significantly related to older adolescent’s behavioural adjustment. Further, Soucy, Nathalie Lorose, Simon (2000), in one of their studies concluded that parental control was predictive of adolescent adjustment to college and perceptions of parental attachment and control, and secure relationship was predictive of adolescent’s adjustment.

When 11th and 12th adolescents group was compared with undergraduate adolescents group then no significant difference emerged in parental acceptance but was found in coping. The 11th and 12th adolescent group had scored less in coping than the undergraduate group as noticed earlier. However when this group of 11th and 12th adolescents was compared with 9th and 10th adolescents group, it showed better in adjustment and coping. Moreover, it also scored more on parental acceptance. The 9th and 10th group thus scored lowest in parental acceptance and coping. Interestingly, the adjustment levels of these groups moves in the same progression. This is supported by Anita Chandola and Sunan Bhanot (2008), who reported that there exists significant relationship between parenting style and adjustment of adolescents.
Conclusion

Examining the impact of parenting practice, coping behaviour and adjustment pattern among adolescents, various results are obtained. Present study incorporated the use of stepwise multiple regression analysis, in order to analyze the data. Moreover, *t-test* has also been applied here in order to examine whether the various comparison groups related to demographic variables differ on dimensions of parenting practices, coping behaviour, adjustment and its sub dimensions. The major findings of the investigation are as follows:

Parental acceptance emerge as the most important dimension of parenting practice influencing adjustment and its sub dimensions. It seems that when parents shows a warm and nurturing behaviour the adolescent is more likely to show better adjustment and better coping.

Also, females scored higher on parental acceptance, parental concentration – dimensions of parenting practice, coping and adjustment and its sub dimensions in comparison to male adolescents.

Late adolescent group scored higher on parental acceptance, coping, adjustment and its sub dimensions as compared to mid and early adolescent groups.

With regard to class of the study, undergraduate adolescents scored higher on parental acceptance, coping, adjustment and its sub dimensions as compared to 9th and 10th, 11th and 12th adolescent indicating advancing towards higher class needs to better coping and adjustment.
Implications and recommendations:

- Based on the findings of the present work it has been felt that awareness needs to be generated amongst the parents for the importance of good and effective parenting.

- Developing parental skills and involvement in adolescent’s life would contribute in enhancing positive perceptions of parents by their adolescent.

- Professional experts and counselors at high schools and intermediate levels are required to deal with physiological and psychological changes in adolescents especially related to puberty, social development and problems related to independence and autonomy.

- Government and private organizations can play active role in organizing workshops and welfare meetings to enhance parental self-efficacy skills and help parents to view the behaviour of their children with the developmental context and counter distorted parental expectations based on lack of understanding of developmental needs of adolescents.

- Workshops and programs also need to be conducted regularly providing assistance to adolescents in understanding and coping of emotional and behavioural problems.

Limitation of the study and suggestions for future research

It is a known fact that research in any discipline and especially in social science is a never ending effort. Similarly any study cannot be free from
criticism from varied sides. Researches in psychology focus on few problem areas, and during the process of investigation the researcher comes to know about the novel area which were unknown during starting the particular study. However, in due process of completion of research many hurdles and shortcomings pass by the researcher.

By keeping in mind the limitations of the present study, it is suggested that-

- Longitudinal analysis should continue to examine the role of social context risk factors such as inadequate income and low maternal education in the development of parenting problems and adolescent adjustment.

- The study can also be transformed into a cross cultural study.

- Comparison of parent’s self perception of child rearing and that of adolescent may also be studied.

- Comparison of adolescent’s perception of mother’s and father’s parenting may also be taken for the purpose of study.

- It would be suggested to use much larger samples.