A CONCEPTUAL MODEL:

"What might have been is an abstraction
Remaining a perpetual possibility
Only in a world of speculation.
What might have been and what has been
Point to one end, which is always present.
Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage which we did not take
Towards the door we never opened".

T.S. Eliot, Burnt, Norton.

The objective of this paper is to present the studies on adolescence behaviour in unified terms. This chapter develops the required framework.

INPUT OUTPUT SYSTEM:

Growth can be conceptualized as any process or procedure designed to transform a set of input elements into a specified set of output elements. Thus we view the adolescent period as growth and attempt to analyze this period in terms of 3 component parts of inputs, outputs and process. The diagram shown in Figure 1.1 illustrates the way in which various ingredients are brought together and transformed so as to accomplish the objectives for which the system was designed.
The process can be very complicated, many kinds of inputs can be required, a variety of outputs can emerge. But the idea of transforming a set of inputs so that they yield a set of outputs is not complex. The design of an actual input-output process to accomplish specific objectives is another matter. It can be very difficult.

**OUTPUTS:**

Specification of the desired output or outputs is the usual starting point. The output in our case would be the adolescent maturing into adulthood. This must not be confused with the objectives which may be an ideal profile of a well adjusted adolescent. In many cases the outputs can be traced back via interrelationships to input elements.

**INPUTS:**

Inputs to the growth process of the adolescent are the type of education, the home and school situations, social factors, money material and people.
PROCESS:

The growth process of the adolescent is akin to a kind of transfer function which transforms the above inputs acting on the individual to produce the desired output, that is, a well-adjusted adolescent who matures to adulthood.

This process of growing of the individual is controlled or monitored by home, school and social mechanisms. These mechanisms sense deviations from the acceptable norms governing the ideal adolescent and acts on the inputs and the process.

CONSTRAINTS:

It must be appreciated that there are constraints which perpetually act on the system as a whole. Identification of these constraints seem to be the major thrust of research by psychologists.

Removal or additions of constraints are suggested in many studies and at times controllable constraints may be modified to help achieve the desired objectives.

Here we identify two types of constraints.

(1) Micro-constraints acting on the individual's own growing process.

(2) The macro-constraints acting from outside the individual system that is constraints imposed by general environmental factors like cultural, social, legal, political and economic considerations.
FIGURE 1.2 CAN NOW BE ELABORATED INTO A SYSTEM'S MODEL AS FOLLOWS:

LEGAL  CULTURAL  ECONOMIC  SOCIAL  GEOGRAPHICAL  POLITICAL

**FIGURE 1.2**:  
An Integrated Systems Approach to the study of Adolescent Behaviour.