SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the major findings of the current survey, and conclusions and suggestions for further research emerging from the study.

Everyone of our dreams is, as a rule, related to elements of our wake state experience. However, dream psychology is yet to resolve a basic puzzle - whether dream content is a compensatory manifestation of wake state desires - what the philosopher Jean Paul Sartre would call "lack" - or it is a continuation of the concerns of waking life. Harris Fiss (1979), reviewing the research findings pertaining to this issue, concluded that these two conceptions of dream vis-a-vis wake state are not contradictory as it is presumed by some, but complementary to each other. The preponderant theories and evidences to-day are to the effect that dreams are a continuation of waking life.

Chapter 3 of this thesis cites evidences for studies in which dream reports have been viewed as one type of personal document, a reflector of personality traits, an equivalent to report on conscious functioning and so on. The studies cited under gender identity and the exploration of developmental vicissitudes also lend support to the idea that dreams do reflect the waking world of the dreamer. Hall, after working over 50,000 dreams, holds that there is "Continuity" between dream content and waking thought. In their over view
of dream studies Winget and Kramer (1979) conclude that "The content of dreams has most often, but not always, been found to be continuous with rather than compensatory to waking mental life". All those who favour the use of the manifest dream content as a clue to understanding the human psyche agree that dreams reveal the dreamer and his world rather than conceal the same.

The investigator, a practising counselor, has also found that the approach to her clients' dreams as a continuation of their wake state concerns is more fruitful in offering valid insights into their psychodynamics. The concept of repression as the precipitating cause of specific dreams is perhaps a common denominator in both the continuity theory and the compensatory theory. It is against this background that an attempt has been made to interpret the findings of this survey. Certain speculative inferences are also made on the basis of the findings cited by earlier researches.

The highlights or striking features that emerged in the process of analysis are given below. The findings on the comparison of the data of the current survey and Hall and Van de Castle's norm (henceforth to be referred as H&VC's norm) are given major emphasis. Data pertaining to the entire sample are compared first, then the norms for males and females of H&VC's sample are compared with the corresponding data pertaining to the boys and girls of this sample. Following this are given the findings sub-groups wise: the age groups (11-13 years, 14-16 years and 17-19 years), the religious groups (Hindus, Muslims and Christians), the income groups (the Low, Middle and High), and the physical category (the normal and the special students).
It has to be noted that in chapter 4 and 5, Presentation and Analysis, the tables are presented **dream content category-wise** and the findings in this chapter are presented **sample group-wise**. This has been done with a view to avoid repetition on the one hand and enhance the clarity of the findings on the other. Findings pertaining to the subgroups - age, religion, income level and physical category are not compared with the norm. The findings are presented under two heads - major findings and secondary ones. Findings pertaining to the objectives of the survey are given under **Major Findings**. The **striking features** that emerged in the process of analysis are given under the rubric of **secondary findings**.

**Major Findings**

The dream reports of the Indian adolescents and the post-adolescent American sample of H&VC show similarity in many respects. For example, (1) Among the three social interactions aggressive interactions are reported in the highest proportion by both the samples (2) Misfortune is reported in a higher proportion than good fortune in both the samples’ dreams.

But these samples show variation in the proportions of certain dream elements compared to the norm: this sample has reported **friendly interactions** and **good fortune** in relatively higher proportions than the norm.

Gender differences are found in the dream content categories of boys and girls in this sample in **terms** of almost all the dream content categories.
The dreams of the sub-groups of the sample based on Age, Religion, Income level and physical functional status are found to vary in terms of almost all the dream content categories.

*a la* Hall the variations noted above "make sense in terms of cultural differences". Ways and means of verifying Hall's contention is given under suggestions for future research. The findings indicate that there is relationship between the dream content and the demographic variables considered in the study such as gender, age, religion, income level, physical functional status. Whether such differences could emerge only in the adolescent phase, and not before, as it is purported by Foulkes, (1975) forms yet another hypothesis to be probed by the future research.

Secondary Findings

Setting

The current sample has reported the location-based settings *Indoor* and *Outdoor*, in equal proportion. Among the range of the five subcategories of settings the first one which stands for the most thoroughly 'known' among all the categories namely *Familiar settings* are reported in a higher proportion than each of the other, less familiar ones in the range.

Compared to H&VC's norm the current sample as a whole (total sample) has reported the *Familiar* and the *Distorted* in a higher proportion. Compared to H&VC's female sample the girls in this sample have reported *Outdoor* settings in a higher proportion. Compared to H&VC's male samples the boys in this sample have reported *Distorted* settings in a higher proportion.
a la Van de Castle’s (1968, 1970, 1972) findings the following speculations can be made about the current sample in general and the girls in particular:

(a) Most of the adolescents in the current sample are raised by both the parents

(b) Most of the adolescents in this sample are middle born.

(c) The probability of most of the girls in this sample having already reached menarche at the time of turning in their dream reports for this study is high.

(d) The probability of incipient depression among the girls in this sample is higher.

(e) The probability that the dream reports are collected from the girls in this sample during the non-menstrual days of the menstrual cycle is also high.

On the lines of the findings reported by Kramer and associates (1972) the boys in this sample show incipient schizophrenic tendency.

Ways and means of verifying hypotheses that could be derived from the above speculations are indicated later under suggestions for further studies.

Character

Familiar, Single, Male, Adult characters predominate in the dreams of this sample (entire).
The boys in this sample have reported Male characters in a higher proportion than Female characters. The girls in this sample have reported Female characters in a higher proportion than Male characters. This finding regarding the frequency of Female characters in the girls' dreams runs against the findings reported by Van de Castle, (1972) to the effect that the dreams of Females have equal number of Male and Female characters.

Both the boys and the girls in this sample have reported Family characters in a greater proportion than the males and the females of H&VC's sample. Compared to the females in H&VC's sample the girls in this sample have reported Animal and Creatures in a higher proportion.

The incidence of animal and creatures in the reports of girls and Family and Animal-and-Creature in those of the entire sample indicate (a) the possibility of depressive tendency in most of the subjects in this sample (b) especially the girls in this sample may be fighting unacceptable impulses. These speculations are made on the basis of the findings reported by Van de Castle (1966, 1968). However Van de Castle (1972) reports that the number of animals reported in dreams of children may progressively decrease as chronological age increases. A dream content survey on the character dimension of the adults in this culture may resolve the puzzle whether higher incidence of animals in this reports of girls in this sample is life phase specific or not.
Objects

The object classes Architecture and Body parts are preponderant among the twelve subclasses in the dream reports of this sample. Money gets the least representation.

Compared to H&VC’s norm the number of objects per dream for this sample is less. This perhaps reflects the impoverished atmosphere in which most of the subjects in this sample dwell vis-a-vis the normative sample.

Compared to the norm’s dreams Architecture, Communication, Food, Implements, Nature and Money are reported in a higher proportion by this sample. Region and Street are reported in a lower proportion by this sample than H&VC’s norm.

A high incidence of Food items in the dreams is again considered as one of the symptoms of schizophrenia by Kramer and associates (1972).

Descriptive Elements

Among the twelve modifier elements Colour is the most frequently reported one by this sample. Linearity and Thermal are the least reported ones.

Compared to the norm this sample has reported a lower count of modifier elements per dream. The speculative question, whether it is due to a general deficiency in powers of articulation and expression in this sample compared to the normative samples throws up a new line for dream research.
Social Interaction: Current Survey Vs Norm

- Male
- Girl
- Female

- Aggression
- Friendly
- Sexual
Compared to the norm the elements *Intense, straight* and *Pretty / good* are in a higher proportion in this sample’s dreams. This sample has reported *Chromatic* (Colour) in a lower proportion than the normative sample.

Whether these differences have locus in the two different cultures or in the life phase to which these two samples belong can be ascertained through a follow-up research.

**Social Interaction**

The current sample has reported higher counts of all the three types of social interactions, *Aggressive, Friendly* and *Sexual* per dream than the H&VC’s norm. Among these *Aggressive* interactions are reported in the highest proportion by this sample.

This finding runs parallel to the psychoanalytic observation about this crucial life phase (adolescence). It says that during adolescence, "all of them feel a general antagonism against everyone men and women" (Karen Horney, 1975). Winnicot (1968) describes aggression in children as direct reaction to frustration.

The boys and the girls in this sample have reported *Aggressive* interactions in almost equal proportions, whereas in the H&VC’s sample, the males have reported a higher proportion of *Aggressive* interaction than the females.
Compared to the norm the current sample has reported Friendly interactions in a higher proportion and Sexual interactions in a lower proportion. The findings related to sexual interaction support the findings of Langs, (1967) which state that there were fewer sexual themes in the dreams of adolescents than in the adults' dreams.

Compared to the norm Dreamer-involved and Dreamer-initiated social interactions are reported in a lesser proportion by this sample. The subject qua dreamer is more often the Recipient in the Aggressive and Friendly interactions reported by this sample than it is the case with the normative sample.

The females of H&VC's sample and the girls of this sample report Aggressive and Friendly interactions in almost equal proportions.

Boys in this sample have reported Aggressive and Sexual interactions in a lower proportion than the males in the H&VC's sample. The boys in this sample have reported Friendly interactions in a higher proportion than H&VC's male samples.

The findings reported by Kramer et al., (1969) suggest that the higher incidence of social interaction (per se) reported by the boys and the girls in this sample is yet another symptom for Depression and Schizophrenic tendency in them.
The findings reported by Van De Castle (1972) indicate that the current sample and the Cuna Indians have some common psychological tendencies. The lesser proportion of aggression directed from the dreamer again is cited by Van de Castle as a tendency found in the dreams of Schizophrenics. However, such negative findings must be subjected to culture-fair verification.

Foulkes et al., (1969) report that the subjects who played relatively active role in their dreams also tended to be characterized by the same type of role in waking social interactions. Mutatis mutandis it may be safely speculated that the current sample is passive in its wake state behaviour compared to the normative sample because the former has reported dreamer-involved interactions and less dynamic activities in lower proportions than H&VC's norm.

The findings of Fletcher (1970) would suggest an external locus of control in the sample: Fletcher has reported a positive relationship between external locus of control and hostility towards the dreamer and vice versa.

Perhaps this is what Sudhir Kakar (1997) the Indian Psychoanalyst meant when he said that the "pre-occupation with the themes of loneliness and separation, together with a strong unconscious desire for the confirming presence of the "others" stays with the Individual in India throughout his/her lifecourse. He points to the conscious absence of encouragement for self reliance and achievement in the Indian Personality Training. In our society, he says, the assertion of individuality is not a perceived value. Large scale surveys pursued along these lines of dream content may throw light on personality-in-culture.
Activity

The current sample has reported Verbal activity in the highest proportion among all the eight subclasses of activities.

Girls in this sample have reported dynamic activities such as Verbal and Movement in their dreams than the boys.

Compared to the norm the current sample has reported lesser number of activities per dream. Ladame F, (1995) argues dreaming constitutes an essential safety valve. Whether the finding indicates the deficiency in the psychic apparatus of this sample in acting out the binding drive energy through their dreams is a line for pursuing in future dream research.

Compared to the activities reported by the males and the females in the normative sample the activities reported by the boys and the girls in the current sample belong to the less dynamic category. Both boys and girls in this sample have reported Verbal activities in a higher proportion than the males and the females in the H&VC's sample A higher proportion of verbal behaviour again is an indication for schizophrenic tendency in the sample (a la Kramer and associates, 1972).

Emotion

Happy and Apprehension are the emotions most often found in the dream reports of this sample.
The boys in this sample have reported *Happy* in a greater proportion than the girls. The girls in this sample on the contrary have reported *Sad* in a greater proportion in their dreams. The finding seems to corroborate the alleged bias of Indian culture against the "fairer sex".

Compared to the norm the current sample has reported more counts of emotions per dream. Boys and girls in this sample have reported *Happy* in a higher proportion than the males and the females in the normative sample. The findings reported by Kramer *et al.*, (1968) and Miller (1969) regarding the number of emotions in a dream and the proportion of *Happy* in the total count of emotions again suggest the possibility of schizophrenic and depressive tendencies in the current sample. As already indicated such attributions must be made only after rigorous and careful culture-fair verification. It must also be remembered here that our population consists of adolescents - as against adults in the norm - which is widely held to be a period of acute identity crisis (Erik Erikson, 1968).

Compared to the norm the current sample has reported *Dreamer-involved-happy* in a higher proportion and *dreamer-involved-apprehension* in a lower proportion.

Van de Castle (1971) reports that the dreams of children are predominantly apprehensive. But this adolescent sample has reported *happy* on par with *Apprehension* and the proportion in which apprehension is reported is lower than it is with the normative sample.
What do these findings imply? Do they reflect the unhealthy state of the mental health of this sample or is that emotions in the dreams of this Indian sample something far different? This is a question that can be answered only by means of further, culture-fair dream research. Comparison of the wake state temperament of the subgroups in the sample is another way of answering this question.

**Striving Outcome : Success Failure**

The current sample has reported the two striving outcomes success and failure in almost equal proportion.

Compared to H & VC’s norm Dreamer-expressed success is reported in a lower proportion by this sample. This runs parallel for both the sexes as between this adolescent sample and H & VC’s post adolescent sample.

**Environmental Press : Misfortune Vs Good fortune**

Misfortune is reported in a higher proportion than Good fortune by this sample. The girls in this sample have reported Misfortune in a higher proportion than the boys. The boys in this sample have reported Good fortune in a higher proportion than the girls. It is worth recalling that the emotions Sad and Happy are reported respectively in a higher proportion by the girls and boys of this sample.

Compared to the norm, this sample has reported Good fortune in a higher proportion.
Cohen (1975) reports that androgynous types of individuals - those who show preference for masculine and feminine characteristics - will show relatively little unpleasantness or misfortune in their dreams. Whether the higher incidence of Happy and Good fortune in this samples’ dream (compared to the norm) has anything to do with their gender-orientation is another hypothesis for a further dream research project.

Compared to H & VC’s male sample the boys in this sample have reported Good fortune in a higher proportion. Kramer’s (1973) finding indicates there must be a notable cause for such a high level of Good fortune in the dreams. Kramer (1972), found that the patients with more severe brain syndrome had more dreams of Good fortune and warm-social interaction. It has already been noted that the current sample report more friendly interaction than the norm and in those friendly interactions the dreamers more often were Befrienders than Befriended.

Highlights of differences observed among the age groups

The 11-13 years group has reported Indoor setting in a higher proportion than Outdoor setting. The Indoor and Outdoor settings are reported in almost equal proportions by the 14-16 year group and the 17-19 year group.

The 11-13 year group has reported teachers in a higher proportion than the 17-19 year group.
The 14-16 year group and the 17-19 year group have reported *Female-strangers* and *known-females* in a higher proportion than the 11-13 year group.

The 17-19 year group has reported *Occupational* characters in a higher proportion than the 11-13 year group.

The 11-13 year group has reported *known-teenagers* and *uncertain-adults* in a higher proportion than the other two age groups.

The degree of familiarity of the characters who appear in the dreams of this sample seems to change from the most familiar to unfamiliar as the chronological age of the sample subgroups increases.

The youngest group (11-13 years) has reported *Travel* in a higher proportion than the 14-16 year group. The youngest of the age group has reported *Colour* in a lower proportion than the other two groups. The youngest group has reported *Modifier* elements in a higher proportion and the *Negative* elements in a lower proportion than the other two age groups.

The 14-16 year group has reported *aggressive-interaction* in the highest proportion among the three types of interactions. The other two age groups have reported aggressive and friendly interactions in equal proportions.

The 11-13 year group has reported *school* characters and *Animal-and-creatures-involved* aggressive interactions in a higher proportion than the 17-19 year group.
The 17-19 year has reported *Verbal-activities-by-familiar-other-than-family* in a higher proportion than the other two age groups.

The emotion *Happy* is reported in a higher proportion in the dreams of the 11-13 year group and the 17-19 year group than in those of the 14-16 year group.

The 17-19 year group has reported *failure-to-familiar-other-than-family* characters in a higher proportion than the 14-16 year group.

All the *Good fortunes* reported in the dreams of the 11-13 years have occurred to the dreamer.

**Differences - Normal Vs Special**

The special students have reported *Outdoor* settings in a higher proportion than the normal students. The normal students have reported *Adult-strangers* in a higher proportion and the special students have reported *Teenage-strangers* in a higher proportion compared to each other. The normal students have reported *implements* in a higher proportion than the special students.

Of the three social interactions *Aggressive-interaction* is reported in the highest proportion by the normal students. *Friendly-interactions* are reported in a higher proportion by the special students.
Normal students have reported School-character-involved-friendly-interaction in a higher proportion and the special students have reported family-involved-friendly-interaction in a higher proportion in their dreams compared to their respective counterparts.

The special students have reported the emotion Happy in a higher proportion than the normal students. The special students have reported cognitive activity in a higher proportion than the normal students.

The special students have reported Good fortune in a higher proportion than the normal students.

**Highlights of differences observed among the three religious groups**

The Christians have reported Familiar-Indoor settings in a higher proportion than the other two religious groups namely, the Hindus and the Muslims.

The Christians have reported prominent characters in a higher proportion than the Hindus and Muslims.

The Muslims have reported family-involved-aggression and family-as-victims-of-aggression in a higher proportion than the Hindus and the Christians.
The Hindus have reported *Uncertain-characters-as-recipients-of-friendly-interaction* in a higher proportion than other two religious groups.

The Muslims have reported *Mutually-friendly-interactions* in a higher proportion than the Hindus and the Christians.

The Hindus have reported *Verbal* activities in a higher proportion than the Christians and the Muslims.

The Christians have reported *Immobile-physical activities by familiar-other-than-family* in a higher proportion than the Hindus and the Muslims.

The Christians have reported *Dreamer-involved* emotions in a greater proportion than the Hindus and the Muslims.

*Family-involved* emotions are reported more frequently by the Hindus than the Muslims and the Christians.

The Muslims have reported *School-character-involved-emotions* in a higher proportion than the other two religious groups.

The Hindus and the Muslims have reported *Success* and *Failure* in an almost equal proportions. The Christians here reported *Failure* in a greater proportion than *Success*. 
Differences observed among the income groups

The low and the middle income groups have reported in a higher proportion subclass most *Familiar* setting than the other subcategories of *Familiar*-based settings.

The low and the middle income groups have reported *Familiar* setting in the highest proportion than every one of the other less familiar settings.

The low and the middle income groups have reported *relatives* and *strangers* in a higher proportion than the high income group.

The middle income group has reported teachers in a higher proportion than the other two income groups.

The low income group has reported *region-and-street* in a higher proportion than the other two income groups.

The middle income group has reported *Mutually-aggressive* and *Mutually-friendly* interactive roles in a higher proportion than the other two income groups.

The low income-group has reported *self-aggression* in a higher proportion than the middle and the higher income groups.

The high income group has reported *mutual-sexual-interactions* in a higher proportion than the middle and the low income-groups.
The low income-group and the high income-group have reported *Confusion* in a higher proportion than the middle income group.

The High income group has reported *dreamer-experienced-failure* in a higher proportion than the other two income groups.

**Conclusion**

The findings reported in the survey indicate that the contents of the dreams of school going adolescents do reveal information about this life phase in general and the subgroups in the population which have potentials psychosocial significance. The potential significance can be elucidated by means of further research particularly focusing on the latent content of the dreams.
SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Suggestions for further research are presented in two sections: the suggestions in the first section are those that can be carried out with the data that is already collected and available. The suggestions in second section are those that require collection of further data but, which stem mostly from questions that arose as the research was underway.

Future Research on the Collected Data

The findings of the current survey in a nut shell indicate that the dream contents reported by the subgroups in this survey vary in terms of almost all the content categories. On the lines of Cohen's (1979) it is suggested that a factor analytic study of the dream content categories reported by these subgroups would facilitate theorizing about the nature of differences in dream content among these groups.

The relatively higher frequencies of incidence of certain dream elements in this sample indicate that this sample quite plausibly includes individuals with incipient depression and schizophrenia. Further research can identify the subjects at risk - that is, those who have reported the "critical" dream elements in frequencies significantly over and above the average number per dream reported by the entire sample. By referring these subjects to clinical professionals, the cross-cultural validity of these dream indicators of incipient psychopathology can be either confirmed or disconfirmed.
The higher incidence of *Verbal* activity in this sample indicates that most of the subjects are middle born or last born children. It has already been mentioned that this information about this sample has been collected but is not being utilised in this study. A future research project can categorise the dream reports on the basis of birth order and find out the relationships between birth order of the subjects in this sample and the level of *Verbal* activity reported.

The classification of the dream data on the basis of the standard in which the subjects are studying (this data has already been collected) can disclose differences if any, in terms of the standard in which they are studying. In conjunction with the age of the subjects the data can indicate whether being underaged or overaged for the standard makes for certain patterns in the dream content elements.

The data for the current survey were collected over a period of 14 months. This includes three significant terms of an academic year. The more *relaxed* first term, a rather *even* second term and an *anxious* third term. The dream content difference, if any, among the reports collected during these phases can be examined in a further research project. It could be done because the instruction was to the effect that each dream must be reported with its date of occurrence.

A correlation study of this dream data with the academic achievement data of the subjects (which can be readily secured from the school records) can distinguish the dream correlates of the above average students from the below average students.
The classification of dream data on the basis of the schools in which they study is another line of pursuit possible with the already available data. Such a study can shed some light on the nature and climate of those schools as organizations.

**Future Research with Further Data**

With necessary modifications in the coding procedure the contents could be broadly divided into three sections such as, the elements associated with the school, the home and neutral ones. Such a scheme of classification can throw light on the difference, if any, of the subjects’ conception about the school, an environment in which they spend most of their waking time.

The findings pertaining to the dreamer’s role in social interactions reported in the dreams indicate the probability of external locus of control in most of the adolescents in this sample. A dream survey repeated on the dream content of the adolescents to whom the Internal - External control scale (Rotter, 1966) is administered, and a correlation study of scores on dream social interactions and locus of control test can be pursued.

Foulkes et al., (1978) contend that it is in the adolescent phase that the socio-cultural aspects first manifest in dreams: this hypothesis could be verified by a future research - first, by repeating the survey on the pre-pubescent school pupils and two, by comparing the findings with the current ones.

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