CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Today we are living in the age of information and technology. People are experiencing instant change and instant communication. In the recent years, there has been a definite policy shift in favour of adopting more of new communication technologies to accelerate the pace of development. The modern life has transformed drastically as a consequence of globalization. The world has become closer as the boundaries vanished, courtesy the advent of a number of mass media. The life has become more complex and revolutionized. Modern technological advancements have increased the modes of communication like mobiles, computers, television, laptops, palmtops etc. Media like Television, computers and easy access to internet has led to cultural fusion. Computers and access to internet is not universal and is limited to a few people till now. However, television has universal viewership. Television is accessible both in terms of its technology and in terms of its content. Commercially, the television set has become a common communications receiver in homes, businesses and institutions, particularly as a source of entertainment and news.

Perhaps the most widely debated medium of communication all over the world is television. Exposure to television is almost universal. Television is a widely used telecommunication medium for sending (broadcasting) and receiving moving images, either monochromatic ("black and white") or color, usually accompanied by sound. "Television" may also refer specifically to a television set, television programming or television transmission. The word is derived from mixed Latin and Greek roots, meaning "far sight": Greek \( \text{tele} \) (\( \text{tēlē} \)), far, and Latin \( \text{visio} \), sight (from \( \text{video} \), \( \text{vis-} \) to see, or to view in the first person).

Role of television has ever been pivotal in every aspect of human life. In fact, no aspect of modern life can be conceived to be bereft of media impact. Television has made enormous changes in people’s everyday lives over the last
few decades. No wonder that millions of people of all ages and belonging to
different ethnic groups glue to it. Television channels and programmes have to
cater to requirements of people of all ages. Satellite channels provide a large
number of channels and programmes considering differences in likings and
preferences of people of different age groups. Like there are a number of
religious and spiritual channels for old aged people (Sanskar, Aastha, etc.).
Cartoon and Pogo channels for children, various movie channels for adolescents
and adults (Star Movies, Zee Cinema, Star Gold, HBO, etc.) and serials on Star
Plus, Zee TV, Sony, Sahara One and many more for people of all age
groups(male as well as female).

In the context of modern mass-media, television has emerged as a very
potent and all pervading cultural force throughout the world, which has nearly
demolished the traditional forms of communication. In the west, television is
called the chewing gum of the eye. Elsewhere too, it has become the most
popular, glamorous and acclaimed medium of communication. With the advent of
television and new information technology, also came an overall transformation
of society-transformation in its thinking, perceptions, expressions, beliefs and
attitudes. In fact, television has brought about change in the psyche of people.
Television plays a significant role in making people aware about various social
problems and issues.

Television has come to dominate the hours in our day, the organization of
our living rooms, the topics of our conversations, our conceptions of pleasure, the
things to which we look forward to and the way we discover the world we live in.
Tremendous growth of television has affected viewer’s time budgeting, changes
in sleep hours, modifications in family dining patterns, shifts in study time, social
appointments, discharge of household duties and many other alterations in
individual and group life. Even a cursory glance shows that television
experiences have become an integral part of the weave of everyday life.
Television has become inextricably the part of, and often indistinguishable from
everyday life. In fact, it is difficult to think of any area not included in the television

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embrace. In both public and private spheres, one consumes and is consumed by a flood of images and sounds. Television is so pervasive in its personal, political, economic, strategic, psychological, moral, ethical and social consequences that it leaves no part of us untouched, unaffected or unaltered.

In connection with choosing a self-sufficient media, the emergence of television is worth paying attention. Television is commonly understood as an 'audio-visual' medium of communication. Television is the 'most pervasive medium and master of image and illusion'. Television became widespread nearly towards the latter part of the twentieth century. Television was introduced in India in 1959 and initially only two channels i.e. Doordarshan and its regional counterpart for example, Jalandhar Doordarshan were telecasted at that time. With the advent of satellite technology and cable television, the expansion of television has got an enormous boost. As a consequence of satellite technology, the number of channels has multiplied. Today with the advent of satellite technology, the remote and normally inaccessible parts of the country have become accessible and amenable to the spread of information. If used properly, television can become the forum of a new age of interdependence, the audio-visual mass medium fully capable of crossing the geographical, cultural and political barriers to link men and nations in an evolving world community. Television is a source of 'infotainment' for the masses. As it gives new information and educates people along with entertaining them. (News channels, Discovery, National Geographic channel and History channel etc.)

The recent television channel multiplication courtesy cable television has immensely influenced all arenas of human existence. Now, every observer has turned to the question of its effects on the society and individuals. The impact of television on children and adolescents is becoming an important issue with researchers. The range of effects of television viewing is very wide. Evidence from research suggests that children learn from watching television and the programmes they watch can change their behaviour, adjustment patterns, beliefs, perceptions, attitudes etc.
Women and High school girls form the major segment of television viewers. Consequently television should be automatically catering to the requirements and interests of the majority segment of viewers. Women play multi-dimensional and multi-faceted roles in the society as shapers of the future citizens. Their betterment and amelioration is necessary for social transformation. Television can help in accelerating women’s empowerment and ameliorating their deplorable condition. Television’s vital role in developing women in social, regional, national and international spheres has to be amply acknowledged and recognized.

Women-oriented TV programmes pay a heavy toll of influence on viewers. These programmes are tremendously instrumental in inculcating attitudinal changes and freedom of choice among women and young girls. These programmes focus on the problems, issues, interests, trends and positive as well as negative aspects related to women and young girls. Women-oriented TV programmes are being watched with great interest by the female viewers. The effect of viewing these programmes could be positive as well as negative. The women are portrayed either unbelievably good or extremely bad in these programmes. These programmes may have positive as well as negative effects on the family relations of its viewers. The extreme portrayal of female characters may lead to conflicting ideas about ‘self-concept’ of young girls. They would be confused either to think themselves as the ideal heroine (Tulsi, Parvati) or the wicked vamps (Sindura, Jigyasa). Moreover, the conflicting views about the roles and demands expected from the women in the society may lead to ‘adjustment’ problems for young girls. Regular viewing of women-oriented TV programmes may reshape the attitudes of young adolescent girls. Hence the investigator wanted to explore the possible impact of women-oriented TV programmes on the self-concept, adjustment and attitude towards life of high school girls.

The 21st century can be termed as a ‘transitional period’. The people of this century are facing a conflict between traditionalism and modernity. They are in a state of flux, whether to stick to their traditional culture or accept the
modernity. In this modern scenario, television has become an unavoidable and unremitting factor in shaping what one is and what one like to become. In fact, television is the master of public eye. By virtue of its content, the television is able to shape the beliefs, attitudes, adjustment, self-concept, thinking and perceptions of individuals. Television today has become almost like a member of the family. Hence, its impact on society is incredible. If it is used for constructive purposes, it can have long-lasting benefits for the society as a whole.

Before explaining the terms used in the present study, it is pertinent to mention here that ‘Impact of Women-oriented TV programmes’ is not taken as a treatment type of variable and the dependent variables namely; ‘Self-concept’, ‘Adjustment’ and ‘Attitude towards life’ are not considered as criterion variables. Hence, it is not an experimental type of study, Rather it is a descriptive survey type of study, where ‘Impact of Women-oriented TV programmes’ is just considered as a variable. Hence, it becomes a sort of correlational study where, ‘Impact of Women-oriented TV programmes’ is independent variable and ‘Self-concept’, ‘Adjustment’ and ‘Attitude towards life’ are dependent variables.

1.2 IMPACT OF WOMEN-ORIENTED TV PROGRAMMES:

It has been observed that recently, television in India has incorporated a number of programmes based on women. With the advent of private television channels, mega-serials have become very popular. Most of them are women-oriented. Women-oriented TV programmes portray women as protagonists or the central characters. A large number of women-oriented TV programmes are being telecasted on various channels. These programmes present the woman playing the central characters. The portrayal of Indian women on television is far from what Indian women today are. The Indian woman today has moved from the ghoongat, the oppression and is reaching heights. This kind of portrayal never existed even if it did it was like maybe 25% of what is shown and a million years ago. The makers and of course the actors of such shows they themselves are far away from the image that is shown. There is an urgent need to actually create

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something that portrays the real liberated and progressive Indian woman of today.

While women, who were "traditionally more isolated than men" were given equal opportunity to consume shows about more "manly" endeavors, men's feminine sides are tapped by the emotionally invocative nature of many television programs. Television played a significant role in the feminist movement. Although most of the women portrayed on television conformed to stereotypes, television also showed the lives of men as well as news and current affairs. These "other lives" portrayed on television left many women unsatisfied with their current socialization. This opened up a lot of discussions and arguments about the roles of women in a society that they now knew about in greater depth.

The representation of males and females on the television screen has been a subject of much discussion since the television became commercially available in the late 1930s. In 1964 Betty Friedan claimed that "television has represented the American Woman as a "stupid, unattractive, insecure little household drudge who spends her Martyred mindless, boring days dreaming of love and plotting nasty revenge against her husband." As women started to revolt and protest to become equals in society in the 1960s and 1970s, their portrayal on the television was an issue that they addressed. Journalist Susan Faludi suggested, "The practices and programming of network television in the 1980s were an attempt to get back to those earlier stereotypes of women." Through television, even the most homebound women can experience parts of our culture once considered primarily male- sports, war, business, medicine, law and politics.

The inherent intimacy of television makes it one of the few public arenas in our society where men routinely wear makeup and are judged as much on their personal appearance and their "style" as on their "accomplishments."

From 1930 to 2010 Daytime television hasn't changed much. Soap operas and talk shows still dominate the daytime time slot. Prime time television since
the 1950s has been aimed at and catered towards males. In 1952, 68% of characters in primetime dramas were male; in 1973, 74% of characters in these shows were male. In 1970 the National Organization for Women (NOW) took action. They formed a task force to study and change the "derogatory stereotypes of women on television." In 1972 they challenged the licenses of two network-owned stations on the basis of their sexist programming. In the 1960s the shows *I Dream of Jeannie* and *Bewitched* insinuated that the only way that a woman could escape her duties was to use magic. Industry analysis Shari Anne Brill (1982) of Carat USA states, "For years, when men were behind the camera, women were really ditsy. Now you have female leads playing superheroes, or super business women" current network broadcasting features a range of female portrayals.

As regards portrayal of women the television has been identified as major culprit. As it is biased against women and responsible for projecting women as sex objects and propagate stereotyped roles and negative images. In both developed and developing countries, public attitudes regarding the role of women in society are major determinants in deciding the status of women. In shaping these attitudes, the television exerts a potent influence. They seldom depict women as significantly involved in work, in pursuance of careers, or in public life. Women are shown primarily as confined to the domestic sphere, or else as secretaries, assistants and in similar roles ancillary to those of men. Even in domestic and personal situations, women are depicted as incapable of decision making without masculine guidance. Women appear in television as self-deprecating, dependent, irrational, superstitious and over emotional (Srivastava, 1992).

However, the 'bias against women' is slowly diminishing with increasing number of programmes now portraying 'the real women of today’s world'. She is not just confined to household chores but is career oriented successful woman of the 21st century. The media-specifically television has helped to increase the self-confidence of women. Television programmes constantly project images of
women handling authoritative position in family and outside. They take decisions and express the spirit of their freedom with a sense of pride. Women characters are not shown scared to lead their own lives as independent, thinking people capable of taking action (Patil, 2004). Television in India has profoundly shaped women’s place in the family, community and nation (Mankekar, 2004).

Television programmes help in throwing light on issues such as tensions in a struggle between traditional and modern portrayal of women, questions of gender, ethnicity, sexuality, power in the construction of femininity, etc. (Munshi, 2004). Housewives were always looked down upon as compared to those who went out and worked. So they always had a complex that they were not good enough. Our serials, however, give the message that homemakers are important. They hold the family together and protect it. So when housewives watch soaps they start to recognize their importance. That is why housewives are hooked to serials (Bajpai, 2008).

Some soaps do have underlying positive messages. Saat Phere, for example, was about a dark complexioned girl who successfully fought against discrimination. In ‘Banoo Mein Teri Dulhann’, an illiterate girl fights to educate herself. By giving women powerful roles and making them fight for what is right, a message is sent that I am sure makes an impact somewhere in the subconscious of women viewers (Bahl, 2008). We as producers should be responsible and stick to our own ideology. One should not succumb to the pressure of a channel. If we think of a concept or an idea that is new and creative, we can surely convince the channel about it (Malhotra, 2008). The change is positive and there are opportunities.

The industry is going through a major transition and when this is over, things are going to settle down. But as far as the present condition is concerned, I accept the fact that there has been a huge degradation of quality. But at the same time I am confident that things are going to settle down in the future (Mehta, 2008). The ‘saas- bahu’ melodrama has created a problem in various families. Since, India is a country where the joint family is still in vogue, we as
professionals in entertainment should keep the social structure in mind when creating the content of the soaps (Kapoor, 2008). Television’s active role in developing women in regional, national or international spheres has to be fully acknowledged. Women-oriented TV programmes are tremendously instrumental in inculcating attitudinal changes and freedom of choice among young girls and women.

These programmes exhibit a progressive picture of today’s woman. Women-oriented TV programmes like Astitva, Kareena Kareena, Woh rehne waali mehlon ki, Kadam, Jassi jaisi koi nahin, Milee, Kagaar, Kumkum, Tumhari Disha, Reth, Meher, Kasauti Zindagi Kay and several others focus on the problems and issues related to the woman of the 21st century. These programmes focus on the problems of girl child, dowry deaths, broken marriages, widow remarriages, killing of female foetus, discrimination against women at work place, professional growth and numerous other issues. Women-oriented TV programmes can help in bringing about a change in the mindset of people regarding the preference of male child over female child to improve the deplorable condition of the sex-ratio in India. Women-oriented TV programmes are being watched with great interest by young girls and women. These programmes pay a heavy toll of influence on young girls. These programmes have a constant bearing on their attitudes, perceptions, interests, personality, adjustment, self-concept etc.

1.3 SELF-CONCEPT:

Of all human attributes, the self appears to be the most complex and most intangible. The concept of self is not clearly defined, has various meanings, and is used in many different ways. The self is the most real aspect of one’s experience, however, and it is the frame of reference, through which a person perceives, conceives and evaluate one’s world. Self-concept, whether viewed as an association of psychological processes or an accumulation of attitudes and feelings, occupies a conspicuous or central role in human existence. The concept of self emerges from an awareness of being or becoming; self is both process
and entity and gives our behaviour unity and stability. The core of personality is the self-concept. It reflects both personal and social expectations. It is an important integrating factor.

The self-concept is the self as perceived and the values attached to these perceptions, or what a person refers to as ‘I’, ‘me’. Initially, the self-concept may be made up largely of self-expressions, events in the phenomenal field discriminated by the individual as ‘I’, ‘me’ or ‘self’, even though in a pre-verbal way. The ‘self’ is a learned attribute constituting the individual’s picture of himself. It stands for ‘awareness’ of one’s being or functioning. As young people interact with the environment, more and more experience may become symbolized in awareness as self-experience. People develop a self-concept which includes both their perceptions about themselves and the varying positive and negative values attached to these self-perceptions.

The self-concept reflects who the person is. It not only includes feelings toward the self and others, but also the moral structure, attitudes, ideas and values that propel one to action or, on the other hand inaction. The self-concept includes feelings about self – both physical self and psychological self in relation to the environment. Self-concept involves self-image, reflects the ability to satisfy needs, is born of social interaction, determines perceptual field, and as a consequence behaviour.

**Raimy (1948)** defined self-concept as, “a learned perceptual system which functions as an object in the perceptual field”.

**Symonds (1951)** opined that self-concept consists of four aspects: how a person perceives himself, what he thinks of himself, how he values himself and how he attempts through various activities to enhance or defend himself.

**Good (1959)** defined self-concept as, “the parts of the phenomenal field which the individual has differentiated as relatively stable and definite parts or characteristics of himself.”
Rogers (1961) perceives man as rational, forward moving and social entity. He possesses a self-actuating tendency; an inherent tendency of organism to develop all his capacities to the fullest. Based on this idea, Rogers gives the following properties of self:

- Self emerges and develops through interaction with significant others in the environment – self strives for constancy. The need for self-regard leads to selective perception of experience. Organism believes in the ways that are incongruent with the self structure are perceived as threatening and a state of anxiety may exist.
- Self changes as a result of maturation and learning.

Smith (1961) thinks that self-concept is a person as perceived, felt and thought by himself. He feels that self-concept has the following dimensions:

- The perceived self: This is an individual’s concept of the kind of person he or she is. It is influenced by his physical self, his physical appearance, dress and groom, by his abilities and dispositions, his values, beliefs and aspirations.
- The real self: It means one’s nature with all its potentialities. A person is aware of some aspects but unaware of other aspects of his own self. The real self includes perceived self plus unconscious self.

Jourard (1963) said that the self-concept comprises all the beliefs the individual holds concerning what kind of a person he is, i.e., conclusions concerning his model and typical reaction patterns to typical life situation.

Arieti (1967) said that the self-concept is basic in all behavior. The feelings, the ideas, the choices, the actions of man attain their highest development in the state of social mutuality, but begin and end in the intimacy of the sentient self.
Labenne and Greene (1969) defined it as, “the person’s total appraisal of his appearance, background and origin, abilities and sources, attitudes and feelings which culminate as a directing force in behaviour.”

Rogers (1977) defined self-concept as the way an individual views himself or herself.

Ellis (1979) defined self-concept as, “irrational thinking, a process involving self-ratings, self-judgments, and self-justifications, resulting in global positive or negative effect with respect to our feelings of self-worth and intrinsic value.”

Chaddha (1985) defined it as, “one’s own image in one’s own eyes and it is very important in decision making and decision implementing.”

Brigham (1986) said that self-concept is developed and maintained through the process of taking action and then reflecting on what we have done and what others tell us about what we have done.

Purkey (1988) defined it as, “the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence.”

Markus and Curft (1989) defined it as a multifaceted phenomenon as a set or collection of images, schemes, conceptions, prototypes, theories, goals or tasks.

Suthar (1989) defined self-concept as, “the relation of individual with himself and the world around him.”

Taneja (1989) defined self-concept as, “the picture or image a person has of himself.”

Singh (1990) defined it as, “the study of the self where the person’s experiences make him realize his feelings and capabilities.”
Franken (1994) defined it as, “the basis for all motivated behaviour. It is the self-concept that gives rise to possible selves, and it is possible selves that create the motivation for behavior.”

Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology (2001) stated- that self-concept is a global evaluation made about one’s own personality. It is derived from the subjective evaluations we tend to make of our own behavioural traits.

Thus components of a being’s self-concept include physical, psychological and social attributes and can be influenced by its attitudes, habits, beliefs and ideas, these components can be condensed to the general concepts of self-image. The self is a complex process of gaining self awareness. There are numerous views about self. Some of these are shown in the Table 1.1.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1.1</th>
<th>Different Views about Self</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dramatism and Self-Presentation</td>
<td>We construct roles that we perform in the everyday drama of life and shape the image we choose to convey to others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Humanistic View of Self</td>
<td>Drawing on perspectives of Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers, this view of self emphasizes individual growth towards self-actualization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postmodern Self</td>
<td>Our sense of self is a relational view that is defined and negotiated in relational communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Esteem</td>
<td>Esteem is the need to affirm self worth and gain confidence in interacting with others. This focus also draws on humanistic psychology.</td>
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Characteristics of Self-Concept:

Many of the successes and failures that people experience in many areas of life are closely related to the ways that they learned to view themselves and their relationships with others. It is also becoming clear that self-concept has at least three main characteristics- it is learned, it is organized and it is dynamic. Each of these traits are discussed in detail as follows.
Self-concept is learned:

As far as we know, no one is born with a self-concept. It gradually emerges in the early months of life and is shaped and reshaped through repeated perceived experiences, particularly with significant others. The fact that self-concept is learned has some important implications:

- Because self-concept does not appear to be instinctive, but is a social product developed through experience, it possesses relatively boundless potential for development and actualization.
- Because of previous experiences and present perceptions, individuals may perceive themselves in ways different from the ways others see them.
- Individuals perceive different aspects of themselves at different times with varying degrees of clarity. Therefore, inner focusing is a valuable tool for counseling.
- Any experience which is inconsistent with one’s self-concept may be perceived as a threat, and the more of these experiences are there, the more rigidly self-concept is organized to maintain and protect itself. When a person is unable to get rid of perceived inconsistencies, emotional problems arise.
- Faulty thinking patterns such as dichotomous reasoning (dividing everything in terms of opposites or extremes) or over generalizing (making sweeping conclusions based on little information) create negative interpretations of oneself.

Self-concept is organized:

Most researchers agree that self-concept has a generally stable quality that is characterized by orderliness and harmony. Each person maintains countless perceptions regarding one’s personal existence and each perception are orchestrated with all the others. It is this generally stable
and organized quality of self-concept that gives consistency to the personality. This organized quality of self-concept has corollaries:

- Self-concept requires consistency, stability and tends to resist change. If self-concept changed readily, the individual would lack a consistent and dependable personality.
- The more central a particular belief is to one’s self-concept, the more resistant one is to changing that belief.
- At the heart of self-concept is the self-as-doer, the “I” which is distinct from the self-as-object, the various “me’s”. This allows the person to reflect on past events, analyze present perceptions and shape future experiences.
- Basic perceptions of one are quite stable so change takes time. As Rome was not built in a day and neither is a self-concept.
- Perceived success and failure have an impact on self-concept. Failure in a highly regarded area lowers evaluations in all other areas as well. Success in a prized area raises evaluations in other seemingly unrelated areas.

Self-concept is dynamic:

To understand the active nature of self-concept, it helps to imagine it as a gyrocompass, a continuously active system that dependably points to the “true north” of a person’s perceived existence. This guidance system not only shapes the ways a person views oneself, others and the world but it also serves to direct action and enables each person to take a consistent stance in life. Rather than viewing self-concept as the cause of behavior, it is better understood as the gyrocompass of human personality providing consistency in personality and direction for behavior. The dynamic quality of self-concept also carries corollaries:

- The world and the things in it are not just perceived; they are perceived in relation to one’s self-concept.
- Self-concept development is a continuous process. In a healthy personality there is constant assimilation of new ideas and expulsion of old ideas throughout life.
- Individuals strive to behave in ways that are in keeping with their self-concepts, no matter how helpful or hurtful to oneself or others.
- Self-concept usually takes preferences over the physical body. Individuals will often sacrifice physical comfort and safety for emotional satisfaction.
- Self-concept continuously guards itself against loss of self-esteem, for it is this loss that produces feelings of anxiety.
- If self-concept must constantly defend itself from assault, growth opportunities are limited.

Thus it can be concluded that the self-concept is so important to people because it is the constellation of their perceptions about themselves and, as such, the means by which they interact with life in such a way as to meet their needs. As the self-concept develops, it brings a unique perspective of one’s relationship with the world. A person with a weak or negative self-concept and who is unsure of himself is likely to have narrowed or distorted perceptions. In contrast a person with strong or positive self-concept can explore his world openly and honestly because he has a background of acceptance and success. Positive self-concepts result from positive experiences leading to perceived competence. Self-concept is the essence of one’s existence that is known to him/her. Effective self-concepts allow people to perceive their experiences realistically, whether they originate within their organisms or in their environments; in other words, such self-concepts allow them open access to their experiences. It includes the entire structure of one’s being. Self-concept is not inherited rather it develops in an individual as a consequence of his interactions with the environment. No two people have identical self-concepts. The self-concept emerges or is learned through each person’s internal experiences, relationships with other people and interactions with the outer world.
1.4 ADJUSTMENT:

The concept of adjustment is as old as human race on earth. It is an important characteristic of living organism. Every organism tries to achieve some sort of working arrangement with his environment. Life is a continuous process of adjustment. Each day one makes countless adjustments, most of them apparently insignificant and many of them carried out more or less automatically, with no particular thought and often without awareness.

Adjustment is a dynamic and ever-changing process, and not a static one. It involves the ability to solve one’s problems in a socially acceptable and constructive way. Psychologists have tried to define the concept of adjustment from time to time. In psychology, the behavioral process by which humans and other animals maintain an equilibrium among their various needs or between their needs and the obstacles of their environments. A sequence of adjustment begins when a need is felt and ends when it is satisfied. Hungry people, for example, are stimulated by their physiological state to seek food. When they eat, they reduce the stimulating condition that impelled them to activity, and they are thereby adjusted to this particular need.

NATURE OF ADJUSTMENT:

The concept of adjustment is as old as human race on earth. Systematic emergence of this concept begins from Darwin. In those days, the concept was purely biological and he used the term adaptation. The adaptability to environmental hazards goes on increasing as we proceed on the genetic scale from the lower extreme to the higher extreme of life. Insects and germs, in comparison to human beings, cannot withstand the hazards of continuously changing conditions in the environment and as the season changes, they die. Hundreds of species of insects and germs perish as the winter commences. Man, among the social animal not only adapts to physical demands but he also adjusts to social pressures in the society.
The concept of adjustment was originally a biological one and was used in Darwin's 'Theory of Evolution' (1859). It was termed as 'adaptation'. As a person adapts to his physiological demands, he also has to adapt to social demands. This concept of adaptation has been borrowed by the psychologists and named 'adjustment'. From strictly the psychological point of view, adjustment covers needs gratification, skill in dealing with frustrations, conflicts and peace of mind. It means learning how to get along with other people and how to meet the demands of life.

Biologists used the term adaptation strictly for physical demands of the environment but psychologists use the term adjustment for varying conditions of social or inter-personal relations in the society. Thus adjustment means reaction to the demands and pressures of social environment imposed upon the individual.

PROCESS OF ADJUSTMENT:

The process of adjustment becomes still more complicated when one’s interaction with one situation comes into conflict with the requirements of the other situation. One situation may give rise to pleasure while the other may give rise to pain. The resultant tension may cause disturbance in one’s psyche, produce uncomfortable physical symptoms or may even lead to abnormal behavior.

Psychologists have interpreted adjustment from two important points of views. One adjustment as an achievement and another, adjustment as a process. The first point of view emphasizes the quality or efficiency of adjustment and the second lays emphasis on the process by which an individual adjusts in his external environment.

a) **Adjustment as an Achievement**: Adjustment may be viewed as achievement or how well a person handles his conflicts and overcomes the resulting tension.
b) **Adjustment as a Psychological Process:** Adjustment as a process is of great interest to psychologists who want to understand a person and his behavior. The way one tries to adjust to himself and to his external environment at any point of time determines the efficiency of the process.

In general, there are three broad types of adjustive process in the event of a conflict between a person's internal need states and environment demands. They are given as under:

1. The person may modify or inhibit the internal impulse.
2. The person may try to alter the environmental demand in some manner so that he resolves the conflict.
3. The person may escape through unconscious resources to mental mechanisms like compensation, projection, rationalization, sublimation etc.

We cannot call any of these modes of adjustments as the most superior. None of them used in isolation, to the exclusion of others is helpful in adjustment. Excessive use of any one of them is likely to be maladaptive. The human beings in order to reconcile their needs or the environmental demands must modify or inhibit their own impulses sometimes, alter or modify the environment at other times, and use some mental mechanism at other times at times a combination of all the three.

The word adjustment connotes two meanings. Firstly, it is a continual process by which a person varies his/her behaviour to produce more harmonious relationship between himself/herself and the environment. Secondly, adjustment is a state, i.e. the condition of harmony arrived at by a person whom we call a well-adjusted person. Well-adjusted people are an asset and regarded as successful in the art of living. A well adjusted person is able to face new situations with patience, endurance and confidence, to do things with determined efforts and to surmount difficulties with greater care. A well-adjusted person can
think clearly, act confidently and is in a position to interact with the difficult situations positively.

In general, the adjustment process involves four parts: (1) a need or motive in the form of a strong persistent stimulus, (2) the thwarting or non-fulfillment of this need, (3) varied activity, or exploratory behaviour accompanied by problem solving, and (4) some response that removes or at least reduces the initiating stimulus and completes the adjustment. Social and cultural adjustments are similar to physiological adjustments. People strive to be comfortable in their surroundings and to have their psychological needs (such as love or affirmation) met through the social networks they inhabit. When needs arise, especially in new or changed surroundings, they impel interpersonal activity meant to satisfy those needs. In this way, people increase their familiarity and comfort with their environments, and they come to expect that their needs will be met in the future through their social networks. Ongoing difficulties in social and cultural adjustment may be accompanied by anxiety or depression.

Psychologists in order to judge the adequacy of adjustment have evolved four criteria. They are discussed as under:

- **Physical Health**: The individual should be free from physical ailments like headache, ulcers, indigestion and impairment of appetite. These symptoms in individual have sometimes psychological origin and may impair his physical efficiency.

- **Psychological Comfort**: One of the most important facts of adjustment is that individual has no psychological disease as obsession, compulsion, anxiety and depression etc. These psychological diseases, if occur, excessively cause to seek professional advice.

- **Work Efficiency**: The person who makes best use of his capabilities may be termed as well adjusted in his professional set up.
• **Social Acceptance:** Everybody wants to be socially accepted. If a person obeys social norms, beliefs and set of values, he may be called as well adjusted. But if he satisfies his needs by antisocial means, then he is called maladjusted. But societies differ in deciding the universally acceptable criteria of good behavior for e.g. smoking and drinking are supposed to be antisocial but there are societies where these activities do not qualify social adjustment.

Smith (1961) defined adjustment as, “a good adjustment is one which is both realistic and satisfying. At least, in the long run it reduces to a minimum the frustrations, the tensions and the anxieties which a person must endure”.

According to Coleman (1969), “Adjustment is the outcome of the individual’s efforts to deal with stress and meet his needs”.

Gates, Jersild and Others (1970) defined it as, “Adjustment is a continuous process by which a person varies his behavior to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment”.

Eysenck (1975) defined it as a, “state in which the needs of individual on one hand and claims of society on the other hand are fully satisfied”.

Lazarus (1976) defined adjustment as, “it involves a reaction of the person to demands imposed upon him.”

Pietrofesa (1978) stated that adjustment occurs when one is able to incorporate without distorting the experiences that come with daily living and one’s own reactions to these occurrences.

Bhatia and Purohit (1983) considered that adjustment is directly connected with needs and problems of life and refers to the behavior pattern through which those needs are satisfied or problems are solved habitually.
According to Patil (1992) - adjustment is one of the most important parts of human life; the process of adjustment starts from the birth of the child and it continues through life. So, adjustment is the relationship between an individual and his environment.

Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Psychology (2001) – originally, adjustment, was regarded as little more than the avoidance of mal-adjustment but then became a goal for therapy with the emergence of the humanistic approaches to psychotherapy.

According to MERRIAM WEBSTER’S COLLEGIATE DICTIONARY (2001) – adjustment is the act or process of adjusting, a correction or modification to reflect actual conditions.

From the above definitions, the various aspects of adjustment are identified. The problem of adjustment has become a crucial one in today’s world. It is of great significance as the quality of life depends on adjustment. Adjustment helps in attaining integrated and balanced personality. Adjustment implies proper degree of social feeling and acceptance of social responsibility. Adjustment enables greater satisfaction in living and smoother functioning in which the person’s diverse psychological activities, such as learning, setting life goals, relating to others, meeting crisis or problem situations are more or less in harmony with one another. Adjustment is continuous process which produces a more harmonious relationship between an individual and his or her environment.

1.5 ATTITUDES:

Attitudes are the guiding force behind all human activities. Attitude is the amount or degree of positive or negative feelings towards certain objects and issues. Attitudes are, to a great extent, responsible for the particular behaviour of a person about an object, idea or person and make the individual respond in a particular way to the particular stimuli. Attitudes are the amount or degree of positive or negative feelings towards the object. It includes likes and dislikes.
which mean favourable or unfavourable inclinations towards certain issues, objects or situations. Attitudes are tinged with emotion, and are very personal and complex.

Nature of Attitudes:

Attitudes are important keys in understanding the long range organization of behaviour. No one is born with attitudes. They are learned in the course of life experiences which make the individual behave in characteristic ways towards persons, objects or issues to which they are related. Attitudes are not static, rigid entities. They are dynamic and change radically under certain conditions. Attitudes are uniquely organized in each individual. Though certain attitudes may be held by many, each usually gives his own slant in expressing them. The prominent role of attitudes in determining one’s thought, memory and learning processes has been recognized by various psychologists.

Osgood et al. (1957) said that an individual’s attitude is the sum total of the strength of beliefs about the objects and evaluative aspects of these beliefs.

Kretch et al. (1962) regarded attitude, “as a predisposition of an act in a positive and negative way towards persons, objects or events”.

Campbell (1963) reported that attitudes represent ‘consistency in response to social objects’.

Gates (1963) defined attitude as' “primarily an inner state rather than an overt experience.”

Anderson and Fishben (1965) defined attitude in terms of evaluative dimensions of a concept.

Triandis (1971) said, “An attitude is an idea charged with emotion which predisposes a class of actions to a particular class of social situations”.

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Good (1973) called it a, “state of mental and emotional readiness to reach to situations, persons or thoughts in a manner in harmony with a habitual pattern previously conditional to or associated with these stimuli”.

Landy (1987) viewed attitude as a combination of feelings and beliefs about an object, person or event. According to him, attitudes are made up of three distinct elements: behavioural, emotional and belief.

Allport (1989) has treated attitude as, “a mental and natural state of readiness, organized through experiences, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related”.

Crow and Crow (1991) said, “Attitudes are personal and related to feelings of a person.”

Hines et al (1996) defined an individual’s attitude, “as the body of favourable or unfavourable feelings toward some specific aspects of one’s environment, certain situation, idea, object or person.”

Mehndiratta (1997) defined attitude as, “a general predisposition or mental set with regard to any persons, beliefs or other entities”.

Gumpert (1997) defined attitudes as learned predispositions that exert some consistent influence on responses toward objects, persons, or groups. Attitudes are usually seen as the products of socialization and therefore modifiable.

Best and Kahn (1999) believed that how an individual feels or what he believes is his attitude.

Baron and Byrne (2000) see attitude as an ambivalent evaluation of any aspect of the social world; thus evaluating it both negatively and positively.
Oxford Dictionary (2000) – “attitude is the way one thinks about something or somebody; the way one behaves towards something or somebody shows how one thinks and feels”.

Shaw and Wright (2000) believe that attitudes are the end products of socialization process which significantly influence man’s responses to cultural products, to other persons and to group of persons.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica in Social Psychology (2001) - “attitude is a predisposition to classify objects and events and to react to them with some degree of evaluative consistency. While attitudes logically are hypothetical constructs (i.e., they are inferred but not objectively observable), they are manifested in conscious experience, verbal reports, gross behavior and physiological symptoms”.

Encyclopedic Dictionary of Psychology (2001) defined attitude as a more or less stable pre-disposition to react in either a positive or a negative manner to given categories of persons or objects.

Attitudes are powerful sources of motivation and are capable of arousing and sustaining concentrated efforts. Attitudes can exert a potent influence on an individual. They act as cause as well as results of behaviour. Attitudes and their organization are the products of individual’s own reactions to his own experiences. They represent the way one feels or thinks, acts or talks in a situation. Attitudes provide us with a personal outlook on the world through our feelings, biases, preconceived notions, ideas, fears, threats and convictions.

1.6 LIFE:

The word “life” has probably been around ever since mankind began using language. It is a word of fundamental importance to all of us, and seldom do we make it through an entire day without putting it to use. We do so, however, with only a sketchy and subjective idea of what life actually means. Life is a multi-faceted concept. Life is a process that happens to us while we are making other
plans. Living things are systems that tend to respond to changes in their environment in such a way as to secure their own continued existence. This is because until recently, within the last century or so, it has been easy for people to distinguish between what they call living and what they call non-living. There has been no need to define life precisely; its meaning is intuitively understood.

The question about the meaning of life is probably as old as human beings. And it is a very fundamental question, too. It shouldn’t be expected to find an answer to this question in one simple, easy understandable sentence. The general answer to the question of why one live is: We incarnate on the Earth to develop ourselves, because our soul wants to develop certain traits further, like e.g. unconditional love, joy, honesty, modesty and humbleness. Thus life can be regarded like a school to train certain aspects of our personality. Often, this process of developing the above mentioned traits is also called «getting a higher consciousness or awareness» or self-realization.

The things that matter most in our lives are the things that are there for the duration of our whole life. Such constants are: oneself, others, the Earth, the Universe. Further, it will be explained why these are the constants, why we should focus on them, and how we should treat other important things as variables, including family, career, passions, and possessions.

Nature of life:

- **Oneself**
  
  We must live with ourselves all our life, whether we like it or not. So we better like ourselves, or change into somebody that we like, in order to live happily ever after. But do we really know ourselves that well? We have to understand our body, our mind, and our feelings. If we know how they work, we are able to shape them. Thus, we can prevent, avoid, and diminish pain. Controlling pain leads to less fear. It sounds selfish, but it is a simple fact that we are the most important person in our life in order to have a more positive attitude towards life.
• Others
Our lives depend on others. Here I also include other life forms. We cannot live without them. We ought to treat them like ourselves; that is, learn about them, listen to them and understand them. We can transform hate and indifference into respect and gratefulness. Every little thing in our life is produced by something or somebody. There is no way we can make most of these things by ourselves. Life cannot be imagined without people.

• The Earth
I guess you already know why the Earth is important in our life. Yes, it is the only home and spaceship we have. Our lives depend so much on it.

• The Universe
Apparently, there is no “reason” for anything in the Universe, yet, if you look closer, you will find that everything is interconnected. There is a flow of causes and effects, unforeseeable emergence of complexity, ultimately leading to life, so that the Universe can know itself. Knowledge is the new toy, and it will be developed until it reaches the point of a new, unpredictable outcome. On a universal scale, it is very likely that we won’t find out what's next in the grand scheme of things.

• And Everything
Now, that the constants have been described, perhaps you’ve already figured out what the variables are - family, career, passions, possessions, etc. I call them variables because they can come and go, and in many cases there is not much we can do about it. Obviously, if we rely entirely on them, sooner or later we'll be hurt by loss. Spending some time developing the constants will reduce the impact of variance. For instance, if we know and trust ourselves and others, then shocks like a divorce, or getting fired, or losing wealth, etc. will be less disastrous and recovery will be faster. Although subject to change, these things are invaluable because they give us the opportunity to experience and discover
ourselves and the world. However, we should take care that we do not identify ourselves with the family, career, possessions, etc. A somewhat detached point of view should be maintained so that we control our lives, not the external factors. All the above discussed constants are equally significant in human life.

**Meaning of life:**

Life has a number of views as far as its meaning is concerned:

- “Life” may refer to the ongoing process of which living things are a part;
- “Life” may refer to the period between birth and death of an organism;
- “Life” may refer to the state of something that has been born and has yet to die, i.e., that which makes a thing alive.

**Random House College Dictionary (1984)** defined life as: “The condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic objects and dead organisms, being manifested by growth through metabolism, reproduction, and the power of adaptation to environment through changes originating internally.”

**The Glaxo-Smith-Kline Foundation (1997)** worked to develop and implement a new campaign on life. The key messages or lessons of the campaign are based on real life experiences that give meaning and completeness to life. Their goal is to promote awareness and understanding about life and to change attitudes and behaviour of people towards life.

**Oxford Dictionary (2000)** defined life as the ability to breathe, grow, reproduce etc., which people, animals and plants have before they die and which objects do not have.

According to **Dave Hale (2001),”The meaning of life has always been a mystery to humankind. Why we were put on this earth is beyond our comprehension. To me the meaning of life is a combination of things.”**

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Lama Surya Dass (2003) said, "A human life is the fact of our own mortality; then by definition one has to deal with the essential questions of how to live and how to spend one's allotted time."

Our life is a ship sailing on the sea of constants. Variable wind and waves are the events that make the ship struggle, stagnate or go forward full speed. It is up to the captain to make the right decision in order to reach the shore. A purpose in life is a guide that gives direction in life that inspires the individual to think and to act, to do and to be whatever enables him to achieve his purpose of ideal perfection. It gives a focusing unity to all one chooses to do, be, and become, while avoiding blocking conflicts with what is irrelevant to the purpose. It gives an almost instant general answer as to where to go, what to do, how to do it, and why to do it. Answers deny blocking mental conflicts. A purpose is a reason for using self-sacrificing self-discipline to deny present goals and values for a greater purpose and values in one's future life. A purpose enables one to rationally plan his goals and to use free will to self-determine the direction of his life. As an ultimate ideal of perfection, an ultimate purpose enables answers as to what is true, moral, just, beautiful, and meaningful. As an ultimate rational premise, it enables the self-controllable reason that enables a happy moderation, harmony, and stability in one's life.

1.7 ATTITUDE TOWARDS LIFE:

Attitudes play a very significant role in human life. Attitude is a comprehensive and broad term covering almost all the important fields of human life. Attitudes influence the pattern of life as well as the success and happiness, which determine not only the conclusion one derives from the facts but also influence the very facts one is willing to accept. Attitudes play significant role in man's life. They are the components of mental life, the basic element of human existence. Attitude towards life will determine what we get from life. Our attitude towards work and learning will determine what we can do well. William James a Harvard professor said "the greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitude of mind". 
First let's look at our attitude towards ourselves. We take ourselves for granted. We believe that other people can do things that we cannot. Many people oppose change yet change in life is the one thing on which we can absolutely count. We need to train our attitude day by day. Take a look at successful people in every occupation. You will find that no matter what fields they work in they all have one thing in common. They have a good attitude towards themselves, they believe they can accomplish and as a result they do remarkable things. They are called successful, fortunate, gifted, and lucky. They are frequently no better able than the people around them but they do have a good attitude. They do expect better out of life than bad. They expect to succeed rather than fail.

**Characteristics of Attitude towards life:**

- It is one's attitude at the beginning of a task which will determine its outcome.
- It is one's attitude towards life that will determine life's attitude toward one.
- We are interdependent, it is impossible to succeed without others.
- It is one's attitude towards others which will determine their attitude towards one.
- Before a person can achieve the life he wants he must become that kind of person.
- Your mind can only hold one thought at a time, as there is nothing to be gained by being negative-- be positive.
- Everyone craves to be needed, give them this feeling.
- Don't talk about your problems or your health unless it is good.
- Radiate the confidence of someone who knows where they are going and good things will start happening.
Having a positive attitude towards life can make it easier. One will feel less stressed and a whole lot better. Trying not to think a negative thought will result in thinking it more.

Thinking is like breathing: It goes on night and day and one can’t stop it. But one can change it. One can breathe slowly and deeply or shallowly and quickly. One can breathe any way one wants. But one can’t stop.

The same is true about thinking. One can say something stupid or depressing to oneself; one can say something intelligent or inspiring to oneself; but one can’t stop thinking entirely.

So when one finds oneself disliking the content of one’s thoughts, instead of trying to stop oneself from thinking a thought, try to direct one’s thoughts.

And the way to direct one’s thinking is by asking oneself a question. A question gets one’s mind going in a new direction without suppressing what one is already thinking. Ask oneself a question.

The idea is to direct one’s mind by asking questions that put one’s attention on practical things, on accomplishment, on the future.

When one decide on a question to ask oneself, ask the question and keep asking. Ponder it. Wonder about it. Let it run through one’s mind whenever one’s mind isn’t otherwise engaged. It will turn the tide of one’s thoughts and bring one into a new state of mind because one is thinking positively.

There are three basic types of attitudes; attitudes about ourselves, attitudes towards others and things around us, and attitudes towards life itself. Attitudes about life include the feeling that good things will always come our way, or that we are doomed to difficulty and failure. Attitude towards life denote the way of looking at life as a whole. An attitude towards life denotes one’s attitude towards various aspects and areas of life, namely social, political, religious, moral, educational, professional etc. The following five dimensions namely religion and values, family and marriage, profession, education and socio culture were included in the present investigation. The dimensions of attitude towards life are discussed briefly as under.
(A) **Religion and Values:**

Religion means one’s faith in spirituality and Almighty. Values are the beliefs carried over from one generation to another. Values & religion are of immense significance in the modern life, where stress and crime is increasing day by day.

(B) **Family and Marriage:**

Family implies the feeling of togetherness and oneness in the members of family. Marriage implies union of two beings. Family and marriage is of great significance in life, as social interaction is a pre-requisite for human existence.

(C) **Profession:**

Profession is one’s job or occupation. Profession has now become a way of life and not just the way to earn a living. Nowadays, females have also become serious about their profession. Hence, profession is also included as one of the dimensions of scale.

(D) **Education:**

Education is a perennial process of learning from formal as well as non formal sources. Education here implies to understand the importance of education in life. Education has become very significant in today’s world of cut-throat competition.

(E) **Socio culture:**

The ability of an individual is to understand the social situations and society as a whole. Culture is the customs and traditions inherited from the forefathers. Society and Culture give identity to individuals. As man is also termed a social animal, he cannot exist without society.
In addition to having the right attitudes towards others and life around us, it is always best to have an overall positive attitude. An overall positive attitude has the power to attract sudden good fortune from the world around us. We have also seen that when difficult circumstances come your way, and you do not get overwrought by them, maintaining a positive calm, life can suddenly reverse and cancel the problem or otherwise bring sudden instances of good fortune. If you have an optimistic attitude towards life, or an overly optimistic attitude, then most of the emotion that you get is going to be undercut (undermined, etc, because it is going to be outweighed by the few things which you are praising, or have an optimistic attitude for) and therefore overall be leading to a dulling of emotion. That is because this overly optimistic attitude is a conscious thing that only enhances a few of the events in life and doesn’t understand that everything in life can be viewed as being fun (if you take the same attitude and just twist it that is). A major part of your life concerns your attitudes toward yourself and others and how you feel as a result of those attitudes.

Fulfillment in your attitudes can contribute to leading a satisfying and successful life. Factors involved in having satisfying attitudes are that you should enjoy life, be accountable for your own well being, and think in terms of taking care of your whole person. The importance of attitudes in human life is universally acknowledged. Attitudes influence the behaviour of the individual by making him selectively oriented towards certain objects and issues of life. Attitudes determine the actions of human beings. Attitudes are the threads which run through and colour all human experiences of life. Our environment is really a mirror of our attitude. If we don’t like our environment we have to change our attitude first, the world plays no favorites. It is our attitude that determines our lives. Studies of thousands of successful people show that they radiate confidence. They expect success and this is why they get success. You can spot these people by the way they look and act.
1.8 HIGH SCHOOL:

Schools are the formal agencies for imparting education to young boys and girls. Schools are the temples of learning, where children go to learn. In the ancient period, there were ‘Gurukuls’ in the Ashrams of ‘rishis’-teachers. The students used to live there and gain the bookish as well as practical knowledge. With the passage of time, the schools substituted the old Gurukuls. The modern schools provide the education to students.

The aim of education is not just imparting knowledge of books, but to develop all round personality of the children. The modern day schools have all the best facilities like computers, smart-classes, sports, co-curricular activities and recreational experiences to achieve the above said aim. The school aims at providing quality education to students who have to meet the challenges of a complex and ever changing world. The future of the entire world is being shaped in the schools.

According to the age and needs of the children, the schools can be divided into categories. Children from Nursery to V class go to Primary schools. After completing the primary education, the children go to Middle schools (Classes VI-VIII). And after Middle schools, they go to High schools (Classes IX and X). And after completing X years of high school, the children go to the last category of schools, that is Senior Secondary schools (Classes XI and XII). Hence, high schools are the schools, where children come after class VIII and go after they pass class X. The students studying in classes IX and X can be termed as high school students.

1.9 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS OF THE VARIABLES:

The operational definitions of the variables chosen up for the present study are given as under.

- **Impact of Women-oriented TV programmes**: Variable of ‘Impact of Women-oriented TV programmes’ denote the opinion on daily-
soaps being telecasted on various satellite channels, with female characters as the main protagonists and is as measured by the scores obtained on the self-constructed checklist on women-oriented TV programmes (by adapting and modifying the checklist by Kaur 2001).

- **Self-concept**: Variable of ‘Self-concept’ is the way an individual views himself or herself and is as measured by the scores obtained on the Self-concept questionnaire by Saraswat (1992).

- **Adjustment**: Variable of ‘Adjustment’ is the act or process of adjusting to the environment and is as measured by the scores obtained on the Adjustment Inventory for School Students by Sinha and Singh (1993).

- **Attitude towards life**: Variable of ‘Attitude towards life’ denotes the way of looking at life as a whole. An attitude towards life denotes one’s attitude towards various aspects and areas of life, namely social, political, religious, moral, educational, and professional and is as measured by the scores obtained on the Self constructed scale on Attitude towards life.