CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The transition from higher secondary school to college involves great changes: some positive, others negative; some stressful, others not-so-stressful; but all characterize a time of growth rather than hardship (Aseltine & Gore, 1993).

As most college students would admit, this transition empowers them in decision-making. It provides them with a choice of more subjects from which they can make their selection, more time to spend with peers, more opportunities to explore and adopt different lifestyles and values. The transition permits them to feel grown-up and to enjoy greater independence from parental monitoring. At the same time, it involves “a move to a larger, more impersonal college structure and interaction with peers from more diverse geographical and ethnic/religious backgrounds” (Santrock, 1998) and increased focus on identity, self-concept, achievement, adjustment, social challenges and performance, and their assessment.

Prior to taking up serious responsibilities and embarking upon a career, it is highly imperative that college students enhance self-concept, adjustment, social competence and achievement motivation whilst still at the threshold of adult life. The degree to which they acquire these qualities depends, to a great extent, on those under whose care and guidance they live and grow, namely the family in general and the parents in particular. Needless to say, the family and, specifically, the parents influence children’s behaviour. Parents not only provide the genes for
the adolescent's biological developmental blueprint, they also play important roles in determining the types of environments that their offspring will encounter. Similarly guardians, too, play a very crucial role in developing them into healthy adults.

The views put forth by various psychologists on the development of self-concept, adjustment, social competence and achievement motivation is of paramount importance, as it provides insight into the mechanism and the process of developing a healthy personality.

This section deals with the views put forth by different theorists on each of the following four variables:

1. Self-concept.
2. Adjustment.
3. Social competence.
4. Achievement motivation.

I. SELF-CONCEPT

Perhaps no other stage of the life span is more important to the development of the self than adolescence. Adolescence is truly a period for “finding oneself” and carving a niche for themselves in society.

The development and maturation of the self-concept is at the heart of psychosocial development. The ego is transformed through continuous ongoing interaction with
society over the life span: the rudimentary experiences of the physical self in infancy are transformed in self-consciousness, self-control, a sense of self-other relationships, a personal identity, a style of life and finally a sense of integrity about the life one has lived.

The transition from high school to college brings about substantial changes in the college students' self-concept. They are in the process of describing who they are, what they are, taking both their own and others' views into account (Harter, 1990) and re-evaluating themselves physically, socially, emotionally and intellectually in relation to their peers and society. This is possible because, according to Piaget (1954), adolescents are at the formal operational stage of cognitive development, where they move beyond the world of actual, concrete experiences and begin thinking in abstract and more logical terms. Piaget (1954) emphasized adolescents' ability to actively construct their own cognitive world by adapting their thinking to accommodate new ideas to old ones. This search for identity, which Erikson (1968) defined as a coherent conception of the self, is made up of the goals, values and beliefs to which the person solidly committed and focused during adolescent years.

Therefore, it has a bearing on adolescents' self-concept, adjustment, competence and achievement.

**Definitions:** The self-concept is our sense of self. According to Allport (1968), the self-concept is a blend of experiences, which he defines as "the self-as-known – that which is experienced as warm and central, as of importance". According to
Markus and Nurius (1984), the self-concept is our sense of self and has two components: (a) the content and (b) the function. The content is the knowledge of what we have been and have done while its function is to guide us in deciding what to be and do in the future. Hence self-concept helps us to understand ourselves and adds integration to the diversity of the activities and control thereby giving momentum and direction to our beliefs. There are seven dimension of the self-concept:

1. **Bodily Self:** The body is a basic source of intimate knowledge and commitment to the self.

2. **Self-Recognition:** It is the identification of your own self whose reflection you are in the mirror.

3. **Extensions:** The self that extends beyond its physical boundaries to objects, spaces and important people identifying the self with specific objects, space or other people. People may use objects to prove their importance or status.

4. **The Reflected Self:** Our life is filled with feedback from others about ourselves. The reflected self includes the responses from many different people across time. From those arrays of reflected images, certain attributes are abstracted as accurate descriptions of the self.

5. **Personal Competencies:** An individual’s skills, new areas of mastery and special areas of talents all increase his expertise or effectiveness, which consequently expands his sphere of influence. Also, these areas of competence or incompetence contribute to the self-concept.
6. **Aspirations and Goals:** Formulation of life goals is the important aspect of self during adolescence. The person is not just content to exist but he seeks to grow and to become. This future achievement gives boost to self to endure and persevere in their goal.

7. **Self-Esteem:** It refers to the person evaluating the worthiness of different characteristics like physical self, the reflected self or the array of personal aspirations and goals. Positive feelings like those of being loved, valued, admired or successful contribute to a positive sense of work. Similarly, feelings of being ignored, rejected and scorned or of inadequacy contribute to a negative sense of worthlessness.

Each of these dimensions contributes to the continuity, the creativity and the persistence of the self-concept.

The self is known through our physical experience, physical appearances and our identification of objects, spaces and people linked to the self as in the comments/criticisms of others about the self. The person’s effectiveness is determined by the personal competencies and life goals included in the self-concept, behaviour and expectations about the likely outcome of life choices and is influenced by self-esteem.

**Differences in self-conceptions between children and adolescents**

Several notable differences between the self-descriptions of children and adolescents are observed (Montemayor & Eisen, 1977).
First, as children get older, self-descriptions become less physical and more psychological. Second, as children grow, self-portraits become less concrete and more abstract. According to Piaget's Theory, children begin to shift from concrete-operational to formal-operational thinking about the age of 11 or 12. Third, adolescents reflect more about what they are like and are more self-aware than children are (Selman, 1980). Their new ability to think about their own and other people's thoughts and feelings can make them self-conscious. Fourth, adolescents have a more differentiated self-concept than children (Harter, 1996). Finally, older adolescents seem able to combine their self-differentiated, self-perceptions into a more integrated, coherent self-portrait.

**Forming a sense of identity**

Identity refers to a firm and coherent definition of who you are, where you are going and where you fit into society. Just like Hall, Erikson learned that adolescence is a time of dramatic change in the self. Erikson (1968) characterized adolescence as a critical period in the lifelong process of forming one's identity. According to Erikson (1968), adolescents are at the fifth stage of identity versus role confusion psychosocial conflict. In order to achieve a sense of identity, Blasi and Glodis (1995) believed that the adolescent must somehow integrate the many separate perceptions that are part of the self-concept into a coherent sense of self and must feel that he/she is the same person yesterday, today and tomorrow – at home, at school and at work.
This search for identity, which Erikson (1968) calls “identity crisis”, is grappled with many questions like: What kind of career do I want? What religious, moral or political values can I really call my own? Who am I as a man or woman and as a sexual being? Where do I fit in the world? What do I really want out of my life?

This “crisis” occurs at this period because of many reasons:

1. Their bodies change and they must revise their body images.
2. The cognitive development that occurs in this period allows adolescents to think systematically about future possibilities.
3. Social demands and expectation are placed on them to “grow up” – and to decide what they want to do in life and achieve it. According to Erikson (1968), society supports them during this period when they are in high school and college, when they are relatively free of responsibilities and can experiment with different roles in order to find themselves – a so-called moratorium period. With a huge number of options at their disposal, society is encouraging adolescents to believe that they can be anything they want to be.

Developmental trends

Based on Erikson’s theory, Marcia (1966) conducted research on identity formation by developing an interview that can assess the period an adolescent is in, vis-à-vis the process of identity formation. On the basis of whether an adolescent has experienced crisis (i.e. facing identity issues and explored alternatives) and
whether he/she has achieved a commitment (i.e. a resolution of the questions raised), adolescents are classified into one of the four identity statuses, namely:

1. **Diffusion status** (the person has not yet thought about or resolved identity issues and has failed to chart directions in life)

2. **Foreclosure** (the individual seems to know who he or she is, but has latched on to an identity).

3. **Moratorium status** (the individual is currently experiencing an identity crisis and is actively raising questions and seeking answers).

4. **Identity Achievement status** (the individual has resolved his/her identity crisis and has made commitments to particular goals beliefs and values).

Meilman (1979) found that most of the twelve and fifteen year old males were in either the identity diffusion or the foreclosure status, wherein adolescents have not yet thought about who they are and any idea that they hold will change.

Other adolescent males do not know what suits them best, or have not thought of any identity or simply accepted identities suggested to them by either parents or other people (Foreclosure status, involving commitment without a crisis).

At the age of eighteen years, adolescents experience a crisis of actively exploring identity issues, indicating their entering into the moratorium status. In Meilman’s (1979) study, only 20% of the eighteen year olds, 40% of the college students and slightly over half of the 24 year-olds had achieved a firm identity based on a careful weighing of alternatives (the identity achievement status).
Archer (1992) and Kroger (1997) studied identity formation in females and found that, in most respects, females do not differ from males. Females progress towards achieving a clear sense of identity at about the same rate that males do. However, modern college girls were found to be as concerned about establishing their career identity as men and they pay greater importance to the aspect of identity that is centered on sexuality and try to balance career and family goals.

Identity formation takes quite a bit of time. Waterman (1982) observed that it is not until the late teens and early twenties that young men and women move from the diffusion or foreclosure status into the moratorium status and then achieve a sense of identity. Even this identity, as Droger (1990) found, occurs at different rates in different domains of identity.

**Influences on identity formation:**

Adolescents achieving identity are influenced by four factors:

2. Relationship with parents.
3. Experiences outside the home.
4. The broader cultural context.

Firstly, Adolescents' **cognitive development** enables them to enter into formal operational thought. Thinking in complex and abstract terms enables them to raise and resolve identity issues. Waterman (1992) found adolescents who had high
cognitive maturity were better in resolving identity issues than those who were less cognitively developed.

Second, adolescents’ relationship with parents affects the formation of identity (Markestrom-Adams, 1992; Waterman, 1982). Adolescents in the diffusion status of identity formation are found to be coming from neglected and rejected parents. But adolescents categorized in the foreclosure status appear to be extremely close to their parents who are loving but overly protective and controlling. However, students in the moratorium and identity achievement statuses appear to have a solid base of affection at home with considerable freedom (Campbell, Adams, & Dobson, 1984; Grotevant, 1986).

The third influence on identity formation is experience outside the home. College students, who are exposed to diverse ideas and are encouraged in independent ways of thinking, are thereby provided with a kind of moratorium period.

Finally, identity is also influenced by the broader cultural context in which it occurs. Adolescents in many traditional societies adopt adult roles. For such adolescents, identity foreclosure is the most desired practice (Cote & Levine, 1988). For women in such societies, becoming mothers even at an early age is being in foreclosure identity since women may see few other options. (Cohler & Musiak, 1996). However, in western society, adolescents who raise questions about self and answer them are in achievement status. Identity achievement is associated with psychological well-being and high self-esteem,
complex things about moral issues and other matters, a willingness to accept and co-operate with other people and a variety of other psychological strengths (Waterman, 1992). But those individuals who lack in self-esteem and an aim in life, fail to achieve a sense of identity and remained fixated in identity diffusion status.

Although, according to Erikson (1968) identity issues can and do crop up later in life even if one has a positive identity, the period of adolescence continues to be a key time in life for defining who you are.

II. ADJUSTMENT

The hallmark of success in this complex and sophisticated modern society lies in one's adjustment. Although the problem of adjustment is of great importance to all of us, it plays a crucial role in the life of college students, who are on transition from higher secondary school to college – an environment that demands a lot of adjustments to a new and challenging atmosphere of education.

For any student, the entry to college demands adjustment to peers, teachers and friends and to the ethos and culture of the college. Failure to adjust in any area of adjustment will have repercussions on academics as well as upon personality. Hence, early detection of maladjustment and subsequent therapy and counseling is crucial for the healthy growth of college students.
Various meanings have been associated with the dimensions of adjustment-maladjustment. Adjustment, according to Hanni (1972) is a “state in which the individual on the one hand, and the claims of the environment on the other hand, are fully satisfied. Adjustment is thus a state of harmony between the individual and his/her social environment”.

Gilmer (1978) defined adjustment as “the process of trying to bring about a balance between needs, stimuli and the opportunities offered by the environment”.

Murray (1938) defined adjustment as the satisfaction of two fundamental human needs: the viscerogenic and the psychogenic needs. Viscerogenic needs are air, water, food, sex, avoidance of injury etc., while the psychogenic needs are achievement, recognition, autonomy, affiliation etc. According to Murray (1938), a well-adjusted person is one whose viscerogenic and psychogenic needs are satisfied.

Adjustment is a continuous process of satisfying one’s desires and involves many aspects of behaviour. It exists on a continuum – at one end there is a so-called well-adjusted person, who is ever-changing and ever adapting to new needs that arise. At the other end is the mal-adjusted person who may show signs of anxiety, aggression or disordered thinking. It is of great importance to know how well a college student gets along with himself and with others. Adjustment is not an all-or-none affair; it is a matter of degree – no one achieves complete adjustment and, at the same time, maladjustment is very rare; most people fall in between the two extremes.
Views of adequate adjustment

Freud described mental health as expressing oneself in love and work. Anyone who finds fulfillment in both these areas is called well-adjusted person.

Erikson (1968) thought of adjustment as a lifelong process that demands successful mastery or resolution of crises at successive life stages. Maslow (1970) believed that human beings constantly seek expression of their potential in the process of becoming actualized. Those enhancing and utilizing their capacities to the fullest are said to be self-actualizing. For Maslow (1970), a well-adjusted person is one who is self-actualized. Rogers (1951) viewed adjustment as a process involving openness to experience and trust in oneself. Any individual who utilizes knowledge to do what is appropriate in a given situation is said to be well-adjusted.

Human behaviour is interpreted as adjustment to constant demands and stresses that are basically social or interpersonal and grouped into internal and external whose adjustment can influence the personality development of a person. Adjustments also require both internal and external changes. Changes in the individual’s attitudes, feelings, emotions and motivation are internal adjustments. External changes include social changes as new roles and relationships. These adjustments, in our culture, are based on self-concept.

Adjustment has been interpreted in two ways: adjustment as achievement and as a process. Adjustment may be defined as “a state of life when the individual is more or less in harmony with personal, biological, social and psychological needs and with the demands of the physical environment”. The Dictionary of Behavioral
Science defines adjustment as a “harmonious relationship with the environment involving the ability to satisfy most of one’s needs and meet most of the demands, both physical and social that are put upon one”.

Adjustment as Achievement: This is the most widely used aspect of adjustment that refers to good or bad accomplishment an individual makes in terms of their adjustive adequacy.

Adjustment as Process: As a process, adjustment or adaptation (Darwin would call it) begins from birth and continues throughout life. This process is governed by biological factors as well as the social experiences that he/she receives from higher environments. The individual may deal with any conflict, either internal or external, either by modifying or inhibiting the internal impulse or altering the environmental demand to eliminate the conflict. Piaget (1954) used the term adaptation to describe adjustment, which includes accommodation and assimilation to represent the alternation of oneself or the environment respectively as a means of adjustment. Both accommodation and assimilation bring about resolution to conflict.

Criteria of good adjustment

1. Psychological Comfort: A well-adjusted person has a warm and cordial relationship with others which contributes to his physical and mental well being, while the maladjusted person experiences discomfort which may include depression, anxiety, fear, etc.
2. **Work Efficiency**: A well-adjusted person's performance or efficiency is satisfactory. Such individuals love their work and they work for fulfillment and happiness, co-operating with others while those who have adjustment difficulties are unable to create a healthy work ambience and may have impaired ability to make full use of social capacities.

3. **Physical Symptoms**: Sometimes inadequate adjustment appears in the form of damage to body tissue or the individual may complain of pain, fatigue, etc.

4. **Social Acceptance**: A well-adjusted person is accepted well by society. There is a reciprocal give-and-take relationship *vis-à-vis* such people.

Tallent (1978) also suggested the following:

1. **Good Subjective Feeling**: A well-adjusted person is free of fears and anxiety, feels comfortable and is normally happy with his well-being.

2. **Personal and Social Achievement**: A well-adjusted person uses his potentialities for the betterment of society as well as develops his abilities to the maximum.

3. **Ability to Work**: Adjustment refers also to performance of physical and mental work satisfactorily in accordance with one's ability.
Difficulties in Adjustment

One of the major problems in adolescent adjustment is frustration. Frustration is referred to as the failure to fulfill adolescents’ needs or the failure to reach the desired goal or thwarting of life goals.

Frustrations may arise due to:

1. **Withholding of reinforcement**: The sudden withholding of the reinforcement that was regularly given, brings frustration which may lead many an adolescent towards aggressive behaviour.

2. **Blockages/Thwarting**: Any barrier whether physical, socio-economic, self, authority etc., which may block the achievement of a goal, may lead to frustration.

3. **Conflict**: Conflict refers to the existence of two or more incompatible motives, which cannot be satisfied simultaneously because they interfere with one another. Conflicts are very common in the life of adolescents. Frustration and conflict are interdependent; one leads to the other.

Conflicts may be classified into four major kinds:

1. **Approach-Approach conflicts**: When an adolescent faces two equally attractive goals of approximately equal value, he/she is said to temporarily experience a conflicting situation. Such conflict may be resolved by advice of elders or peer-group.
2. **Avoidance-Avoidance Conflict:** When two or more negative outcomes operate simultaneously, the individual experiences a conflicting situation wherein he/she tries to avoid them.

3. **Approach-Avoidance Conflict:** Approach-avoidance conflict arises when both positive and negative motives are involved in the same goal; in other words, obtaining a positive good necessitates a negative outcome as well.

4. **Double Approach-Avoidance Conflict:** Sometimes the conflicts that we face are complex combinations of approach and avoidance conflicts. A double approach-avoidance conflict requires the individual to choose between alternatives that contain both positive and negative consequences.

These are the common conditions, which pose problems to adjustment during adolescence. Besides these, there are specific situations/conditions in areas of adolescents' life that create adjustment problems, some of which are mentioned herein under:

**Adjustment problems of adolescents:**

Adolescence is a period of rapid changes in all dimensions of growth. More than ever before, today's adolescents are faced with adjustment problems and difficulties due to increased complexity of our social and economic developments because of the use of modern technology. Some of the common problems adolescents are faced with are:
(a) Personal Adjustment

1. Problems which arise from physical and physiological changes in them. They are more concerned about their looks than about any other aspect of themselves and many do not like what they see with the mirror (Siegel, 1982).

2. Adolescents feel emancipated and demand more freedom. They also seek freedom from emotional dependence on parents.

3. Depression and suicide.

4. Accepting one’s own characteristic sex-role and making adjustment to the opposite sex adolescent.

5. Problems of adjustment related to sex and teenage pregnancy.

(b) Educational-College Adjustment: A large number of students have adjustment problems at college based on caste, creed and class. Some have dislike for study while others have low grades in examinations, etc. Still others have adaptive problems.

(c) Home Adjustment: Adolescents feel they need to have more freedom. They may react to strict restrictions imposed upon them by their parents. Similarly, lack of understanding due to generation gap, indiscipline due involvement with their peers and other activities bring adolescents to get into scuffles with parents.
(d) **Health and Illness:** Health problems due to eating disorders like Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, Obesity, Sleep Disorders, HIV/AIDS and other STD diseases.

(e) **Financial Problems:** Today’s adolescents want to earn money to spend on buying bikes and cars, for partying, nightclub activities, etc. Sometimes they scuffle with parents for more allowance, for new clothes and other entertainment.

(f) **Vocational Adjustment:** Adolescents are very much concerned about their future career. Many of them are confused in making vocational choices. Others are indecisive as to which career to choose from the multiple available choices. So the problems, which they face, are selection of a vocational preference and preparation for a career.

(g) **Personal-Social Problems:** Adolescents also experience guilt, which is essential for maintaining standards. Adolescents who travel to other states or countries have difficulty in adjusting to language, food habits, unusual customs, which can bring about frustration and stress and can often be debilitating. This is termed as “culture shock”.

Other adjustment problems arise from the use and abuse of substances (drugs) and alcohol. The use of illicit drugs and abuse of alcohol is a major issue facing the youth. Also, juvenile delinquency and violence amongst adolescents is of great concern to parents and society.
Adjustment Mechanisms

Adjustment problems are so prevalent in our society that we react differently: some effectively, others ineffectively. Indeed, most of us use effective mechanisms and are healthy and well adjusted. Adolescents also use mechanisms to maintain the balance of their personalities and their self-esteem in society. These mechanisms may be classified into effective and ineffective mechanisms.

Effective Mechanisms:

Effective mechanisms are those ways in which either the sources of conflict/frustration are removed or help the individual to control reaction to it.

1. **Resolving conflict/removing source of frustration:** One effective way of getting better adjusted in our lives is by resolving conflict, choosing the lesser and sacrificing one goal to get the better one. It also means locating the source of frustration and eliminating.

2. **Changing cognitive and/or developing positive cognitions:** Our cognitions are intimately linked to our reactions to conflict/frustrations. One effective method is to change the way we think about or interpret the obstacles or blockages or conflicts in positive way or by giving positive meaning. Developing positive cognition also means improving self-esteem by positively thinking and developing a sense of control or mastery of situation.
Managing problems/conflicts by seeking special training from a psychologist in controlling bodily reactions by learning to relax the body muscles. Also by making time for relaxing activities i.e. aerobic exercises, hobbies, time with friends, religious activities, etc.

Ineffective Adjustment Mechanisms

Unfortunately, many of us use ineffective adjustment mechanisms that may provide temporary relief but do not provide solutions. On the contrary, they may even make matters worse. Three common ineffective adjustment mechanisms are as follows:

Aggression is a typical adjustment mechanism used as an attempt to harm or destroy the source of frustration. It may be divided into two kinds: extra-punitive and intropunitive.

Extra-punitive responses are those in which an individual aggressively attributes frustration to external persons or things. It may take different forms: physical attack upon the source of obstacle; or retaliation or revenge in form of verbal expression; or in the form of criticism. Sometimes, expression of aggression on the person in authority is difficult and in such instances aggression is displaced on inanimate objects.

Intropunitive responses are those in which the individual aggressively attributes frustration to himself. He considers himself to be the source of frustration and therefore inflicts physical pain upon himself or criticizes himself.
The release of pent-up feelings through aggression may give relief to adolescents but it can have serious repercussions. Teachers can reduce aggression in adolescence by sympathizing, or through fair treatment and by organizing positive programmes for catharsis.

Withdrawal usually results when a person becomes intensely frightened and frustrated by a situation. Withdrawal involves escaping and removing oneself from unpleasant situations. Adolescents who fear rejection often avoid or withdraw from social situations sometimes resulting in shyness. If used continuously, withdrawal can be a healthy adjustment mechanism. However, overstepping, withdrawal can result in quitting college, jobs or separation and divorce.

**Defense Mechanisms:**

According to Freud (1917), the unrealistic strategies are used by the Ego to defend the person from a buildup of uncomfortable tension such as frustration, conflicts and discharge tension. Freud (1917) believed that the Ego possessed a small arsenal of defense mechanisms that are unconsciously used to discharge tension. Adolescents use defense mechanisms in order to overcome blocks, reach goals, satisfy motives thus relieving frustration and maintain equilibrium. When they are not overused, defense mechanisms can be healthy but overuse can have the opposite effect of the personality of the person. Following are some defense mechanisms:
**Suppression and Repression**: Suppression is one method to protect self-esteem by consciously and deliberately avoiding unpleasant thoughts and memories. Adolescents also use suppression by getting out of the house, going for a movie or getting in sports activities. Suppression is only useful for minor problems. Usually suppression can prevent problems for only a short period of time. Thoughts and worries tend to reappear and may even be more stressful if they have been bottled up. Hence, suppression requires a conscious and voluntary effort and has limited use as a defense mechanism. Sometimes, adolescents are faced with issues that deeply involve self-esteem or it may be too painful to allow them into consciousness. When they are unconsciously put out of the mind with unconsciously motivated forgetting, it is called Repression. Repression is the most basic defense mechanism and most other defense mechanisms stem from repression.

**Fantasy**: Fantasy is a defense mechanism that involves withdrawing to an imaginary world through daydreaming or wishful thinking. Fantasy is at its peak in adolescence. Adolescents spend a lot of time in day dreaming of their future successes etc. Fantasy is effective defense mechanism as one could create one's own dream world. Where one would always be accepted, loved and admired. Moderate use of daydreaming can be healthy and can lead to creative thinking. Fantasy can bring healthy and welcome escape from boredom, anxiety and lead to mental relaxation. However, excessive use of fantasy can be unhealthy.

**Compensation**: Compensation is a healthy defense mechanism that allows persons who are inadequate in one area to turn to areas where they can excel. It
allows adolescents to make up for inadequacies by doing well in another area. It allows adolescents to de-emphasize weaknesses and play up strengths. For example, a college student who is poor in studies may put extra energy in sports. Compensation is a safe defense mechanism and generally leads to a healthy adjustment.

Compensation may be of four types:

1. **Direct Compensation**: Occurs when an individual removes his specific weakness and frustration in the same field by unusual efforts e.g. Demosthenes, a stutterer became a great orator.

2. **Indirect Compensation**: Most compensation is indirect e.g. a boy may steal things to compensate for being humiliated by his parents.

3. **Overcompensation**: It takes place when an individual shapes his outstanding weakness into an outstanding strength e.g. Theodore Roosevelt, an asthmatic patient, became a great horse rider.

4. **Substitute Compensation**: This occurs when an individual, who is weak in one area and sees no scope for improvement, attempts to become outstanding in another area.

**Identification**: It is a mental mechanism operating beyond conscious awareness wherein an individual identifies himself in vying with another person of great/important personality. As a consequence, the individual unconsciously imbibes thoughts, behaviours, characters, traits, emotional feelings and lifestyle of the other person. Adolescents identify themselves with some political leaders,
youth leaders, actors/actresses, sports personalities, and acquire their characteristics.

**Reaction Formation:** It is an unconscious transforming of conflicts over dangerous motives of feeling into the opposite desire. In other words, it is a defense mechanism that causes people to behave in a manner opposite to their unacceptable impulses. Usually people who use reaction formation feel so guilty that they bend over backwards to deny their feelings, the consequence of which is exaggerated behaviour.

**Sublimation:** Sublimation is the most accepted healthy defense mechanism that channels unacceptable impulses into positive, constructive or creative areas. Through sublimation, the unacceptable or blocked and unobtainable instinctive drives are diverted so as to secure their disguised external expression and utilization in channels of personal and social acceptability. Thus, the repressed drives are deflected into new pathways of creative endeavour i.e. intropsychic energy is usefully employed extra-physically which is a personal gain. Adolescents use it through sports activities, dancing, music, art and crafts.

**Rationalization:** Rationalization is a frequently used adjustment mechanism which is aimed at lowering frustration by giving sound and worthy reasons for an action which is frustrating. Rationalization is a distortion of the truth to maintain self-esteem by providing an excuse or explanation for a situation that is really unacceptable. Adolescents often rationalize failures as being the result of some external factor, but success is deemed the result of personal abilities.
Although most people are unaware of how often they rationalize - indeed a misuse of logic - yet rationalization can help many an adolescent to reduce anxiety. Rationalization helps many young people to look at the bright side even when one can do nothing in the event of occurrence of an unpleasant event. Distortion can be of two types:

- **Sour Grapes**: It is a response that is used to rationalize failure in obtaining a cherished goal by blaming various factors. Just as in Aesop’s fable when the fox could not reach the grapes, she blamed the grapes were sour out of frustration.

- **Sweet Lemon**: It is a form of rationalization that is needed when individual is not satisfied with his achievement and the situation is unpleasant.

**Projection**: Freud (1917) described projection as a process by which we ascribe to the external world the rejected impulses of the id. Adolescents repress their guilt feelings by projecting them into other things and people. It provides temporary relief to the person from frustration.

**Regression**: Regression has been defined as an unconscious “back track in” either in memory or in behaviour, which might have been successful in the past. The adult who has been frustrated in fulfilling his needs may use immature and childlike behaviours to cope with problems. A dejected/rejected adolescent may regress in a child-like way – he might burst into tears or pout, suck his thumb, throw things, scream and have a tantrum. Regression explains
manifestations of infantile behaviour in adolescents or youth. Some degree of regression is normal for maintaining mental balance with social environment. It can even establish good rapport with adolescents or youth, but habitual use of it for all problems can pose serious problems and sometimes indicate severe form of mental ill health.

**Negativism:** Negativism is an attention drawing mechanism employed by a person. It is partly a defense and partly an escape mechanism. The person develops strong and emotional resistance in accepting the suggestions of others. The foundation of this mechanism is laid in early childhood. Adolescents and adults use negativism in special situations wherein they do not oppose but resist suggestions by others. Adolescents have some negative feelings towards teachers but resisting every suggestion may hinder achievement of goals and cause disharmony.

**Displacement:** Displacement is a form of aggression, which a rejected or frustrated person uses to redirect his feelings to a substitute person or object when the true cause of the feelings is either an unacceptable or unavailable target. The chosen victim is usually a harmless/safe person—someone who is not likely to retaliate or deflate the aggressor's self-esteem.

**Denial:** Another way to maintain the balance of personality is to deny the facts that could create conflict in the mind. Children usually use this mechanism when they are busy in play activities. They ignore parents' call saying they heard nothing. Infact what was said was not allowed to penetrate into their
consciousness. In adolescents, the percentage of denial is much higher as they are not always prepared to frankly admit failures. Denial helps to postpone facing a problem or failure.

III. SOCIAL COMPETENCE

The transition from high school to college is marked by changes especially in social spheres of college students’ lives. The impact of college on the cognitive growth and the college as a setting for the socialization has shown marked changes in the social relationships of college students.

It is a natural shift for college students because, as adolescents, they are in this period of drifting and sometimes breaking away from the family unit and orienting in conformity to the ideas and judgment of the peer group that occurs at the beginning of puberty (Costanzo & Saw, 1986). At the same time, as members of society they are to acquire high level of social competence through varied interpersonal interactions and cultural integration in different socio-cultural settings.

Social competence is defined as the collection of specific social skills that permit individuals to perform successfully in social settings (Erwin, 1995; Feldman, Philippot & Custrini, 1991). Social competency means a facility in dealing with people and social situations. Ford (1985) offered five distinct uses of competence:
1. Competence as an outcome measure reflecting one's effectiveness in a specific situation.

2. Competence as a personality type: The use of competence is similar to "resilience", a term used to discuss children who successfully overcome stressful life circumstances and continue to perform well in school (Garmaz & Masten, 1991).

3. Competence as a motivational system: It has been used in this sense by White (1959) to describe what he believes as a universal tendency to strive toward higher and higher levels of mastery.

4. Competence as a composite of knowledge, skills and abilities that permit successful adaptation.

5. Competence as a belief in one's effectiveness.

The most important kind of competence, though, may be social competence – the ability to apply social-cognitive skills successfully in initiating social interactions, responding positively to peers, resolving interpersonal conflict and so on.

Popular children are usually socially skilled – co-operative and responsive rather than argumentative and disruptive (Coie, Dedge, & Kupersmidt, 1990), while "rejected" children are usually highly aggressive, although some are socially isolated, and submissive children who are overly sensitive to teasing are seen by others as "easy to push around" (Parkhurst & Asher, 1992). In the category of "neglected" children, there are those who usually are non-aggressive ones; many of them have reasonably good social skills but tend to be shy, withdrawn and unassertive (Coie et al. 1990).
Role of Social Competence in Socialization:

Social competence is not just limited to happiness but has an important influence on self-concept and self-esteem. It also influences the kind of social adjustment the adolescent makes that often compensates for unsocial or even antisocial behaviour. Social competence influences the degree of success the person achieves in life. Today, adolescents' social competence in the complexity of social life and business is very important as they need to meet a wider variety of people and adjust to a greater variety of social situations than adolescents of past generations.

Social competence also gives the adolescents poise and self-confidence – traits that are of great importance in any social situation.

Socialization is a process, which begins in childhood. It is the process through which children acquire the behaviour, skill, motives, values, beliefs and standards that are characteristic, appropriate and desirable in their culture. Although heredity, temperament and variations in early attachments are the determinants of socialization, the important agents are the individuals and institutions that are involved in the process namely parents, siblings, peers, teachers, members of the clergy, television and other media. Although all of these agents play a part in socialization, it is the family which is regarded as the primary or most powerful agent of socialization, playing the key role in shaping personality characteristics and motives: guiding social behaviour and transmitting the values, beliefs and norms of the culture.
Socializing agents can be grouped as primary and secondary. During the early years of human development different "significant others" play an important role in developing social competence. The first and the most important influence is that of parents, one's siblings, neighbours and peer groups. In primary socialization, the individual comes into direct, immediate and enduring interaction. While the secondary sources are those with whom the contact and interaction are neither direct nor intimate or enduring. These interactions are indirect. They also play a significant role in influencing social behaviour and attributes like values, attitudes, political behaviour etc. They include religion, social class, culture, media – newspapers, cinema, television etc.

- **Family influence on Social Competence:** The family is the basic unit or the first social agency with whom the child comes into contact with. Living together and interacting with the members of the family viz. parents, grandparents and siblings have a lasting influence on the personality and social behaviour of the child. Parents play the most important role in shaping the social behavioural pattern of the child, which Freud (1917) highlighted in his psychosexual stages of human development.

Baumrind (1972) found in her study that authoritative parents raised the most competent children. These children were more responsible and more independent than children raised by either authoritarian or permissive parents. As she put it, authoritative parents "reflect a synthesis and balancing of strongly opposing forces of tradition and innovation, divergence and convergence, accommodation and assimilation, co-operation and autonomous expression, tolerance and principled.
intractability”. This kind of flexible parenting, characterized by firm standards and the use of reason, seems to provide children with the kind of discipline and socialization that serves them well as they grow into adolescents.

Early family experiences contribute to a child’s sociability and social competence. Children who had secure attachments in infancy were found to have more friends; they were more popular and had more ability to freely interact in social situations (Sroufe & Fleeson, 1986).

A mother’s disciplining techniques, the way she communicates and her parenting have a bearing on the child’s social competence and popularity.

**Autonomy from Parents:** Adolescents are, in this stage, in a heightened sensitivity to the process of identity development. Achieving a psychological sense of autonomy from one’s parents is most important in this process. Autonomy is an ability to regulate one’s own behaviour and to select and guide one’s own decisions and actions without undue control from or dependence on one’s parents (Steinberg, 1990). It should not be understood as rejection, alienation or separation from parents. Rather, it is an independent status in which parents and children accept and respect individuality, which eventually leads to healthy parent-adolescent growth. Such interaction promotes good social relationships with peers and other members of the society.

- **The neighbourhood and community:** Besides our family, the neighbourhood or community also surrounds us. This also provides a
source of influence on one's behaviour by their interactions and social relations.

- **Different Peer Groups**: As adolescents emerge from the physical transformation that accompanies puberty, they once again feel the need for social life and they attempt to create a society for themselves by associating with various kinds of social groups in order to meet their more mature needs and interests. Therefore, peer groups dominate the adolescents' social world and are considered the strongest social force in their life (Hill & Holmbeck, 1986). With peers they can practice adult roles, share problems, learn to adjust with people, learn and test their skills and learn socializing. That makes the peer group an important socializing agent during adolescence. Considering that many adolescents, during this period, are alienated from their families, the peer group becomes a blessing in disguise in the sense that it not only provides emotional security but also becomes a teacher of socialized attitudes and behaviour. It gives first hand experience on how to handle feelings, how to listen and be tolerant to the views of others, how to be considerate about the feelings of others and how to get along with others i.e. members of his/her own, as well as of the opposite sex. Wagner (1971) has written: "Perhaps the greatest gift of the peer group is that of empathy. Since all of the members are in the same boat, they can understand each others’ problems and offer sympathy and advice that would not be appreciated by parents and teachers".
The term 'peer group' refers to the group of equals in age, socio-economic status, having similar backgrounds, values and personality characteristics (Cavior & Dokecki, 1973).

Social Groupings of Adolescents:

This period is known for establishing various groups, some of which are mentioned herein:

**Chums:** Chums are inseparable companions and confidants. They are often people who have known each other from childhood and have found that they have mutual interests. Usually the adolescent has only two or three chums and they are of his/her own sex. The adolescent who does not have a chum is likely to be handicapped in learning to make good social adjustment (Hurlock, 1973).

**Cliques:** Cliques are small exclusive groups made up of several chum groups. Initially they are composed of unisexual groups but later, with interest in dating, members of the two sexes combine to form cliques. Their activities are mainly social and they dominate the members’ time in school and out of it. There exists a strong emotional attachment between members, strong feelings of friendship and responsibility to render assistance in time of need (Hurlock, 1973).

The clique has a powerful influence on the attitudes, thoughts and behaviour of each member. It provides opportunities to develop social skills that will help adolescent make good social adjustments. The clique sets patterns and standards of
behaviour, which motivates the adolescents to behave in a socially mature way. And it helps the adolescents adjust in his/her transition from junior to senior high school and later to college. However, it may encourage snobbishness and discrimination against other non-clique members (Coleman, 1961).

**Crowds:** Crowds are “formed groups” usually composed of several cliques with similar interests, background and values. They meet to engage in specific activities and form the largest of the friendship groups. Crowd offers such advantages to the adolescent that every adolescent at some time should be a crowd member. The advantages may be experienced in different areas but the influence on socialization is worth mentioning. It offers adolescent a feeling of security, especially when home relationships are unsatisfactory. Crowds provide insight into understanding persons with varied backgrounds, providing an opportunity to acquire skills in getting along with people of different backgrounds and with members of both sexes (Hurlock, 1973).

**Formally organized groups:** Formally organized groups are youth groups organized by different institutions in order to help young people to socialize and protect them from mischief and other anti-social activities. Many educators, church and community leaders have realized that young people need a platform under some guidance to have a healthy passage to adulthood. Formally organized groups can be classified into three:

**Special interest groups** are those, which pursue a single activity, such as basketball, dramatics, etc.
Clubs, which have programmes that include many kinds of activities.

**Purpose groups**, which are developed to pursue some idealistic or altruistic purpose.

Formally organized groups also provide an opportunity to develop social skills and participate in social activities. The adolescent who does not belong to a clique or a crowd has an opportunity to experience the ways of getting along with others and develop social skills in formally organized groups.

**Adolescent gangs**: Gang is another adolescent group where adolescents who lack social acceptance among their peers make their way to gangs. They seek companionship and a feeling of security by being a part of the gang. The members of the gang are compelled to learn that they must conform to the standards of behaviour set by the gang if they are to retain their status, even if these standards include antisocial or delinquent behaviour (Hurlock, 1973).

Gangs do provide some of the essentials of socialization i.e. a sense of social belonging and social behaviour. However, gang members' behaviour does not have approval from the larger social group. The gang leads to the development of antisocial rather than social adolescents (Crane, 1958).
The Development of Identity

Erikson and the Crisis of Adolescence

According to Erikson (1968), the reason for adolescents seeking peer groups is to establish a sense of identity because they are in the crisis period of psychosocial development. They are striving to “be somebody”, looking for a place among peers, aspiring a role to play, developing a sense of who they are, and when they meet these challenges they achieve the positive sense of self that Erikson terms psychosocial or Ego identity. But in this process, according Erikson (1968), those adolescent cliques and their stereotyping of themselves are defenses against what he called “identity confusion”. And therefore, “to keep themselves together they temporarily over-identify to the point of apparent complete loss of identity, with heroes of cliques and crowds” (Erikson, 1963).

It is not easy to define objectively the concept of Ego identity; Erikson (1963) includes a number of complex dimensions in his concept of identity. It involves combining various salient elements from person’s past with expectations for the future (Blasi, 1988), to question and then consider society’s expectations, so also ones own values and abilities, and finally to make a flexible commitment to one’s occupation, sexuality, religion and politics. This commitment allows one to desire goals in common with those of society, feel loyal to society and gain self-esteem by contributing to those common goals. However, this is a long process which begins in infancy and goes through many years of resolving identity crisis that the adolescent experience as he considers venturing into society. According to Erikson (1968), if adolescents fail to resolve identity crisis, they experience
identity diffusion – a lack of focus about who they are and what roles they should and can play.

The Secondary Sources of Socialization

Religion is an important source involved in the process of socialization. Religion consists of two elements: Faith which is based on the individuals’ beliefs and Practices or religious observances in common with others of the same faith and centered around a place of worship – in the home, school or community. In order to impart faith and teach the observance of religious practices, societies have invented Sunday schools, parochial education and tribal transmission of religious tradition and parental teaching of children at home. In general, adolescents show an interest in religion and religious issues. (Paloutzian & Santrock, 1997). Gallup and Bezilla (1992) found that 95% of 13 – 19 year olds believe in God or a Universal Spirit, almost three-fourths of adolescents pray, about one-half indicated attendance to religious services and one-half of the youth considered it important for a young person to learn religious faith.

During adolescence, especially the college years, young people focus in trying to find answers to many question like “who am I?” They also ask, “Is there really a God or a Higher Spiritual Being or have I just been believing what my parents and the Church imprinted in my mind?” (Erikson, 1968).

Besides socialization, religion also exerts strong influence on adolescents’ sexual activity (McLaughlin & others, 1997). The Church discourages premarital sex and
those adolescents who regularly attend religious services may hear messages about abstaining from sex, which in turn influence adolescents' premarital sexual attitudes and behaviour. Adolescents who are involved in religious organization may enhance their friends and interaction with those other adolescents who have restrictive attitudes toward premarital sex. Thorton and Camburn (1989) found that adolescents who attended church frequently and valued religion in their lives were less experienced sexually and had less permissive attitudes towards premarital sex than their counterparts who attended church infrequently and said that religion did not play a strong role in their lives.

**Social Class:** Social Class or "socio-economic status" also plays a crucial role in the process of socialization. It refers to one's ranking on a number of social and financial indications including years of education, kind of work and salary. Based on this viewpoint, social class may be grouped broadly into three classes namely Higher Social Class, Middle and Lower Social Class. Socio-economic status causes differences in child rearing practices adopted by parents and in the nature of lifestyle at home. An adolescent from a higher social class home gets more exposure to media like newspapers, magazines and television and is therefore more open to secondary socialization. However, adolescents from lower social class do not have such exposure. Also, the kinds of people with whom members of a particular family interact with also depend on the social class. Adolescents of the upper class travel frequently, read more, attend parties more, and visit clubs more than adolescents from lower class families.
Adolescents from middle class families are found to be much more puritanical with an emphasis on rigid adherence to traditional principles of morality. Middle class adolescents have been described as more ambitious, entrepreneurial and growth-oriented. Studies have shown that adolescents from lower class acquire a sense of independence and self-reliance much faster than higher group adolescents. Adolescents of higher class are found to be more dependent. Although middle class adolescents are puritanical, they are found to be quick in abandoning or forsaking values.

All these factors contribute to differences in the socialization process and thus bring about different types of social behaviour.

**Culture:** Culture is an important factor in predicting human behaviour and understanding socialization. Culture is defined as the behaviour patterns, beliefs and all other products of a particular group of people that are passed from generation to generation. We have already seen the influence of different important cultural settings on adolescent development namely family, neighbours, peer group and social class.

It is important to overview ethnicity, television and media – important dimensions of culture that affect adolescent development. No study on adolescence is relevant without focusing upon culture and ethnicity (Greenfield & Suzuki, 1997). Ethnicity is based on cultural heritage, nationality characteristics, race, religion and language. With global interdependence and with the world becoming a village, it is an inescapable reality that adolescents are not just citizens of a particular country but of the whole world. Therefore, understanding the behaviour and values of
cultures around the world will help to interact effectually and be hospitable to each other and live in peace (Cushner & Brislin, 1997).

Understanding cultures and knowing cultural attitudes has helped adolescents to interact with each other freely and respecting each other beliefs and practices. In fact, knowledge of culture has established a base to interact as a multicultural society, which the twenty-first century is all about. Studies have found that Asian-American adolescents in the United States are the fastest-growing segment of the American adolescent population and that Indians have somehow better integrated into the Anglo lifestyle. They are also more successful at school.

**Television and other Media**

For the last forty years or so, television has taken over childrearing or parenting from parents. In fact, few developments in our society have had a greater impact on adolescents than television (Huston & Wright, 1997). The influence and persuasion capabilities of television are staggering. This is also true of other electronic media like Internet, radio, rock music, video, films and magazine.

**Functions and use of media:** Arnett (1994) underlines the functions of media for adolescents:

1. **Entertainment:** Like adults, adolescents often use media simply for entertainment and an enjoyable diversion from everyday concerns.
2. **Information:** Use of the media is sought frequently by adolescents to procure information about various topics and especially about sexuality, which their parents may be reluctant to discuss with them.

3. **Sensation:** Certain media programmes provide intense and novel stimulation that appeals adolescents more than adults. The tendency in seeking sensation is higher in adolescents than adults.

4. **Coping:** Attractive and novel programmes on media operate as soothers. So adolescents "Listen to music and Watch TV" are the two most frequently used coping responses by adolescents.

5. **Gender-role modeling:** The male and female gender roles that media present, influence adolescents' gender attitude and behaviour.

6. **Youth-Culture identification:** To a great extent media is adolescent-oriented and hence interests, values, etc. are presented which attract adolescent and they feel watching television is also updating, getting connected to the larger peer network and culture.

Studies indicate that adolescents spend a third or more of their waking hours with some form of mass media. Fine, Mortimer and Roberts (1990) found that as television viewing decline, the use of music media – radio, records and tapes, Compact Discs and music video – increase by middle adolescence. And Wartella and others (1990) found that movie attendance and videocassettes, watching Compact Disc increased as they move into late adolescence.
Although television may lead adolescents to antisocial or aggressive behaviours and increased sexual activity, it also teaches them attitudes, behaviours and values that society needs and persuades them to act in social situations. It helps them to easily exchange views, news etc in social gatherings.

IV. ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION

Our culture stresses the importance of individual achievement and as a consequence most of us have developed achievement needs. These needs or goals are common to human beings, and all through ages they have strived to achieve them. Adler (1924) had stressed on the importance of man's innate need for achievement. According to him, everyone has a "life plan" – a purpose or goal that determines his actions. Most humans have these goals and therefore they are motivated to set and achieve them throughout the life span as satisfaction of one need they formulate another and so on. And hence humans like to master and control the environment and become distressed when they cannot (Schulz & Heckhausen, 1996).

Need for Achievement

McClelland and his associates (1953) defined the need for achievement (nAch) as a "learned motive to compete and to strive for success wherever one's behaviour can be evaluated against a standard of excellence". In other words, "people with
strong achievement motivation take pride in their ability to meet high standards and are motivated by this sense of self fulfillment to work hard, be successful and outperform others when faced with new challenges" (Seligman, 1983).

Achievement is the outcome of a complex process – not just of one single motive, but, several motives that are interrelated and that is why achievement has been rightly labeled as a “achievement syndrome”. It is made up of three elements: (Cantril, 1963; Rosen & D’Andrade, 1959).

1. **Aspiration**: It refers to the adolescent’s setting of goals based on his training at home and college in order to place his focus on those objectives which are prestigious in the eyes of society.

2. **Motivation**: It is a driving force that directs energies of adolescents into channels that will lead to achieve goals which has been set. This drive is influenced by society’s ability to approve or disapprove and reward or punish.

3. **Achievement Value**: It refers to the assessment of goals and motives and determines whether they cope up to the social expectation and whether they are worth striving for. According to Hurlock (1973), the strength of the “achievement syndrome” is largely determined by the kind of training adolescents have received from their parents. Parents who have low aspirations for their child gave less training in setting and achieving goals and providing motivation to aspire for success. Even if the adolescent has enough ability, he/she is unlikely to effectively use it. Failure may lead him to blame himself and others.
Adolescent is at a critical juncture in achievement (Henderson & Dweck, 1990). As new social and academic pressures increase and as new roles that demand more responsibility need to be adopted, achievement becomes a more serious business and adolescents begin to sense that the game of life is now being played is real (Yoon & others, 1996). Whether or not an adolescent effectively adapts to these new academic and social pressures is determined, in part, by psychological and motivational factors (Eccles, Wigfield & Schiefele, 1997). McClelland (1953) and Atkinson (1964) pointed out that effective individuals depend, to a great extent, on what one wants to achieve. In fact, other things being equal, some adolescents perform very well in a given task and some do not care at all about performance. Indeed, an adolescent’s achievement depends on much more than their intellectual ability – sometimes students who are less bright than others show great adaptive motivational pattern (e.g. persistent at tasks and confident about their ability to solve problems) and turn out to be high achievers, while other times, even some of the brightest students show maladaptive achievement patterns (e.g. give up easily) and do not have confidence in their academic skills and turn out to be low achievers. This is due to motivation, which plays an important role in adolescents’ achievement.

Role of Motivation/Achievement Motivation

Many a time parents are baffled by different behaviours that are put up by adolescents. And they wonder what causes such different behaviours? Psychologists have examined many factors that cause behavior. The factors may include thinking, feeling, acting or any combination of the three.
Motivation is the reason why individuals behave, think and feel the way they do, with special consideration of the activation and direction of their behaviour. Motivation can cause much behaviour including achievement and success. It is the reason for our eating, drinking, sleeping, studying or working. Motivation is based on internal needs that push and drive us. It is sometimes based on physiological needs such as hunger, thirst, etc. At other times, it reflects psychological needs such as a desire for approval or a craving for love, or it can be influenced by the attitudes of parents, peers, teachers, etc.

Thus, motivation is an internal state or condition that activates and gives direction to our thoughts, feelings and actions.

It has been observed that there are some college students who are highly motivated to succeed and spend a lot of energy striving to excel; while others are not as motivated to succeed and do not work as hard to achieve. These students differ in their achievement motivation. Achievement motivation is the desire to accomplish something, to reach a standard of excellence and to expend effort to excel.

Achievement motivation is influenced by more than one motive. Among many factors that are considered important are the value that is placed upon achieving a particular goal, the individual’s expectancies of success and the individual’s beliefs about the causes of success or failure.

1. **The value placed on achievement**: According to Atkinson (1964), the value of success to the individual or aversion to failure is an important influence on achievement outcomes. The individual is more likely to
pursue and strive hard to achieve goals that are important than those which are unimportant. Therefore, according Rayner (1970), a strong need for achievement predicts success only when the value placed on achievement is high.

2. **Expectation of success:** Similarly, according to Atkinson (1964), humans are more likely to work hard when they think they are capable and have a reasonable chance of succeeding rather than failing. It is a fact that those who expect to achieve often do succeed, whereas those who expect to fail may spend little time or effort in pursuing the goal and may not succeed.

3. **Attributions for Success and Failure:** Achievement motivation also depends on how individuals interpret their success and failures and their beliefs whether they can control these outcomes. Weiner (1974, 1986), in his *Attribution Theory of Motivation*, proposed that the explanation (causal attributions) we offer for our outcomes influence our future expectancies of success and our future motivation to succeed. Weiner (1974, 1986) put forth the following four causes of success or failure:

1) Ability (or lack thereof).
2) Effort.
3) Task difficulty.
4) Luck (either good or bad).

Two of these, namely ability and effort, are internal causes or qualities of the individual, whereas the other two i.e. task difficulty and luck are external or environmental. In other words, Weiner (1974) proposes that causal attributions
can be grouped along a Locus dimension (internal versus external) in the same line of Crandall's (1967) dimension of personality, which is called Locus of Control. Individuals with an internal locus of control assume that they are personally responsible for what happens to them while individuals with an external locus of control believe that their outcomes depend more on luck, fate or the actions of others than on their own abilities and efforts. Findley and Cooper (1983) found that children with an internal locus of control earn higher grades and higher scores on academic achievement tests than children with an external locus of control.

However, Weiner (1974, 1986) feels that it is due to stability dimension. He claims that ability and task difficulty are reasonably stable or unchangeable whereas the effort one put in and the aspect of luck are highly unstable or varies from situation to situation.

So it is quite clear, achievement motivation involves more than one motive for achievement. It may be the kind of motive, the value of success, individual competence and expectancies of success etc. Finally, based on Attribution Theory, we must say that achievement behavior is influenced by the ways in which individuals interpret success and failures.

Individuals who are high in achievement motivation generally experience little anxiety or fear of failure, but tend to choose jobs and other challenges (such as college courses) in which they have a realistic chance for success. And when success is achieved, the high achievement individual enjoys the fruits of his/her labours more than the average person.
Achievement motivation is a learned motive based on several sources. Truner (1970) observed that children of parents who have occupations that demand individual achievement had high need for achievement. Also McClelland (1953) demonstrated the influence of learning of the need for achievement by teaching it to business leaders from countries that were traditionally low in achievement motivation. The teaching not only raised scores on measures of nAch, but also increased their business productivity as well (McClelland & Winter, 1969).

**Fear of Failure and Fear of Success:**

It is evident from high ranking officials/managers of multinational companies that high need for achievement often leads to great success sometimes at the cost of health (mental, physical), family life, leisure, etc. However, being low in nAch does not leave you satisfied either. Infact, it may lead one into serious problems in life. But many individuals, who are low in nAch, are highly anxious in competitive situations and hence greatly fear failure. According to Atkinson (1964), some of these individuals may avoid competitive occupations or may experience considerable discomfort in such jobs.

Several researchers have found that not only fear of failure but also fear of success is common among individuals. Researchers have found that those who fear success are those who are overly concerned about the pressures and responsibilities that are associated with success or concerned that success would lead to their rejection by others. Horner (1972) found that fear of success was common in
women and related to the passive non-competitive roles that women have been expected to assume in our society because many women are taught that they should be homemakers. However, Morgan and Mausner (1973), suggest that fear of success is common in females as well as in males.

**Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation**

Closely related to the concept of internal and external causes of behaviour, is the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, the distinction of which is found very useful.

Intrinsic motivation refers to human motives stimulated by the inherent nature of the activity or its natural consequences. In other words, it is the performance of activities by humans because they are in themselves, rewarding and enjoyable. Extrinsic motivation refers to human motives stimulated by external rewards. In other words, it is the performance of activities only for an outside or external reward.

It is important to know when parents, teachers, employers should apply extrinsic motivation in order to increase motivation. Researchers have suggested that if some behaviour occurs infrequently – and its intrinsic motivation can be assumed low for that individual – then extrinsic motivation is successful in increasing the frequency of occurrence of the behaviour. Rimm and Masters (1979) found the children who hate to do their mathematics homework often will do it diligently if rewarded with additional allowance money and because of the success they experience they will sometimes come to enjoy mathematics.
In contrast, Lepper, Greene and Nisbett (1975) found that for individuals who are already intrinsically motivated to perform an activity, adding extrinsic motivation would often detract from the intrinsic motivation.

College students’ achievement motivation whether in college, at work or in sports can be divided into two groups – intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. College students work hard because a personal standard is important. Here an intrinsic motivation is at work. But if students work in college because it will bring a higher paying job, then extrinsic motivation is at work.

It is quite intriguing to know when a reward may be awarded to college students. Researchers suggested that when college students are not producing competent work, seem bored, or have a negative attitude, incentives may help to improve their motivation. However external rewards may sometimes get into the way of achievement motivation. It is observed that adolescents’ achievement is motivated both by internal and external factors. Some of the most achievement-oriented adolescents are those who have high personal standards for achievement (internal) as well as strong sense of competitiveness and a desire to do better than others (external). Gottfried (1990) suggested that intrinsic motivation is related to higher school achievement and lower academic anxiety students. Lepper, Greene and Nesbett (1973) observed that when those children who like to draw pictures as a consequence of their hobby in art were also given certificates for good drawing, they drew pictures less often than children who had not received certificates.
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Motives:

Maslow (1970) tried to sort out and organized human needs or motivations into a pyramid-like hierarchy. Our needs/motives are organized in a hierarchy from the most basic to the personal and advanced. According to Maslow (1970), people progress upward to the top of the ladder when they have satisfied each need along the ladder. If the lower needs in the hierarchy are not met for the most part, then higher motives will not operate. Higher needs lie dormant unless the individual has satisfied lower needs like hunger, thirst, safety, etc. At the base of his pyramid, Maslow (1970) placed everyday physiological needs which are meant for survival like food, drink, rest, elimination and so on. On satisfaction of the basic needs on the next level Maslow (1970) placed the need for stimulation and escape from boredom. It also includes the need to explore and satisfy curiosity. Safety and security needs follow. And once safety and security motives are fulfilled, individuals step up to a need for love and a sense of belonging. At the fourth level, friendship plays an important role. A move to the upper levels of the hierarchy involves the need to feel respected by others. The top level is the realization of one’s full potential that Maslow (1970) called the top level of his hierarchy as self-actualization, which is achieved by very few people.

Maslow’s pyramid is like a ladder on which people line up and down throughout their lives – stepping on each rung to reach the next.

However, some argue that people often experience several needs at the same time. Besides, these there are wide individual differences in satisfying their needs. It is
observed that Maslow's hierarchy theory cannot explain why people will starve or be tortured rather than give up their personal beliefs.

In summary, what can we say about the need to achieve? According to McClelland (1961), people with strong needs for achievement prefers to use their skills and abilities and improve them. They take into consideration tasks that require some effort and those that are possible. Men and women with strong need for achievement enjoy getting positive feedback for the average goals they set and achieve. For many, getting feedback from others is more important than money.

Adams and Stone (1977) found that high achievers would spend even their leisure time in activities that will reflect achievement. But what is the reason behind such strong needs of people for achievement? McClelland (1961) found that the need for achievement is related to parental attitudes. Parents who are high achievers themselves usually demand independence from their offspring. Therefore, they make them self-reliant at a relatively early age. As a consequence, children develop a sense of confidence, which urges them to set high goals and achieve them.

While on the other hand, parents who have low needs for achievement are more protective of their children. They even help their children to perform everyday tasks. Hence, such children have less freedom and usually have low achievement needs.
Thus, self-concept, adjustment, social competence and achievement motivation are very important to college students in the process of maturing and moving on to shoulder greater civic and adult responsibilities. In the following chapter, a number of research studies conducted with regard to college students’ self-concept adjustment, social competence and achievement motivation will bring to light the importance of these variables and the influence of parents and guardians on the college students with regard to these variables.