INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitional period and it is the bridge between childhood and adulthood. It is the time of rapid development of growing to sexual maturity, discovering one’s real self, defining personal value and finding one’s vocational and social direction. Age of adolescence is age of identity formation where occupational, educational, and personal context develop (Erikson, 1968). It is a time when one faces variety of new potentially stressful experiences, but also has strong desire to deal with life events independently. Interventions for adolescents are often aimed at helping them deal, constructively with the stress in their daily lives. Achieving positive outcome depends on understanding the actual stressors faced by adolescents, the way they make sense of stressful events and how they react to and cope with problems.

Stress is a subjective experience largely determined by focal person’s appraisals and interpretation of the potential stressors (Lazarus & Lunier, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; and Wofford et al., 1999). Individual makes the appraisal of stressful situation in the framework of his psychological characteristics, traits, beliefs, expectations, perspectives, attributions, and characteristics of cognitive sets. A growing number of researches have found that not all individuals are equally vulnerable to stressors (Cannon, 1929). Resistance perspective has become popular and more researchers have been interested in the individual adjustment ability to cope with stressful situations (Gomez et al., 2006). Therefore stress researches have shifted the perspective from an emphasis on pathology to an interest in adaptive processes and outcomes (Kobasa, 1982; and Holahan et al., 1986).

By developing certain specific and desired personal attributes such as self-esteem, self-efficiency, resilience, patience, daydreaming, optimism, and guided
imaginary the individual can to a large extent, prevent or resist to negative experience of stress as well as moderate experienced stress (Srivastava, 1995).

Humans are a daydreaming species. Daydreaming occurs when one creates images to reflect inner psychological selves in action. Daydreaming is a widespread phenomena that occurs frequently in the course of everyday life. A person daydreams for about one-third of one’s waking hours. Daydreams may include images of the future or fantasies about ordinary, everyday people, places, or things. Some daydreams are spontaneous; others are deliberate. People commonly report deliberately launching into vivid daydreams to ease boredom at work, (Singer; 1961; and Fisher, 1987). Daydreaming is a short-term detachment from one's immediate surroundings, during which a person's contact with reality is blurred and partially substituted by a visionary fantasy, especially one of happy, pleasant thoughts, hopes or ambitions, imagined and experienced while awake (Klinger, 1987). Daydreaming is an constituent in adolescent development, in terms of the opportunity for exploring, experimentating, enacting and problem-solving that it provides (Radzik et al., 2008).

Daydreaming can have many constructive uses including self-regulation, plan preparation and rehearsal, learning from success and failures, support for process of creativity, emotion regulation and motivation (Muller & Dyer, 1985). Most of daydreams combine fanciful actions that create wish fulfilling situations and realistic actions that generate solution to practical problems (Klinger, 1990). A Positive-Constructive daydreaming style is associated with openness to experience, reflecting a curiosity, sensitivity, and exploration of ideas, feelings, and sensations (Singer, 1975). Daydreaming, much like nighttime dreaming is a time when the brain consolidates learning. Daydreaming may also help people to sort through problems and achieve success. Research with MRI shows that brain areas associated with complex problem-solving become activated during daydreaming episodes (Smallwood et al., 2009).
The literature and researchers on the interaction between daydreaming and stress-resistance is extremely limited. Most daydreams are ‘self-satisfying’ often serves to provide relief from emotional stress (Segal, 1985). The inner experience of daydream serves to buffer the stress of adolescents (Singer, 1975). Daydream can also provide temporary relief from the emotional stress of harsh realities by encouraging more comforting thoughts that foster relaxation (Lang, 1995; and Novey, 2000). Daydreaming also alleviates emotional stress, conflict, and physical pain (Lang, 1995). In fact, individuals with a proclivity for daydreaming exhibit less physiological reactance to stressful events (Singer & Antrobus, 1972).

Singer (1975), Caught (1984), and Klinger (1990) support for the potentiality of daydreaming to be a powerful tool for coping. The use of positive daydreaming as a guided imagery in psychotherapy to induce stress-relaxation is widely adopted and accepted (Ackerman et al., 2000; Gruzelier, 2002; and Peck et al., 2003).

Positive psychology proposes extending the scope of research to include not only pathological personality conditions, but also those positive emotions, strengths, competencies, capacities and virtues that contribute to increase personal satisfaction and leading a fuller life. Within this new field, optimism is one of the most widely studied variable in positive psychology. Optimism has been described as a generalized tendency to expect positive outcomes (Scheier et al., 1993). It is a belief that “good rather than bad things will happen in a person’s life”. Optimism is related to better problem-solving under stress (Khan et al., 1995), ego resiliency (Klohen, 1996), better physical health (Chang, 1996; and Cerrato, 2001), action coping and seeking of social support when appropriate (Aspinwall et al., 1992), and overall psychological well-being.

A small volume of daydream research has focused on life orientation in an attempt to determine if optimism interacts with affective daydreams. Schoenfend (1970) developed a daydream inventory that was to include daydreaming that
measures an optimistic or pessimistic outlook on life events. Starker (1982) asserts that optimism and pessimism are affective dispositions that should taint the affective orientation of daydreams. Negative daydreamers are central to maintaining a pessimistic cognitive orientation (Cundiff et al., 1979).

Gender differences have always attracted psychologists’ attention due to biological, psycho-social, and cultural variations. Gender differences are essential in various domains of human endeavor. Stress resistance is one area where their variation can be thought playing vital role in proning male and female adolescents to cope with stress differently. Studies on psychological distress have constantly reported gender difference. Women experience more stress than men (Gove et al., 1973; Mirowsky et al., 1989, 1995, Almida et al., 1998; and McDonough et al., 2003). Some other studies also suggest that adolescent girls do experience more stress than adolescent boys (Geet et al., 1994; and Davies & Windle, 1997). However, some studies have failed to find significant gender differences in total stress among adolescents (Hankin et al., 2007). Moreover, some other studies suggest that female adolescents are more stress-resistant than male adolescents. (Fagot & Hamilton, 1988; Gulankis et al., 2009; and Ajawani et al., 2010).

A number of studies have examined whether optimism differs as a function of gender. Whereas many researchers have found that optimism does not vary by gender (Fischer et al., 1986; Scheier et al., 1994; & Puskar et al., 1999). In a study, Kassinova et al. (1995), and Osompara et al. (2000-2001) found that females were more optimistic than males, though this difference was small and probably not practically meaningful.

**STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

The present investigation aimed at studying role of daydreaming and gender on stress-resistance and optimism in adolescents. The problems undertaken in the present research and respective hypotheses formulated are described here below.
The first problem of the research was whether positive and negative daydreamers differ in respect of their stress-resistance?

It had been hypothesized that positive daydreamers would show higher stress resistance than negative daydreamers.

The second problem of the research was whether male and female adolescents differ in regard to their stress-resistance?

It had been hypothesized that female adolescents would show more stress resistance than male adolescents.

The third problem of the research pertained to joint role of daydreaming and gender in stress resistance of adolescents.

It had been hypothesized that positive daydreamer females would be the most stress-resistant while negative daydreamer males would be the least stress-resistant.

The fourth problem was whether positive daydreamers and negative daydreamers differ in respect of their level of optimism?

It had been expected that positive daydreamers would be more optimistic than negative daydreamers.

The fifth problem of the research was whether gender specification of adolescents play any role in respect of their optimism?

It had been hypothesized that female adolescents would be more optimistic than male adolescents.

The last problem of the present research pertained to joint role of daydreaming and gender in optimism.

It had been assumed that positive daydreamer females would be the most optimistic, while negative daydreamer males would be the least optimistic.
METHODOLOGY

THE SAMPLE

Initially, incidental samples of 600 male and 600 female adolescents aging 16 to 18 years and studying in class 11th or 12th were selected from eight randomly selected Hindi medium schools for boys and for girls of Raipur city. On the basis of scores on cognitive intelligence test only those of average intelligence were screened out.

Again on the basis of scores on daydreaming inventory, these students with average cognitive intelligence were further classified as positive daydreamers or negative daydreamers. Sixty adolescent students were randomly selected from each gender category from samples of positive daydreamers and negative daydreamers both. In this way, a final random sample of 240 adolescent students was selected in the present research. Equal number (n = 60) of adolescent students were selected randomly in each of the four sub-groups i.e., positive daydreamer male, negative daydreamer male, positive daydreamer female, and negative daydreamer female.

INSTRUMENT OF THE STUDY

Following tests were used to measure various aspects considered in the present research.

1. **Measurement of Cognitive Intelligence**: Indian Adaptation of Culture Fair Intelligence Test, Scale 2 (Form B) developed by Singh & Kapoor (1980) was used to assess level of cognitive intelligence of the subjects.

2. **Measurement of Daydreaming**: Daydreaming Inventory constructed and standardized by Ajawani & Varwandkar (2010) was used to determine the direction and level of daydreaming of subjects.

3. **Assessment of Optimism Level**: An Optimism Scale constructed and standardized by Ajawani & Varwandkar (2010) was used for assessing optimism level of adolescents.
4. **Assessment of Stress-Resistance Ability:** A Stress-resistance Scale constructed and standardized by Ajawani et al. (2010) was used to assess stress-resistance ability of the subjects.

All the above tests are reliable and valid.

**EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN AND PROCEDURE**

A 2x2 factorial design was used in the present research to observe independent and joint role of daydreaming and gender in stress resistance and optimism of adolescents. Sixty subjects were studied in each of the four sub-groups i.e., positive daydreamer male, positive daydreamer female, negative daydreamer male, and negative daydreamer female, for their stress resistance and optimism.

Data were collected in three steps. In the first step, a list of all Hindi medium school of Raipur city was prepared and four schools were selected on random basis separately from girls’ and boys’ schools. 600 male and 600 female adolescent students studying in 11th or 12th class and aging 16-18 years were selected incidentally from these schools. Culture Fare Intelligence Test, Scale 2 (Form B) was administered on all these initially selected students. On the basis of $Q_1$ and $Q_3$ statistics, those students were screened out whose scores lied between $Q_1$ and $Q_3$ and were considered as of average cognitive intelligence.

In the second step, a daydreaming inventory was administered on these adolescents of average cognitive intelligence. Medians were computed separately for positive and negative aspects of daydreaming and accordingly these adolescents were classified as positive daydreamer or negative daydreamer. Adolescent students scoring above median (Mdn=66) on positive dimension of daydreaming and scoring below median (Mdn=31) on negative dimension of daydreaming) were classified as positive daydreamers. Similarly, adolescent students scoring above median (Mdn=31) on negative dimension of daydreaming and below median (Mdn=66) on positive dimension of daydreaming were classified as negative daydreamers. Finally, 120 positive daydreamers and 120 negative daydreamers were selected randomly maintaining male-female ratio 1:1.
In this way, sixty subjects were finally selected in each cell of 2x2 factorial design on random basis and were administered stress resistance and optimism scales in the third step. The scores on these two scales served the base for further computations.

**DATA ANALYSIS**

The obtained data were analyzed with the help of F-ratio and protected t test. Hartley Test of homogeneity of variance was used to ascertain whether observations were randomly drawn from a normally distributed population and all of which had the same variance, before applying the inferential statistics.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Findings Pertaining To Stress Resistance**

1. In reference to role of daydreaming, it had been found that positive daydreamer adolescents showed truly higher stress-resistance than negative daydreamers.

2. In regard to role of gender, it had been observed that male adolescents had shown considerably higher stress resistance than female adolescents.

3. Regarding the joint role of these two independent factors i.e., daydreaming and gender, it had been found there did exist true joint role of daydreaming and gender in stress resistance.

**Findings Pertaining To Optimism**

1. In respect of role of daydreaming, it had been found that positive daydreamer adolescents were truly more optimistic than negative daydreamer adolescents.

2. In regard to the role of gender, no significant gender difference in optimism had been observed in the present research.

3. In regard to joint role of daydreaming and gender, it had been observed that both the factors were independent in respect of their role in optimism.