CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
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Introduction and Background of the Study:

Adolescence is a crossroad from childhood to adulthood. Childhood experiences and biological characteristics are transformed into interests, competencies, and self-beliefs and begin to play an increasingly important role as the adolescent starts to value his/her way towards adult life. This development is channeled by a variety of opportunities and constraints in the adolescents' social and institutional environments.

During this phase a lot of physical changes take place. The adolescent, at this time, is neither a child nor an adult. They become curious about anything and everything happening around them. Since Indian cultural system does not allow an adolescent to fulfill their curiosity anywhere, whether it is home or it is an educational set up, their curiosities especially about physiological changes and sexuality remain unanswered. The teen years can be tough for both parents and the child. Adolescents are under stress to be liked, do well in school, get along with their family and make important life decisions. Most of these pressures are unavoidable and worrying about them is natural. Even cultural barriers in Indian society sometimes do not allow children/adolescents speak about personal and emotional problems with their parents and become dependent on peer group members. Hence, sometimes there is a possibility of misguidance. At the same time, during this phase a good number of them develop a tendency to take risk, which sometimes results into early pregnancy, involvement in legally deviant social activities and dependence on substance. Deb (1991) found that peer groups mostly influenced the adolescents who are dependent on drugs. In another study Deb (1995) observed that about 15.0 per cent of Kolkata teenagers are suffering from serious 'identity crisis' and 'high role confusion' in social life. Rutter (1983) stated that
various aspects of school and classroom climate have important effects on youngsters’
learning and achievement especially the way teachers interact with students. Grunbaum
et al., (2000) found that loneliness was associated with marijuana use. Less coping
ability, church attendance, and low educational aspirations were significantly
associated with cocaine use. Results of one cross-cultural study clearly indicate that
social pressures were much more important in determining intention to smoke
cigarettes among the New Zealand sample than among the US sample (Newman et al.,
1982).

Premarital unprotected sex exposes adolescents to the risk of sexually transmitted
diseases including HIV/AIDS. This apart, the deviant behaviour, over expectation of
parents, family violence, gap in parent-child relationship and un-fulfillment of curious
mind regarding different reproductive health issues also cause serious psychological
stress, which in turn affect the career development. A good number of adolescents
consciously or unconsciously indulge them into high-risk behaviour, which sometimes
affects their future adversely.

Regarding sexual behaviour, Hacker et al., (2000) found that 63.0 per cent of the
students in US have had sexual intercourse. Of these, 35.0 per cent were consistent
contraceptors and 65.0 per cent were inconsistent. Students believed that having more
information on pregnancy and birth control, education about relationships, parental
communication, improved contraceptive access, and education about parenting realities
would prevent teen pregnancy. Huerta-Franco and Malacara (1999) observed that
family problem solving and roles were also associated with adolescent's sexual activity.
These findings support the notion that effective environment within the family is a
factor in adolescent sexuality. In India, very few studies have been carried out on
sexual and addiction behaviour of adolescents.

Given this background the necessity of the study was reinforced to understand the
nature of risk behavior, psychological stress of adolescents and its relation with
different mental health variables. There were altogether six specific objectives and
twenty-six hypotheses. In order to achieve the objectives six psychological scales were
used. A group of 450 adolescents, 230 boys and 220 girls were covered in the study. The study has brought into picture the nature of risk behaviours adolescents of Kolkata city are involved in, their mental health in terms of their adjustment, psychological stress, mental depression, and nature of aggression. The picture has really been found to be varied; varied in terms of frequency of involvement, gender differences, age differences, differences in socio-economic level and even their pattern of family whether it is joint or nuclear.

**Adolescents and Risk Behavior:**

Taking into consideration the nature of risk behaviour the study unveiled that the common substances adolescents depend on are cigarettes and alcohol. Bidi and drug though calls for their attention does not take much of their interest. Boys and girls are addicted to some substance, but for most of the things boys have been found in greater number involved in, are the intake of bidi and cigarettes; and girls to those of drug and alcohol, among all those who have reported to be addicted to at least one substance. Bidi and Cigarettes are consumed in public while consumption of drugs and alcohol are still a private affair in the Indian Society. Girls find themselves to be more comfortable to such private consumption and have also been found to report the fear of smells from mouth out of Bidi and Cigarette smoking, which are less possible for drug and alcohol. Drugs had also been an element of experimentation for many. For high school student’s bidi and drug and for college goers’ cigar and alcohol are found to be common. But school and college goers do not show much difference in their practices. Bidi is very common among adolescents of low socio economic group while cigarettes among adolescents of high socio-economic group. In general, cigarette has been found to be a common source of addiction among all the groups.

The reason why an adolescent wants to attach himself/herself with addictive substance can be varied. The life style for adolescents has become such that they find themselves comfortable when attached to one such substance; even they report a feeling of sense of ‘grown up’ when they use the substances. A pressure from peers to conform to the most obvious aspects of peer culture, dating and smoking in parties and common
substance abuse reflects their intense curiosity about ‘adult like’ behaviour. So they dabble in alcohol, tobacco and the like. These minimal experimenters are headed for a life of dependence and addiction. They are psychologically healthy, sociable, and curious young people, in a society where substance use is commonplace, some involvement with drugs appear to be normal. It is to be remembered still, that drugs impair perception and thought processes, a single heavy dose can lead to permanent injury or death. And even using enough can impair their ability to meet schoolwork or other responsibilities. But those who are simply not experimenters are seriously troubled young people who are inclined to express their unhappiness through antisocial acts. Sometimes, it can have genetic roots, but a wide range of environmental factors promotes it, for example. In low socio-economic strata (SES), family mental health problems, parental and older sibling drug abuse, physical and sexual abuse, lack of parental warmth etc. The risk, however, remains when teenagers depend on alcohol and hard drug to deal with daily stress; they fail to learn responsible decision making skills and alternative coping techniques. The study has also found that they show adjustment problems including depression.

Premarital sexual (PMS) relationship is serious risk behaviour was found in 26.4 per cent adolescents. The findings of the present study are corroborated by two other local studies (Mitra, Prithvijit reported in The Times of India on March 8 and 30, 2006). Premarital sex is a serious moral issue confronting college students. Sexual temptations certainly exist in high school. Lamater et al., (1979) examined when do individuals first begin experimenting with sex and is there a fairly common order of activities in which adolescents proceeding toward intercourse? He found that the developmental sequence in which males and females engage in various sexual activities is remarkably similar. But once in college, students are more cut off from familial restrictions and parish supports. The way adolescents are found to be engaged in pre marital sex reveals the truth that adolescents and adults have become more liberal about the matter in recent times. Of course, in this regard media played a major role especially after taking liberalization policy by the Govt. of India. Now more and more adolescents in Kolkata city believe that sexual intercourse before marriage is all right, as long as two people
are emotionally committed to each other. But today the fear of sexually transmitted
diseases is also observed among many. This type of early and frequent sexual activity
is linked to personal, family, peer and educational variables. Those can be early
physical maturation, parental divorce, step family homes, large family size, no
religious involvement, weak parental monitoring, disrupted parent–child
communication, sexually active friends, poor school performance, lower educational
aspirations, and even a tendency to engage in norm violating acts. The findings of
some of the previous researchers corroborate the above observation (Huerta and
Malacara, 1999; Donnelly et al., 1999).

In another local study carried out by Deb et al., (2001) found that friendship with
opposite sex and falling in love is a very common phenomenon among adolescents in
Kolkata city, which clearly indicates the trend of changing values among adolescent
girls of Kolkata City. Deb et al., (2001) further stated that today's adolescent girls are
not submissive like the past generations especially about sexuality. Adolescent girls of
this generation are far more advance and open about their sexuality as most of them
feel that friendship with opposite sex and getting a special boy friend is healthy. In this
regard, quantitative data are supported by qualitative data and qualitative data also
reflect the mindset of target audience very clearly. Influence of western culture through
mass media could be one of the main factors behind changing outlook of today's
adolescents. The adolescent girls of Kolkata City further added that love does not affect
studies if both of them are confident and have faithful relation. So far as perception
about love and arranged marriage is concerned, most of the students clearly stated that
nothing specific can be said as to which type of marriage is good. Here also qualitative
data justified the student's argument. However, the adolescent girls in the industrial
countries are more advance in regard to sexuality and substance abuse (Hacker et al.,
2000; Grunbaum et al., 2000).

In a study on Chinese population, Lin et al., (2005) found that alcohol intoxication was
associated with sexual risk behaviors. Okafor (2005) studying sexual risk behaviour
among undergraduate students concluded that economic reasons are a major factor that
encourages risky sexual behaviour in the female, and the urge to have sex and curiosity, tended to favour such sexual experimentation in the male.

The present study has found that premarital sex (PMS) is more common among adolescents of high socio-economic group, they are subjected to greater liberty and free mixing, parties, dices, pubs and get-togethers. The boys and girls get much opportunity to get close to one another and their increased curiosity about sexual matters takes them to pre-marital sexual relationship. Another very important factor related to PMS is children's queries about sex matters, which remain unanswered. In this regard, parents, teachers, older siblings could have been their best source of knowledge about those matters.

Risk behaviours are further aggravated when the adolescents do not make use of any precautionary measures. The possibilities of HIV/AIDS, however, crop-up with unprotected sex. The study found that the partners involved in physical relationship are varied—from friend, relatives to commercial sex workers (CSW). As overall picture reveals that as high as 66.4 per cent of adolescents who have reported of having PMS with their friends, only 4.0 per cent with commercial sex workers (CSW) and 25.6 per cent with relatives including uncle (paternal and maternal), siblings, cousins etc. High school students have found to be more involved with friends, which may be attributed to the fact that they get more scope to interact freely, than the other groups. Adolescents rely more on their peer groups or friends to maintain the confidentiality of their relationships. The friends are at the same mental state as they are in. When the world tries to discipline them, the friends do only give them consent to whatever unruly conduct they want to pursue. Across every group, irrespective of sex, ages, SES, level of education friends have been found to be most frequently reported for sexual partners except few cases. Further, it has been found that adolescents of 17-18 years age groups having physical relationship with close relationship (68.0 per cent) owing to ample chances to be in physical relationships when both the parents are working, again where there is a joint family and the home is crowded. None of the groups have shown much involvement with commercial sex workers, owing to their delicate age and social
unacceptability and fear of being caught. Only 9.0 per cent adolescents have reported to have sexual intercourse with the commercial sex workers. Those who are involved in sexual relations with the commercial sex workers come from the age group of 18-19 years, i.e., the eldest of the three age groups.

Visiting porn websites, reading porn magazines and engaging in dirty chats over the internet has been found to be a pretty common affair among the adolescents under study. Overall 64.7 per cent adolescents involved in the same, irrespective of sex, level of education (school and college), socio-economic status, age groups and pattern of family. Most of them have reported to be frequent users of porn websites. Internet today is the most sought for source of communication among adolescents. They engage in establishing friendship across the globe through internet. Aided with web cameras they can see a friend sitting at the farthest corner of the globe and express and communicate all their unhealthy intentions which they dare not reveal to a friend in the classroom or next door. Such repressed desires find their fullest expression when their identity is veiled. Chatting is one of the easiest modes of relaxation one can have, and when adolescents find the opportunity to open their minds of curiosity about any topic on earth, even it is as undesirable as discussing about sexual intercourse; they make the fullest use of it. Thus, internet quenches their thirst for knowledge on every ground. It is very common that adolescents have come back failing to get any good answer to the ample questions that perturb their mind. Parents have intelligently shut their mouth up by saying such things as "It is not the right time for you to know this ..." or "don't discuss such unhealthy topics with any body, people will think bad about you". The best option that remains available to the adolescent then is the internet followed by other sources like magazines, books, friends, etc which are filled with the best information the adolescents usually look for. Unfortunately often such sources do not carry very correct information. Adolescents start relying on that information which in the long run may leave undesirable impact on the adolescent’s healthy development – both physical and psychological. He may develop distorted perception about sexuality, and deviations from those in reality can make them maladjusted when they become adults. Boys in general have been found to be slightly more frequent regular users of
these sources. Girls though only less in number have a greater interaction which their parents and get a scope to discuss their issue with family members than boys are able to.

**Sexual Abuse: A Predisposition to Risk Behavior**

Sexual abuse is again an area where adolescents are still prey to. Though child abuse is a very common form of abuse prevalent in the Indian society, a large number of adolescents are also the victims of the same. The study explored that about 17.2 per cent adolescent boys and 26 per cent adolescents girls are sexually abused. Girls have been found to be mostly abused by cousins. In such cases crowded home, less personal apace and on the top increased sexual curiosity of the sibling plays the maximum role. An overall 34.0 per cent of boys and girls report being abused by a sibling. Again 13.0 per cent of both boys and girls have reported having abused by a friend of same or opposite sex. Close family members like aunt, uncle, grandfather and brothers in law have abused them. As high as 36.2 per cent adolescents of 16 – 17 years age group have reported being abused by close relations/ family members. For unknown persons as abusers, all categories have reported the least. And surprisingly enough, 48.0 per cent adolescents from 17 – 18 years age group and 46.0 per cent from 18 – 19 years age group reported having sexually abused, received abuse from teachers, servants, liftemen, milkmen etc. In all the cases the abuser has been a male. They reported of being abused from middle childhood, but more at adolescence. For most victims the abuse begins early in life and continues for many years. The findings of another study corroborate with the findings of the present study (Trickett and Putnam, 1998).

So far as nature of sexual abuse is concerned, findings reveal that vaginal sex is the most common, followed by oral genital contact, fondling and forced stimulation by the adult. Victims are unable to protest even to known abusers. A personal conversation of the researcher with the respondents has revealed that adolescents who have had a sexual abuse sometime in life have an inclination toward smoking, show aggressive behaviour unnecessarily, though they realize their fault later, and also feel depressed at times without any apparent reasons. Abusers make the child accompany him in a
variety of ways, including deception, bribery, verbal intimidation and physical force. They blame the abuse on the willing participation of the seductive younger. Yet children are not capable of making a deliberate, informed decision to enter into a sexual relationship even at older ages, they are not free to say ‘yes’ or ‘no’. Sometimes offenders pick out adolescents who are unlikely to defend themselves – an uncle pick up a niece very much knowingly that she would never say a word against him; a sister will not be able to complain against the older cousin.

**Adolescents and Media Use:**

The study found that the adolescents procure information on sex both incidentally and intentionally. But there is a variation of this behaviour when seen across age, socio economic status, and level of education, sex and even pattern of family they are members of. Adolescents were found to be very keen at procuring information on sex to quench their thirst about those matters. They have been found to depend maximally on the media as a source of information. When adolescents use media, incidental exposure to substantial amounts of information about sex frequently occurs. But seeking sexual information intentionally was also found to be very common. Thus media could be thought to play an important role in shaping adolescents’ beliefs about, attitude toward and behaviours related to sex. This period of life, in virtually all adolescents is marked as a period for intensely getting focused on information about sex whether that incidental, intentional or both.

Adolescents from nuclear families report it to be more incidental; those from 17-18 years age group say, its greatly intentional, maximum college students say its incidental. The media this day is very much responsible for incidental procuring of sex information by adolescents. Generally television portrays sex as pleasurable and carefree, rarely referring to associated risks, responsibilities or consequences. Popular teen shows are most likely to portray the risks and consequences of sexual activity, but it is a matter of fact that although these programs with teenage characters often depict emotional and social consequences of sex (e.g. humiliation) disappointment, guilt, anxiety, rejection), physical consequences of sex (e.g. unwanted pregnancy, STDs) are
far less common. The potential for media influence is strengthened – often by default in the absence of other socializing influences. Adolescents have been found to report about their unprecedented access to entertainment media featuring abundant, widely varied, on-demand information concerning sex and sexual behaviour. Adolescents’ high levels of exposure make both incidental and intentional learning about sex from media virtually inevitable. Whether exposure is intentional or inadvertent and whether exposure is sought for the purpose of acquiring knowledge, exploring alternatives or experiencing pornography the internet has emerged as a significant resource for sex-related content.

Adolescents and Psychological Stress and Depression:

The study has found the adolescents of both the sexes, i.e., boys and girls are slightly stressed, but there exists no significant difference between the stresses of the two sexes. College goers have been to be more stressed than school going adolescents. They have attributed their stress to be generated mainly from career worries, too much parental expectation, and a choice they have to make in choosing a vocation, even whether to study further or look for a job. This is a very crucial phase, when they themselves are actual decision makers and they are well aware of the fact that they will be responsible for any decision they take. Again adolescents from low SES have been found to be least stressed, while those from high and middle SES show similar levels of stress. The group identified as a high-risk group, who are involved in at least in drug abuse and premarital sex, are found to be more stressed than those who are from low risk group; even there has been found to be a significant difference in their levels of stress. As per age groups are concerned, the age group of 18 – 19 years is the most stressed. This is the highest age group among the three. Again adolescents from nuclear families are found to be more stressed than those from joint families. Some stressful events during adolescence are generated by symptoms and other characteristics of adolescents themselves. Some of the risks associated with stressful events can be self generated and contribute to a vicious cycle in which stress may trigger initial behaviour and emotional problems, which in turn lead to more stress. Even there are stresses, which are linked with a particular type of psychological problem (e.g. depression) via a
particular mediating process (e.g. ruminative coping) in the context of a particular moderating variable (e.g. female gender, adolescent age). As in the present study, girls are found to be more depressed than boys, college going adolescents were more depressed than school going adolescents, those from high SES, and also those from high risk group suffered from greater depression. Adolescents of age group 18 – 19 years suffer from greater depression than those of 16 – 17 years and 17 – 18 years age groups. Again adolescents from nuclear families have greater depression than those from joint families.

It is true that biological and environmental factors lead to depression; the precise blend differs from one individual to the next. In general, feeling sad, frustrated, and hopeless about life, accompanied by loss of pleasure in most activities and disturbance in sleep, appetite, concentration and energy – is the most common psychological problem in adolescence. Depressive symptoms increase sharply with puberty. They occur twice as often in adolescent girls as in adolescent boys – a difference sustained throughout life span. And if allowed to persist, depression seriously impairs social, academic, and vocational functioning (Nolen - Hoek Sema, 2000). Depressed youths usually display a learned helpless attribution style, in which they view positive academic and social outcomes as beyond their control. Consequently myriad events can speak depression in a vulnerable young person – i.e. failing something important, parental divorce, or the end of a close relationship or romantic relationship. In developing countries, rates of depression are similar for males and females and occasionally higher for males (Culbertson, 1997). Even in countries with a gender difference, its size varies considerably. Research suggests that stressful life events and gender type, coping style account for girls' higher rates of depression. Early maturing girls are especially prone to depression particularly when they face other stressful life events (Ge, Conger and Elder, 2001a). The gender intensification of girls experienced at puberty often strengthens passivity dependency – maladaptive approaches to the challenges encountered (Nolen–Hoeksema and Gisgus, 1994). Consistent with this explanation, teenagers who identify strongly with “feminine” traits are more depressed, regardless of their sex (Hast Thompson, 1995; Wichstrom, 1999). As girls experience more
stressful life events – due to learned helplessness, gender intensification, reduced power, in relationship with romantic partners, and a ‘feminine’ orientation that can lead them to subordinate their own needs to those of others – they develop an overly reactive physiological stress response (Young and Korzun 1999). College going adolescents are also found to be more depressed than high school going adolescents as teachers and parents tend to minimize the seriousness of teenagers’ problems. At colleges, adolescents are prey to a lot of demands, which are placed upon them by their parents, peers, their selves and also the society in general. They can now better understand their responsibilities, failing to listen to their hearts, unable to accept the control from societal agents they turn out to be depressed ‘even parents take their depression as a necessary con-combatant of their age – because of the popular stereotype of adolescence as a period of storm and stress. Many adults interpret adolescent depression as just a passing phase.

Adolescents and Adjustment:

Adjustment refers to a state of complete equilibrium between an organism and its environment, a state wherein all needs are satisfied and all organismic functions are being carried out smoothly. It is one of the components of sound mental health. Research has shown that secure attachment to parents facilitates children’s adaptive adjustment. A sense of security in life fosters adaptive exploration and buffers children from stress. In contrast, children who experience their parents as unavailable, siblings and peers as rejecting, surroundings as unresponsive or rejecting become insecurely attached, and avoid relying on any significant member of their life for support. Adolescence is froth with a lot of adjustments, which the child does as he learns to grow and adapt to the changes around him. A lot of factors such as parenting, peer pressure and physical development of the child are involved in shaping the adjustability of the child.

In the present study it has been found that adolescents were found to possess a moderately good level of adjustment with slight variations across groups. It is traditionally believed and accepted that girls ought too more adjustable than boys in
every pace of life. In the present study too, girls have been found to possess greater adjustment than boys. It is very interesting to see that girls suffer from greater depression also. It could be because of the fact that they were found to be less aggressive and more depressed, they have learnt to adapt to the life events as they come to them, with least confrontation. Again, high-school students showed adjustment slightly better than college students. College students are a group worried, tensed and open to uncertainty about their career and future prospects. They lose temper when things go wrong, they are more into rebellious nature and do not want to adjust much with their surroundings. Their level of aggression is also quite high as has been found from the study. As per SES, middle SES was the best-adjusted group among the three, as compared to high SES and low SES. The adolescents belonging to the middle socio-economic group know that whatever situation comes they have to face it, neither can they look forward to prospects always as those from high SES can do, nor can they lose all hopes and take shelter to learned helplessness as those from low SES. They have learnt adjusting to the entire pro and cons of life. Their aggression is also the lowest between the other two groups. So they face every challenge of their life courageously. Greater percentage of girls exhibited better adjustment as compared to that of boys, a total of 37.2 per cent boys and girls exhibited good adjustment.

Adolescents and Aggressive Behaviour:

While probing into aggression in the present study, it has been found that boys exhibited greater aggression than girls and the two groups have been found to differ significantly. Again, college students were found to exhibit greater aggression than high school students; this group has also been found to differ significantly with respect to aggression. On a SES level, low SES group was found to exhibit greater aggression than high and middle SES groups. Greater percentage of girls (79.5 per cent) was found to exhibit high aggression as compared to boys (43.5 per cent), a total of 60.5 per cent boys and girls were aggressive. It is interesting enough that the number of girls with high aggression is more prevalent than boys but the mean aggression scores for boys were higher than the girls.
Aggression, however, has attracted more research attention than any other sex difference. It has generally been noted that boys are more overtly aggressive than are girls. But it is also a matter of fact that preschool and school age girls exceed boys in another form of hostility—relation aggression. Children's who violate their gender role in the realm of aggression may be targets of especially intolerant and rejecting feedback from adults and peers—reactions that compound their adjustment difficulties, when spoken to adolescents, they have reported of having received physical punishments from parents which had encouraged them to adopt the same tactics in their own relationship. Parents are less likely to interpret fighting as aggressive when it occurs among boys. The stereotype reflected in the saying—"Boys will be boys" may lead many adults to overlook male hostility unless it is extreme. This sets up conditions in which it is encouraged, or at least tolerated (Contrary and Ross, 1985). In view of these findings, it is not surprising that school age boys expect less parental disapproval and report feeling less guilty for overt aggression than to girls (Perry et al., 1989). Furthermore, arguing between husband and wife, which is another stimulating aggression among all family members, more often triggers hostility in boys.

Another important variable related to adolescent aggression is media. Media depictions of violence affect behaviour by influencing the development of cognitive schemas that serve as rough guides to action depending on cues operating in some subsequent situation; even a wide array of message characteristics affect individual interpretation of given depiction. As a matter of fact, although most young people decline in teacher and peer related aggression in adolescent, the teenage years are accompanied by a rise in delinquent acts. The trend of obtained adolescent aggression can be attributed to the fact that the desire for peer approval increases antisocial behaviour, and aggressive behaviour among the teenagers. Over time peers become less influential, moral reasoning increases, and young people enter social contexts (such as work, etc.), that are less contusive to law breaking.
Conclusion:

In fine, it may be concluded that the trend of the involvement in risk behaviour among the adolescents of a metropolitan city like Kolkata, India is quite alarming. Social cultural factors and advancement in the information technology as well as the liberalization policy of the Government had added to the incidences. The study revealed that considerable amount of risk behaviour (smoking, drinking, watching porn movies, websites, going to red-light areas etc) was practised by almost all the adolescents in the present study and about 30 per cent of them practised high-risk behaviour such as involvement into premarital sexual relations and intake of intravenous (IV) injection. Taking IV injection was more common among boys (4.3 per cent) than girls (1.9 per cent) though the overall incidence was low; and was found more among college students (3.5 per cent) than high school students (2.6 per cent). Incidences of engagement into premarital adolescent sex relation was found more among boys (30.4 per cent) than girls (21.7 per cent) and more among college students (32.5 per cent) than high school students (20.2 per cent). There was a substantial amount of stress, maximum being career stress, stress due to high parental expectations, somewhat from peer pressure and also increased urges of establishing a sexual relationship with a hetero sexual person. As far as mental health aspects of the adolescents of Kolkata city was concerned, the study revealed that aggression was moderate among the overall sample and adjustment was moderate; and depression was quite high. With special reference to high-risk group identified in the study, it was found that stress was higher among them, aggression was found less, while depression was greater among high-risk group as compared to low-risk group; and finally adjustment was lower among high-risk group. Interestingly enough, the difference between the mental health variables were all found to be significantly different between the two groups (high-risk and low-risk). Difference in the mental health variables have been observed when adolescents were compared with respect to gender, educational
standard, age, socio economic background and pattern of family they came from. Thus, there was definitely a difference in the mental health variables of the adolescents with high-risk behaviour as compared to that low-risk group.

**Recommendations:**

It is suggested that reproductive health and value-oriented education should be introduced in the educational institutions. Previous studies also demonstrate the importance of health education and health promotion programmes in educational institutions (Grunbaum et al., 2000; Deb, 2000). However, during the intervention programme in the educational institutions, special emphasis should be given on the followings issues:

- Sensitizing the parents to create an environment in the family so that adolescents feel like sharing their personal, emotional and other problems with parent freely and frankly.

- Sensitizing the parents to listen to the voices of adolescents regarding various issues, which will help to develop barrier free communication and less chance to be dependent on peer group members.

- Providing basic information to both parents and adolescents, separately and/or together depending upon the situation about various aspects of reproductive health like physiological changes, myths and misconceptions about body shape and sexuality, importance of taking nutritious food in proper quantity, information on health and hygiene, consequences of risk behaviours of premarital sexual relationships like those of teenage pregnancy, HIV/AIDS and other psychological consequences of risk behaviour; in this way provide them career guidance.

- It is advised to develop small leaflet and/or booklet containing all the basic information about the above issues for sharing the same with the parents as well.
as with adolescents, as this reinforcement approach of sharing information was found to be beneficial in a number of previous studies.

- It is suggested that school authority should take help of a professional psychologist and medical professional for implementation of the proposed steps.

Suggestions for Future Research:

The issue that has been addressed in the present study is a burning social problem in the Indian society; frequent reports on high-risk behaviours are noticed in different parts of the country. The issue is very complicated and the present study could not explore all the possible dynamics of high-risk behaviour of adolescents. On the basis of the findings and limitations of the present study coupled with given experience the following suggestions are forwarded for future researchers in better understanding of the other variables related to high-risk behaviour of adolescents.

1. Investigating family violence and its impact on children and adolescents as a predisposing factor of high-risk behaviour.

2. Understanding the relationship between parental disciplinary practices and parent-child relationship with high-risk behaviour among children and adolescents.

3. Relationship between the role and influence of various disciplinary measures taken by educational institutions, role of value education and having a perfect role model in life, with risk behaviours among children and adolescents.

4. Personality profile of the adolescents involved in high-risk behaviour.

5. Investigating the nature of risk behaviour among out-of-school adolescents and its relationship with their psychological, social and economic variables.

6. Probing into the relationship between level of academic performance in schools and colleges with risk behaviour and high-risk behaviour.