Chapter 1
Introduction
INTRODUCTION

In recent years there has been growing interest in different stages of child's development. One stage is identified as "adolescence" when the child moves on and prepares for adulthood. This is a period between childhood and adulthood, broadly spanning the biological age of 12 to 20 years, a period which is crucial for the formation of values, attitudes and behaviour and the individual is supposed to adapt and adjust childhood behaviour to culturally acceptable adult form. Adolescence thus becomes a phase of life beginning in biology and ending in society (Peterson, 1988).

Various researches have strongly supported the association between parental practice and psychological adjustment. Larson and Richard (1994) in their book "divergent realities" commented that "close relationship have become the very purpose of families". Having positive close relationships is seen as the essence of a good family. Children grow up healthier when they have warm relationship with their parents.

A number of studies have been conducted in this area. It has been found that effective parenting enhances self confidence (Cheung and Lau 1985; Noller and Callon 1991), social competence and well being, better emotional adjustment and physical health (Carson et al., 1999; Ameerjan 1994; Wrubel, et al.,1981),better social and communicative skills (Bhushan 1993), warm close relationships with friends and romantic partners (Zahn and Smith,1992), developed social skills such as conflict resolution and intimacy (Engels et al., 2001). It acts as a buffer from anxiety, depression and emotional distress
associated with the transition (Cohen and Beckwith, 1996; Stern and Zevon, 1990). Positive communication, openness and less problems with parents (Bhushan and Shirali, 1993), high achievement motivation (Suman and Umapthy, 1997) and enhanced school success, educational achievement and academic performance (Sheikh and Krishnan 1994; Aggarwal 1990; Forehand et al., 1986) are some of the results of effective parenting.

Another important direction of research which appears to have bearing on this aspect of the problem is, studies done on the conceptualization of coping and its relevance with adjustment.

Since adolescence is a period of transition from lower to higher stages of activities or functions (Hurlock, 1972), major developmental changes occur which are perplexing to adolescents and demands -

- Adjustment to the physical changes of puberty and to the flood of new impulses brought in by sexual maturity.
- Understanding emotions and coping with intense uncontrollable and irrational emotions related to transitions such as anger, jealousy, love, fear and anxiety.
- Development of independence from parents or other caretakers.
- Establishment of effective social and working relationship with same and opposite sex peers.
- Preparation for vocation.
- Development of a system of values and a sense of identity.
These demands are overtaxing for adolescents and require enough coping resources for maintaining healthy functioning (Garg, 2002).

Moreover, sometimes parent-child relationship could conflict in many ways due to faulty parenting practices. Thus, parents have to keep a striking balance between the development of individuality and self-reliance of the adolescent on one hand and a sense of connection and parental guidance on the other. When there is an effective combination of cohesion and separation in the family, their adolescent's adjustment becomes healthy.

Several researches share the general hypothesis that parent-adolescents interaction that encourages differentiation and also sent a message of acceptance and connection facilitates positive outcome including healthy identity, perspective taking skills, ego development and self esteem (Hauser et al., 1984; Eccles, et al., 1991; Allison and Sabatelli, 1988).

Variables like gender, age, educational levels of adolescents have been found to be important determinants of various aspects of adjustment.

Age reflects not only the length of time one has lived but different age states reflects different phases of physical, psychological and social consciousness. In this respect younger and older adolescent group may reflects certain distinctiveness in adjustment pattern.

Education is of course one of the most important condition which influences the mental and attitudinal make up of the individual and thereby influences adjustment.
Gender differences also reflect both biologically as well as socially routed differences amongst the two sexes. Social roles and role expectations influences the life perspectives, cognitions and attitudes of man and woman in different ways. Therefore, gender is definitely an important variable to be considered in matter of studying adjustment pattern.

The study tries to explore whether parenting practice and coping influences adjustment pattern among adolescents. Furthermore, certain socio demographic variables namely age, gender and education also forms an important concern of our investigation.

**Characteristics of adolescent stage**

The term adolescence comes from Latin verb, “adolescere” which means to grow or ‘to grow to maturity’. Experts vary on the exact years of adolescence. Some experts have broadly divided the age 12 to 20 years as adolescent years (even though an individual today is legally regarded an adult at the age of 18), the ‘adolescent’ features are held to generally continue more or less till 20 (Hurlock, 1981, pp.222). It is falling within this broad age-group that sub-stages are classified. Some call these in terms of early and late adolescents while others call them simply as periods of “adolescence” and “youth” (Keniston, 1970). The basis of such classification being noticed in many facets of development that an individual undergoes in this period ranging from physical changes, cognitive development, social cognition, development of personality/self and of social relationship etc. The early adolescence thereby
is generally regarded as a time of transition and of significant changes, while late adolescence is regarded as more of a time of consolidation when the acquired characteristics get more established.

Adolescence being a transitional stage, when a person is regarded neither child nor adult, requires a lot of adjustment. The process of adjustment whether personal, social, economic or psychological, assists the adolescents to survive better in society. The level and feasibility of adjustment depends on the coping strategies of an individual. During this process, the adolescent is likely to experience stress in life. Moderate stress helps in establishing coping mechanism and encourages his/her progress, while higher or lower stress hinders and at times even affect adversely. This is the period when parents and teachers play an important role in the adjustment of adolescent.

In addition some extraneous social factors such as economic conditions, parental employment and cultural factor have their own impact, either directly or indirectly on the adolescent's behaviour. This work is an attempt to understand the impact of parenting practices and coping behaviour on adjustment pattern among adolescents and also to gauge its impact with reference to different variables.

Adolescence is generally associated with certain universal concomitants. These are regarded as heightened emotionality, rapid sexual maturation, changes in the interest and the roles, changes in behaviour pattern and values.

The ambivalence in adolescence about the change makes it appear as a difficult developmental period. These may be on account of number of reasons
attributable to the earlier period of childhood. In a person’s life what has happened before will have its mark on the present and the future. As Osterrieth (1969) has explained, “the psychic structure of the adolescent has its roots in childhood and many of its characteristics that are generally considered as typical of adolescence appear are already present during late childhood”. In childhood, problems are mostly sorted out by parents and teachers, giving the child enough cushions which are eventually withdrawn in the period of adolescence.

Besides, no matter how strong the adjustment had been in the childhood and how perfect his/her emotional and social adaptation had been at that stage, the adolescence is regarded to have its own set of problems in preparing an individual for an adult life. Further, the individual might not be otherwise lacking in capacities to cope but with the trail of problems associated with his/her personal development, a person confronts at this stage might weaken his capacities to cope. As Freud, A has explained, “many failures, often with tragic consequences in these respects are due not to the individual’s incapacity as such but merely to the fact that such demands are made on him at a time in life when all his energies or engaged otherwise, in trying to solve the major problem related for him by normal sexual growth and development”. (Freud, A. 1969)

This is compounded with adolescent’s assertion of autonomy and individuality by which he demands the right to cope with his own problems in his own ways and rejects interference from any side. Autonomy is considered as one of the important determinants of personality formation. According to
Hill and Holmbeck, (1986); Steinberg and Silverberg (1986), an adolescent tries to establish himself as separate self governing individual. Autonomy has vital emotional and behavioural components that urge an adolescent to make decisions independently by carefully weighing one's judgement and making choices for course of action.

An adolescent's autonomy might get promoted by emotional detachment from parents which could eventually prove to be helpful for young persons. Still, autonomy achieved in the context of warm, supportive parent child link leads to high self esteem, self-reliance, work orientation and academic competence. Unsupportive parents may at times cause a poor psychological adjustment in the adolescent's life (Lamborn and Steinberg, 1993).

The adolescence with these varied features is thereby widely accepted as a "problem age". But one could at the same time see that the problem ascribed on account of uncertainties and ambivalence of adolescent life do not always have a negative effect on the individual. For instance, one such problem highlighted in this period is over the young person's role confusion, his status being vague and not established at that stage. This very ambiguous state could be advantageous to the person giving him/ her options to try different lifestyles and to decide over patterns of behaviour, values and attitudes that might meet the need best (Gunter, and Moore, 1975).

Besides, the distinction of adolescence as a problem age might also be specific to a certain culture. As the experience of societies in industrialized western world would not have been the same in the pre-modern world.
similarly the features characterizing stages in life could not be extended to all cultures unaffected by modernity. For instance: there would be obvious differences in the experience of adolescents of the villages of Asia and Africa, where even as children of the age 6 or 7 are expected to work and assume adult life roles. With the need for children in undeveloped societies to perform different social tasks in childhood, there could hardly be a total separation between childhood and adulthood, as in industrialized countries. Besides, in India with its large diversity and culture, relatively less affected by modernity, the phase identified as "adolescence" with its western characterization might not be applicable always, but there definitely will be lot of similarities with the urban, upper-middle class group affected by modernity and more so with the liberalization process.

**Biological perspective of adolescence**

Adolescence is considered as a distinct stage marked by significant biological change. Hall, G. S. (in 1904) posited that humans develop in stages: Infancy (birth to age 4), Childhood (4-12), Adolescence (12 to mid 20s), and Maturity (Dusek, 1996). He saw adolescence as a period of "storm and stress" (SandS). The view holds crises on adolescence on account of psychological changes in body structure of function. Parents, peers, teachers and society might exert considerable pressure on the adolescents to grow up during adolescence. Coleman (1978, as cited in Dusek, 1996) clarified that various stresses in adolescence do not occur at the same time. Rather, adolescents deal
with one or two stressful events, cope with the situation, and then deal with other stressful situations. The peak age for stressful situations varies. Coleman's view implies that adolescence is not a relatively short period of time (i.e. it lasts six, seven, 10 or more years for some people) and adolescence is not any more or less stressful than any other developmental stage. Some adolescents may have very difficult and stressful experience, but this might not always be the case. Hence, adolescence seems to represent a series of smoothly evolving changes in development.

This view has been contested as being unsupported by convincing scientific evidence. There has not been much of evidence to support the idea of emotional instability during adolescence nor sufficient research carried out in this direction that could indicate in definite terms dramatic changes in personality or social relations (Dusek, 1996).

Gender differences in the rate of biological growth may spell differences in adult expectations for acceptable behaviour of adolescent females and males. For example, young girls often are expected to behave more like adults than are boys of the same age. Similarly, the timing of maturation, whether one is an early or late maturer, influences social interaction with parents, other adults such as teachers, and peers. Early physical maturers are often treated as more socially and emotionally mature than they are, or than their age mates. This may result in unreasonable expectations being imposed on them, which may have lasting effects on their personalities.
The psychodynamic view

This view regards sexuality as one of the most important stressor during adolescence. Freud (1948) noted that this brings about a recurrence of the *oedipal* situation, which must be resolved through attraction to opposite sex peers. The increase in the sex drive creates stress and anxiety (fear of opposite sex and guilt of sexual feeling), which may call into play one or more defense mechanisms to restore equilibrium and protect the individual from experiencing anxiety. In the context of adjustment to sexual and biological maturation, Blos (1962, 1967, 1972, 1974 as cited in Dusek, 1996) divided adolescence into five stages. These are: latency (inhibition of sexual instincts), early adolescence (peer group relations get strengthened), adolescence (love relationships develop), late adolescence (identity: "who am I?"), and post adolescence (begins to adopt adult roles). It is during early adolescence when they adopt values opposed to those of parents. This may lead to delinquency behaviour, since parental views may no longer be seen as absolutely correct by adolescents. In late adolescence, self-esteem becomes more stable, and sex-role identity gets established leading to the emergence of a stable personality.

Psychosocial view

Erikson (1963, cited in Rice, 1999) shifted the emphasis of psychoanalytic theories of adolescence from sexual to psychosocial domain. He emphasized the acquisition of ego identity and the sense of ‘who’ and ‘what one is’ and the cultural determinants of development. He viewed development
within a series of psychosocial stages that are in part biologically determined. Associated with each of Erikson's eight stages of development is a crisis, which is simply a psychosocial task that is encountered. He believes that there is a disruption of identity during adolescence resulting from both physical and social factors (such as increasing emphasis on making educational decisions and beginning to consider future occupations) that forces the adolescent to consider alternatives. Each crisis then involves conflict and has two possible outcomes that is, either the adolescent faces 'role confusion' or he achieves 'identity foreclosure'. During adolescence, one begins to integrate various roles he/she plays in meaningful and constructive ways as one prepares for adulthood. Havighurst, (1951) believes that the developmental tasks of any given stage are sequential in nature: that is, each task is a prerequisite for each succeeding task. The optimal time for each task to be mastered is, to some degree, biologically determined.

Marcia (1980), refined Erikson's view of identity. He saw identity as a continually changing organization of one's attitudes, values and beliefs. For him, the process of identity formation involves facing a crisis (a period of questioning and thinking) and making a commitment (adoption) to a set of values and beliefs that guides behaviour. Marcia identified four identity statuses based on whether one has faced a crisis and made a commitment. Identity achievers experience a period of decision-making and are committed to an occupation and set of ideological values, which are all self-chosen. They accept both their strengths and weaknesses and are considered adaptive and
well adjusted. Foreclosures make commitments but their choices have been made by others. Identity diffusions have no commitment to an occupation or ideological stance, although they too may have had experienced a decision-making period. Moratoriums refer to those who are in crisis about occupation or ideological decisions. Marcia however agreed with Erikson that identity changes over time. As new roles and experiences are encountered, the identity may change. The identity crisis is continually present and subject to new resolutions.

The cognitive view

Qualitative changes occur during adolescent years in thinking skills (abstract thinking ability), friendship/relations with peer, and moral thinking etc. These changes in the adolescents influence the manner they relate with other children and adults around them, help acquire views of the self change and behave according to social expectations.

Cognitive development reaches its peak during adolescence. Piaget (1952), argues that intelligence develops in a series of stages and it reflects the emergence of biological predispositions as well as cultural influences. Piaget's theory of intellectual development is further clarified by Selman's social cognition theory (1980), which states that adolescents have the ability to consider not only their own perspectives but also those of others. This is made possible through social cognition and social role taking skills.
The social view

The importance of environment in human development is emphasized by the Social Learning Theory (SLT). Taking Walters views on social learning (1959, 1963), Bandura (1969, 1973) elaborated his Social Learning Theory. The theory explains that environmental agents (parents, teachers, and peers) shape behaviour both by directly reinforcing desired behaviour and by providing models of socially appropriate behaviour. The adolescent may learn an entirely new behaviour by observing a model. For instance, a delinquent behaviour may be learnt (through modeling effect), while punishment/reward to the model might inhibit/disinhibit the delinquent adolescent from doing an act (inhibition/disinhibition effect). On the other hand, by observing the response to the model, the observer may encouraged/discouraged to demonstrate a similar behaviour which is already in his/her repertoire (response-facilitation effect). SLT does not support the idea that development occurs in a sequence of stages. Adolescent development is seen as a direct consequence of cultural conditioning and social expectations for certain kinds of behaviours. Mead (1950, 1953), argued that development differs from one culture to another because of differences in cultural institutions. According to him though individual and biological factors play a role in personality development, cultural contexts mainly define expected and allowable behaviour of adolescents and these exert a significant impact on the nature of adolescence. In different cultures, psychological and social changes are associated with behavioural expectations and different sanctioned behaviours.
within cultural contexts. Ruth Benedict’s theory of adolescent transition to adulthood (1938), provided further specification of cultural influence on adolescent development. She argued on the importance of differences and similarities in roles, children and adults are expected to play. A discontinuity in adolescent and adulthood roles produces emotional strain, which in turn produces conflict. However, cultural continuity produces a smooth and gradual growth from childhood to adulthood with relatively little conflict. She considered three dimensions of continuity vs. discontinuity important in understanding adolescent development, namely: 1) responsible vs. non-responsible role status, 2) dominance vs. submission, and 3) contrasted sexual roles. Since cultures vary in the degree of continuity in child-adult roles, the nature of transition from childhood to adulthood is expected to vary as well. In the western culture where children must relearn new behaviour and must unlearn childhood behaviour in order to become adults, transitions to adulthood are relatively more difficult than in other cultures where there is continuity in child-adult roles. For instance, among the pygmies of Kalahari desert, adolescence is not recognized as a separate stage in life, they are regarded as adults at puberty and ready not only to contribute economically to the general welfare but also to marry and become parents. (Shostak, 1981, quoted by Cole and Cole, 2001). One could also keep in mind the historical situation under which adolescence as a category in the lifespan of an individual emerged in the industrialized western world in early 20th century, by which time the concept of childhood and adulthood as separate stages in life became established.
Gender in adolescence

It is now increasingly held that the process of gender construction begins from infancy and by adolescence the consciousness gets strongly entrenched, depending off course on the nature of families and societies. Gender differences on account of biology had been strongly challenged in recent times. Most of the stereotypical attributes and roles linked to gender arise more out of cultural design than from biological endowment (Bandura, 1986; Beall and Sternberg, 1993; Epstein, 1997). This consciousness might lead to differences in gender in terms of different social roles and duties, spheres of action, and different system of rights which might be highly discriminative and unequal for genders. However in recent years, there has also been celebration of differences, regarded more enabling rather than oppressive for genders, if differences are not treated in the framework of inferiority-superiority. The sense of gender being a crucial consciousness for shaping life, its influence on the formative stage of adolescence would be thereby significant. The talents the adolescents cultivate, conceptions they hold of themselves and others, the socio-structural opportunities and constraints they encounter, and the social life and occupational paths they pursue are heavily prescribed by societal gender-typing.

Adolescence is a period of gender intensification and gender stereotyping of attitude and behaviour. (Basow and Rubin, 1999; Galambus, Almeida, and Peterson, 1990). This gender intensification hypothesis posits that behavioural, attitudinal and psychological differences between adolescent
boys and girls increase with and are result of increased socialization pressure to conform to traditional masculinity and feminine sex roles. Sex role denotes shared expectation for gender specific set of behaviours (Worell, 1981). As Hill and Lynch (1983) explains “the role that puberty plays in the differentiation of masculine and feminine characteristics may be that it serves as a signal to socializing others (parents, teachers, peers) that the adolescent is beginning the approach to adulthood and should begin to act accordingly, that is, in ways that resembles the stereotypical male or female adult”.

Here parents play an active role in setting the course of their children's gender development by structuring, channeling, modeling, labeling and reacting evaluative to gender-linked conduct. As children's verbal and cognitive capabilities increase, parents broaden the conception of gender by instructing their children about gender-linked styles of conduct and roles that extend beyond merely classifying objects, people, and discrete activities into male and female categories. Parental conversations with children are extended to emotions, and these discussions take different forms for sons and daughters (Dunn, Bretherton and Munn, 1987). It have been found that girls are encouraged to be nurturing and polite and boys to be assertive and independent (Huston, 1983; Zahn-Waxler, Cole and Barrett, 1991). Not only do mothers talk more to their daughters than to their sons, but they use more supportive forms of speech with their daughters than with their sons. Girls in families marked by traditional gender role attitudes were granted less personal freedom (Bumpus et al., 2001). It had also been found that becoming autonomous was
more stressful experience for girls than for boys (Beyers and Goossen, 1999; Lamborn and Steinberg, 1993); females had higher identity and lower intimacy scores and gave more decision explanations than males (Lacombe and Gay, 1998); females who were dating reported the most intense conflict with parents (Dowdy and Kliewer, 1998). Peer influence in the behaviour of early adolescence depends on the gender of the adolescent, and this modulates group identification and delinquent behaviour (Kiesner et al., 2002 and 2003).

Parents, in fact, actively create highly gendered learning environments at home. Also, children differ in the degree to which they adopt traditional or egalitarian styles of behaviour. Evaluation of parental influence requires tests of co-variation between parental practices regarding gendered conduct and their children’s gender conduct. The parents who practice equality in social, educational and other pursuits have children who are egalitarian in their gender orientation. Parents who espouse traditional gender orientations actively encourage and reward traditional gender-linked activities and pursuits in their sons and daughters (Blakemore, 1998; Caldera et al., 1989; Fagot, Leinbach, and O’Boyle, 1992; Katz, 1996; Katz and Boswell, 1986; Weisner and Wilson-Mitchell, 1990).

Parenting practice

Parenting is a biological and a social process (Lerner, Castellino, Terry 1995; Tobach and Schneila, 1968). It is a bidirectional relationship between members of two (or more), generations, that can extend to respective life span
of these groups; and may engage all institution within a culture (including educational, economic, political and social ones) (Ford and Lerner 1992). The key function of parenting is to raise the young person in as healthy manner as possible (e.g., see Bornstein, 1995). The parent’s role is to provide the child with a safe, secure, nurturant, loving and supportive environment, one that allows the offspring to have a happy and healthy youth; this sort of experience allows to develop the knowledge, values, attitudes and behaviours necessary to become an adult making a productive contribution to self, family, community, and society (Lerner, 1995). Thus, parents at this stage are supposed to play a key role in perpetuating a more congenial, happy, lucid, and warm atmosphere along with careful nurturing for their children (Erickson, 1974).

Parenting plays an important role in moulding an individual’s personality, as it affects in both the ways, positively or negatively as a slightly imbalance may spoil the harmonious growth of a child to a great extent. A well protected parenting on the part of both the mother and father, together or independently be equipped with the realism, love, acceptance, indulgence, moralism and discipline might be practiced for the convival growth of personality.

Parents vary in their rearing styles, in the direction in which they socialize their youth and in the type of relationship they have with and behaviours and emotions they show to their offsprings. A good deal of diversity is not only quite healthy but is, in fact necessary to maintain the richness of culture and experience that enhances human life. Parents in their
function influence virtually all facets of the youth's psychological and social functioning.

The pioneers in the field of parenting research Baldwin, A. L., Kalhorn, J. and Breeze, F. H. (1945), have classified the behaviour of parents towards their children into eight types:

1. Actively rejectant parents, who are consistently hostile, unaffectionate, disapproving critical and distant.

2. Nonchalant rejectant parents, who have the same basic dislike for and indifference to the child but who ignores him and are indifferent to what he does so long as he does not bother them.

3. Casually autocratic parents, who neither accept their children with understanding nor reject them with resentment.

4. Casually indulgent parents who are mildly indulgent and in general intolerant but rather haphazard.

5. Acceptant-indulgent parents, who show a deep emotional attachment to the child are unduly anxious about him, protect and baby him, identifying themselves so completely with him that they try to live their own lives over in his.

6. Acceptant-casual indulgent parents, who are sometimes just as indulgent as that in group 4 and 5 above, although less extreme, but whose indulgence is based on impulse and who do not identifying themselves with their child.
7. Acceptant-indulgent democratic parents, who are basically indulgent and believe in treating children as their own equals in a family democracy.

8. Acceptant-democratic parents, who are emotionally mature people and who believe in the participation of children in family discussions.

The most influential proposal about styles of child rearing has come from Baumrind, D (1973). In a landmark series Baumrind along with many others extend her work explaining child rearing style as a constellation of parenting behaviours that occur over a wide range of situations thereby creating a pervasive and enduring child-rearing climate. She gathered information on child rearing by watching parents interact with their preschoolers (Baumrind, 1971; Baumrind and Black, 1967).

Baumrind, in this context have also stated that parenting style captures two important elements of parenting, parental responsiveness (acceptance) and parental demandingness (control). Parental responsiveness refers to "the extent to which parents intentionally foster individuality, self regulation, supportive and acquiescent to children's special needs and demands" and parental demandingness refers to "the claims parents make on children to become the child who obeys them. Parents then categorizes according to whether they are high or low on parental demandingness and responsiveness and creates a typology of four parenting style-authoritative, authoritarian, permissive and uninvolved child rearing. Each of these parenting styles reflects different naturally occurring patterns of parental values, practices and behaviours and a
distinct balance of responsiveness and demandingness (Maccoby and Martin, 1983).

Psychologists have categories parenting styles into four categories namely (1) Authoritarian child rearing (high control and low acceptance). (2) Authoritative child rearing (high control and high acceptance). (3) Indulgent/Permissive child rearing (low control and high acceptance) (Baumrind. 1991, 1971; Cohen 1997; Patock-Peckham et al., 2001). (4) Neglectful child rearing (low control and low acceptance) (Adalbjarnardottir et al., 2001).

1. Authoritarian child rearing (high control and low acceptance):

Parents who use an authoritarian style are low in acceptance and involvement; children with authoritarian parents are often anxious and unhappy. When playing with peers children reared in an authoritarian climate react with hostility when frustrated. Like parents, they resort to force when they do not get their way. Boys, especially show high rate of anger, defiance and aggression while girls appear dependent, lacking in exploration, and overwhelmed in the face of challenging tasks (Baumrind 1967, 1971; Hart et. al: 1998, 2002). In adolescence, young people with authoritarian parents continue to be less well adjusted than those with authoritative parents (Steinberg et. al: 1994). Nevertheless because of parent's concern with controlling their child's behaviour, teenagers experiencing this style do better in school and are less likely to engage in antisocial acts than are those with undemanding parents (Baumrind, 1991; Kurdek and Fine, 1994).
2. Authoritative child rearing (high control and high acceptance):

The authoritative style is the most successful approach to child rearing. Authoritative parents are high in acceptance and involvement, warm, responsive, attentive, patient, and sensitive to child’s needs.

Authoritative parents engage in gradual, appropriate autonomy. They allow the child to make decisions in areas where he is ready to make choices. And when parent and child disagree, authoritative parents engage in joint decision making when possible. Their willingness to accommodate to the child’s perspective increases the chances that the child will listen to their perspective in situations where compliance is vital (Kuzynski and Lollis 2002, Russell, Mize and Bissaker, 2002).

Throughout childhood and adolescence authoritative parenting is linked to many aspects of competence. These include an upbeat mood, self control, persistence and cooperativeness during the preschool years and at older ages, responsiveness to parent’s view in social interaction and high self esteem, social and moral maturity, achievement, motivation and school performance (Kaisa Stattin and Nurmi, 2000; Mackey, Arnold and Pratt, 2001).

3. Indulgent/ permissive child rearing (low control and high acceptance):

The permissive style of child rearing is warm and accepting. But rather than being involved, such parents are overindulging or inattentive, children of permissive parents have great difficulty controlling their impulses and are disobedient and rebellious when asked to do something. The link between
permissive parenting and dependents, on achieving behaviour is especially strong for boys (Baumrind, 1971).

Permissively reared teenagers do less well academically, are more defiant of authority figures, and display more antisocial behaviours than do teenagers whose parents communicate clear standards for behaviours (Barber and Olsen, 1977; Baumrind, 1991; Kurdeck and Fine, 1994; Lamborn et al, 1991).

4. Neglectful/uninvolved child rearing (low control and low acceptance):

The uninvolved style combines low acceptance and involvement with little control and general indifference to issues of autonomy. Uninvolved parent's child rearing barely exceeds the minimum effort required to feed and clothe the child. As a result they may respond to the child's demands for easily accessible objects, but any parenting strategies that involved long-term goals, such as establishing and enforcing rules, about homework and social behaviour, listening to the child's point of view and providing guidance on appropriate choices, are weak and fleeting (Maccoby and Martin, 1983).

Adolescent's whose parents rarely interact with them, take little interest in their life at school and do not monitor their whereabouts show poor emotional self-regulation, self-esteem, low academics and school performance and frequent antisocial behaviour (Aunola, Stattin and Nurmi, 2000).
Effect of parental attitude on adolescents

The diversity that exists in parenting has pervasive implication for adolescent's development. Most of the adolescents who leads successful life, as they grow older come from homes where parents' attitude towards them were favorable and where a wholesome relationship exist between them and their parents. In this context Baumrind, 1991; Weiss et al., 1996 and Miller et al., 1993, have stated that children and adolescents whose parents are authoritative rate themselves as instrumentally competent than those whose parents are non authoritative. Also, Maccoby (1992) have found that authoritative parenting tend to result in children who are happy, capable and successful.

Parental acceptance on the other hand was found to be positively related to emotional competence (Mithas, 1997), whereas parental rejection makes children fearful, insecure, attention seeking, aggressive and lonely (Bandura and Walters, 1959).

In another study, Ojha et al., (1995) have found out that protective behaviour of both parents contributes positively while there rejective behaviour contributes negatively to self esteem. The evaluation of few studies related to carelessness revealed that the carelessness on the part of parents may grow the feeling of unwantedness (Bhardwaj, 1995; 1996). On the other hand, sometimes parents succumb to the child's slightest whims in terms of indulgence and make children spoilt, selfish, demanding, rebellious to authority and lack of responsibility (Levy, 1943; Coleman, 1970).
Furthermore, perceived parental rejection was also found to be associated with a few value system namely slight evasion, average dependence, selfishness, and slight degree of hate, greater fear and pragmatism, whereas perceived parental acceptance was found to be associated with slight fortitude, self reliance, less love and fear along with less idealism (Bharadwaj, 1998).

Thus, the analysis of the aforesaid studies indicates that parenting emerges as one of the most important factor that plays an effective role in the development of adolescent.

**Coping behaviour**

Coping is the process by which people try to manage the perceived discrepancy between the demands and resources they appraise in a stressful situation. Although coping efforts can be aimed at connecting or mastering the problem, they may also simply help the person alter his or her perception of a discrepancy, tolerate or accept the threat, or escape or avoid the situation. Thus, coping is said to primarily involve conscious style or strategies of responding to stressful or negative events (Billing and Moos, 1981; Folkman, 1984; Folkman and Lazarus, 1988).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) recognized three types of cognitive appraisal in the face of a stressful situation: Primary appraisal, secondary appraisal and reappraisal. In the first an individual evaluates the events in terms of its effect on his or her well being and gives meaning to the stressful events. Three main dimensions are believed to underlie primary appraisals: (1) Threat
Chapter 1

Introduction

(2) Challenge (3) Loss. (Cox and Ferguson, 1991: Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). Secondary appraisal is concerned with the identification and availability of coping resources to deal with threat, challenge or loss. Reappraisal is appraising the events again as new information becomes available.

How we cope with stressful events is believed to be an important mediator of the relation between stress and mental health outcomes (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984). The need for coping is sometimes a result of intrapsychic conflict and sometimes a result of environmental pressure. There are primary components to coping: (1) The ability to gain and process new information, (2) The ability to maintain control over emotions, and (3) The ability to move freely in one’s environment (White, 1974).

Coping strategies can be separated into two categories. The first category is positive coping skill or functional coping strategies. For example, ability to muster family support, social support, seeking salvation through religious involvement in physical exercises, and having creative outlets such as hobbies or games. While the second type of coping strategy is negative coping skills or dysfunctional coping strategies. For example, use of illegal drug use, alcohol abuse and promiscuous sexual behaviour.

Levy-Thors, Schiaffino and Zaleski, (1998) have argued that the transition to college stage is also connected with elevated anxiety, depression and family problems. College is a time where students are forced to develop new coping strategies in order to deal with the adjustment. It has been shown that failure to develop positive coping strategies has result in negative
outcomes such as drug use, sexual and alcohol abuse. Also, adolescence who receives little supports from their families took part in more risk taking behaviour and reported more stress than those students with adequate family support during college. In another study Holahan, Charles J., (1995) have found out that adolescents with high parental support, better adjusted and less distressed than were those with low parental support and was associated with psychological adjustment both directly and indirectly through a higher percent of approach coping strategies.

Coping is the process by which people try to manage the perceived discrepancy between the demands and resources they appraise in a stressful situation. Although coping efforts can be aimed at correcting or mastering the problem, they may also simply help the person alter his or her perception of a discrepancy, tolerate or accept the threat, escape or avoid the situation. Lazarus and Folkman, (1984).

The personality that each individual brings to a stressful event influences how he or she will cope with that event. Some personality characteristics make stressful situation worse, whereas others improve them.

Optimism

Positive thinking and an optimistic nature may lead the individual to cope more effectively with stress and thereby reduce the risk of illness (Scheier and Carver, 1985). In a study of college students, the measures of optimism, perceived stress, both at the beginning and end of the college was undertaken.
More optimistic students were less stressed and depressed and found with a stronger social support. They could positively reinterpret the stressful circumstance they encountered, which was how they could cope with the transition to the college (Brissette, Scheier and Carver 2002).

Optimism also promotes more active and persistent coping efforts, which may improve long term prospects for psychological adjustment and health (Segerstrom, Castaneda and Spencer, 2003). Scheir, Winraub and Carver (1986) examined the coping strategies typically associated with dispositional optimism and pessimism. In studies conducted with undergraduates given both the Life Orientation Test and a measure of coping, the researcher found that optimism was associated with more use of problem-focused coping, seeking of social support and emphasizing the positive aspect of a stressful situation. Pessimism in contrast associated with denial and distancing from the event, a focus directed on stressful feelings, and disengagement from the goal with which the stressor was interfering. Optimists also appear to size up stressful situations more positively and seem especially prone to making favorable secondary appraisals, namely that their resources will be sufficient to overcome the threat (Chang, 1998).

Negativity and stress

Certain people are predisposed by their personality to experience stressful events as intensely stressful, which may in turn, affect their psychological well being. This line of research has focused on psychological
state called negative affectivity (Watson and Clark, 1984). Individuals high in negative affectivity express distress, discomfort and dissatisfaction across a wide range of situations (Gunthert, Cohen and Armele, 1999). People who are high in negative affectivity are more prone to drink heavily (Francis, Fyer and Clarkin, 1986) and to engage in suicidal gestures or even suicide (Cross and Hirschfeld, 1986). In one study Fickova and Emilia 2002, have examined the impact of negative emotionality. It was suggested that coping with stressful situation and the preference of coping strategies in adolescents are influenced by positive/negative affectivity and negative emotionality. It was found that the girls and boys with high scores in trait positive affectivity prefer coping strategies focused on the problem. In high negative affectivity and emotionality they prefer to use mainly avoidance and emotion-focused strategies.

Coping style

It is a general propensity to deal with stressful event in particular way. Coping style are in a way also thought to be like personality traits in that these characterize an individual’s way of behaving in a particular fashion, but these could be more specific than personality traits as these come into play primarily when events become stressful.

Psychological control

Known Feeling that one can exert over stressful events have long been to help people cope effectively (Bandura, 1977; Taylor, Helgeson, Reed and Skokan, 1991; Thompson, S.C 1981). Perceived control is the belief that one
can determine one's own behaviour, influence one's environment and bring about desired outcomes. As may be apparent, perceived control is closely related to self efficacy, which is more of a perception than one has the ability to enact the necessary action to obtain a specific outcome in a specific situation (Bandura, 1977). So powerful are the effects of such psychological control that they have been used extensively in interventions to promote good health habits and to help people cope successfully with stressful events. Thus, when individual are able to perceived events in their environment as controllable, they are more likely to be successful (Benight et al; 1997). thus, the stress they experience is lessened, their distress is lowered, and even their physiological responses to stress get reduced.

**Avoidance versus confrontation**

Some people cope with a threatening event by using an avoidant (minimizing) coping style, whereas others use a confrontation (vigilant) coping style. People who cope with stress by minimizing or avoiding threatening events seem to cope effectively with short term threats (Wong and Kalonpeck, 1986). However confrontation strategies may be more successful if one focus on the information present in the situation rather than in one’s emotion (Suls and Fletcher, 1985).

People who using avoidance cope may not make enough cognitive and emotional efforts to anticipate and manage long term problems (Suls and Fletcher, 1985; Taylor, S. E. and Clark, 1986). In contrast the individual who
cope with threatening events through confrontation or vigilance may well engage in the cognitive and emotional efforts needed to deal with long term threats. In the short term, however, they may pay a price in anxiety and physiological reactivity (Miller, S. M. and Mangan, 1983; Smith, Ruiz and Uchino, 2000).

**Problem focused coping versus emotion focused coping**

Problem solving coping involves attempt to do something constructive about the stressful condition that are harming, threatening or challenging for an individual. Emotion-focused coping involves efforts to regulate emotions experienced because of the stressful event (Folkman, S., Schaefer and Lazarus, 1979; Leventhal, H and Nerenz,1982). Problem-focused coping involves effort to emerge during childhood; emotions focused coping skills develop somewhat in later childhood or early adolescence (Compass et al., 1991).

In one study Langens, Thomas A. and Morth, Sascha (2003) have examined repressive coping and the use of passive and active coping strategies. It was investigated whether coping strategies employed by the individuals who possess a repressive coping style depends on the intensity of the encountered threat. Repressor was expected to employ passive strategies (eg. attential avoidance) when the intensity of threatening stimuli is low and to shift to more active coping strategies (e.g. thinking positive thoughts) when confronted with strong threats the result showed that the repressor showed signs of attential avoidance in the low threat conditions, but not in the high problem-focused
coping strategies are similar to problem solving tactics. These strategies encompass efforts to define the problem, generate alternative solutions, weigh the costs and benefits of various actions, take actions to change what is changeable, and if necessary, learn new skills. Emotion-focused coping strategies are directed towards decreasing emotional distress. These tactics include such efforts as distancing, avoiding selective attention, blaming, minimizing, wishful thinking, venting emotions, seeking social support, exercising and mediating.

Disclosure

The ability to confide in others or to consciously confront their feelings and perceptions may eliminate the need to obsess about and inhibit the event. To examine this hypothesis, Pennebaker, Colder and Sharp, (1990) had done a study on undergraduate students. The students were supposed to write either about the most traumatic and stressful event ever happened in their lives or about trivial topic. Although the individuals writing about the trauma were more upset immediately after they wrote their essays they were less likely to visit the health centre for illness during the following months. There may be reliable cognitive effects associated with talking about or writing about a traumatic event, such as organizing one’s thought and being able to find meaning in the experience (Lepore, Ragan and Jones, 2000).
Specific coping strategies

Various researches have also focused on more specific coping strategies as well as general coping strategies. Such an approach also provides a more fine-grained analysis of exactly how people manage the stressful events they confront each day. Carver, Scheir and Weintraub (1989) developed a measure called the cope to assess the specific coping strategies to meet the demands of a situation, cope better with stress than those who do not. (Cheng 2003).

Coping and external resources

Coping is influenced not only by the internal resources that an individual has, such as personality traits and coping methods, but also by external resources. These include time, money, education, a decent job, children, friends, family, standard of living, the presence of positive life events, and the absence of other life stressor (Hobfall, 1989).

Adjustment pattern

The term ‘adjustment’ has been defined in various ways. Psychologists, biologists, educationist, sociologist and other behavioural scientists have described the term in their own unique ways of interpretation. The dictionary meaning of ‘adjustment’ is to fit, to make correspondence, to adopt or to accommodate. For adjustment biologists meant in the sense of adaptation to the physical world; the concept becoming popular with Darwin’s theory of evolution and “survival of the fittest” to the physical world while with the
psychologist replaced adaptation with adjustment meaning there by psychological survival.

‘Adjustment’ came into popular use in psychology during the 1930’s and was given strong endorsement by Shaffer (1956). He emphasized the biological adaptation of the organism to its environment. This is a somewhat mechanistic approach to human behaviour on the lines of behaviourists (Watson, 1937). The term adjustment as used by Shaffer (1956) was subjected to considerable criticism particularly with reference to its emphasis upon the mechanical adaptation of human being to the demands of the environment. It was argued that man not only adapts to his environment, but through the use of his intelligence and imagination, changes his environment to meet his needs more effectively (Freud, 1933; Adler, 1930; Erikson, 1963; Fromm, 1941; Bandura, 1971; Mischel, 1968; Rotter, 1954; Maslow, 1968; Allport, 1937; Frankle, 1969).

Arkoff (1968) opines that adjustment is a person’s interaction with environment. Each person constantly strives to meet his needs, and reaches his goals. At the same time he is under pressure from the environment to behave in a certain way. Adjustment involves the interaction of personal and environmental demands. It is emphasized that adjustment is a process by which the individual tries his best to maintain a harmonious, stable and satisfying relationship with his environment. (Hussain, 1985). In fact adjustment has been regarded as a process rather than achievement or a condition (Symonds, 1946;
Chapter 1

Introduction


This aspect of adjustment has been emphasized by Coleman (1960), who states adjustment as the process by which an organism attempts to meet the demand placed upon it by its own nature factors-environmental demands, need and motives to be satisfied. There is always a conflict between these two forces which call forth adjustive process. And that behaviour has view considered adjustment behaviour which makes a compromise between these two forces and helps the individual in achieving harmonious, stable and satisfying relationship with his environment. As Madigan (1962) explains that “if the conflict are solved to satisfy the individuals needs within the levels approved by society, the individual is considered adjusted”. The function of adjustment is to bring about a stable equilibrium among the various components of external and internal demands. The significant components of these two types of stimulations have been referred to as motivating stimuli which is perceived as uncomfortable or distressing. The individuals stimuli facing external and internal realities (Sappenfield, 1961) and by its environment is called ‘adjustment’. Further, Rogers (1971) has explained the concept of adjustment as an interaction between the person and his environment, each asserting demand on the other. In most cases, adjustment is a compromise between the two.

Adjustment is dynamic rather than static in quality. A person changes with the change in his environment. It is believed to be a continuous process by
which a person varies his behaviour to produce a more harmonious relationship between himself and his environment. The direction of his efforts may be towards modifying his own behaviour and attitude or towards changing the environment or both. In this context, Eysenck (1949) was of the opinion that adjustment is a state in which the needs of the individual on one hand and the claims of the environment on the other are fully satisfied. Bandura (1971) defines adjustment as a harmonious relationship with the environment, involving the ability to satisfy most of our needs and meet most of demands, both physical and social that are put upon oneself. In other sense adjustment is a state i.e. the condition of harmony arrived at by a person whom we call "well adjusted". It has been observed that an adjusted person is relatively efficient and happy.

Frost (1970) warned that social and cultural forces are operating constantly and a meticulous understanding of these is absolutely necessary in any attempt to unrevealing the factors causing revering behaviour and its change in settings. An individual is adjusted if he is adjusted to himself and to his environment (Arkoff, 1968). Thus, adjustment as an achievement means how the effectiveness with which an individual can function in changed circumstances and is, as such, related to his adequacy and regarded as an achievement that is accomplished either badly or well (Lazarus, 1976).

Cronbach (1960) described adjustment as a means to the end of accomplishment. The adjusted person is one who commits himself to socially desirable goals and makes use of his energies efficiently towards their
accomplishment. Thus, adjustment as an achievement means how the effectiveness with which an individual can function in changed circumstances and is, as such related to his adequacy and regarded as an achievement that is accomplished either badly or well (Lazarus, 1976).

Adjustment is commonly defined in terms of freedom from tensions and conflicts and adapting oneself to the needs of other individuals. It is a state of harmony between the needs, activities resources of a person and the conditions of the milieu. The factors that determine one's adjustment are numerous and complex, and routed in the personality development (Scarr and Kidd, 1983; Slater and Cowie, 1971; Sullivan, 1947; Sinha and Singh, 1980).

Besides, there are other theorists that has explained their view on adjustment process. The mental hygienist takes a more personal view on the adjustment process and explains that, 'adjustment refers to the understanding of one's strength and limitations, facing realities and achieving a harmony within oneself' (Kaplan, 1963).

Social aspect of adjustment requires that the individual should achieve a reasonable compromise between his drives for self realization and the demands of the society in which he lives, as Shanta Kumari (1988) asserts that a person is said to be adjusted when he is relatively happy efficient and has a proper degree of social feeling.

Clinical psychologists on the other hand considers an organized behaviour to be adjusted behaviour and therefore free from phobias.
obsessions, hostilities, complexes and other pathological symptoms are the cultural check of adjustment.

Personality psychologists defines adjustment on the basis of self-concept of the individual which should be in accord with reality, relation to the environment, and ‘self meaning’ or ‘ways of seeing oneself’ (Combs and Syngg. 1959).

In the light of the above discussion it may be deduced that every living being is required to adjust to lead a satisfactory and happy life. Throughout his life span human beings are exposed to problems which must be solved otherwise a person is afflicted by mental stress, anxiety and such other agonies. Thus adjustment plays a very important role in everyone’s life.

Significance of the Study:

Child rearing styles are major contributors to child’s development and well being. Moreover, problem of adolescent’s adjustment varies from culture to culture. The Indian families are supposed to have an authoritarian structure and emphasize conformity to norms and thus allow less initiativeness as compared to western families. However, with the advancement of time some contemporary radical changes have taken place in Indian society at large and also has influences the living arrangements and parenting situations for children and adolescents in our country. Since after a number of studies has been carried out in our socio-cultural milieu specially on this issue because of its social relevance. Side by side coping behavior our parents in particular and family in
general is also playing very important role on the adjustmental pattern of adolescence of our country.