Chapter One

BACKGROUND INFORMATION AS FRAME OF REFERENCE

The Woman Questions

There may be number of folk stories and proverbial thoughts about the nature, habits, sanctity, and a so-called ordained inferior role, of Indian Bengalee women in the social and cultural frame of reference that one can hear or read—published and unpublished. But there are authentic evidences that are present in the writings of men of letters in orient and occident characterising women with certain unique, rather special qualities viz. grace and tenderness, peace and affection, surrender and sacrifice. In spite of all these controversies, round the globe, her role as mother, as educator of man, has been universally admitted. Aitereya Brāhmaṇa, an authentic text on social philosophy of ancient India, described: "because the father is born again of his wife she is called Jāyī, or second mother of him (1). Raghuvāsaṇa, another famous text, describing the female child as duhītī, the English daughter, assigned weaving and needlework, household duties and watching the crops, as her main duties (2). Vedic wisdom were taught to the girls of Brahm Community (3) archery to the girls of Ksatriya Community, besides providing them opportunity to have training in fine arts like music, dancing, and painting (Sachākṛishan, 1947). Though there was no religious obligation for marriage, ancient thought and tradition

used to recognise the spirit, that husband and wife are complementary halves of one whole, the two should have the same rights to spiritual life and discipline. In Ancient Indian thought, virilism was considered as a contra-character and secluded life of the women was found discouraged. An Indian scholar of sixth century A.D., Varahamihira, condemning those who used to emphasise only the weaknesses of women, said that 'they have more virtues than man can claim; and any pursuit righteousness and wealth depends on women'. With a long history of promiscuity as a fashion, it was in epic period, Svetaketu earned the credit for supplanting promiscuity by regular marriage (4). "Monogamous marriage is not a natural condition, but a cultural state" (Radhakrishnan, 1947). Though the jurists of ancient India discouraged adultery totally, still they described woman as a fragile plant, to be cared for and nourished by men; and prescribed that under no circumstances death sentence could be verdicted to any female criminal (5).

The pioneer social philosophers of India described marriage and conjugal life as a preparation for a quiet happiness of future life through uninterrupted fidelity between the couples and a willingness to accept the other in all particularity. In the following years of married life by a generous self-abandonment, endless tolerance, gentleness, and politeness of the heart, the sanctity of an ideal monogamous marriage could be achieved (6). In the true Indian tradition, a woman unscarred by trouble is

Women have a genius for suffering, and if they are not true to it, their due becomings would remain unexpressed. "Centuries of tradition have made the Indian woman the most unselfish, the most self-denying, the most patient and the most dutiful woman in the world, whose pride is sufferings" (Radhakrishnan, 1947). Marriage was never considered as an end in itself but as a normal means of gaining selffulfilment through a sacred life-long fellowship which comes out of realization, habit formation and tuning the souls to true complementation. Thus the ideal role of wife is found in traditional thoughts as a source of endless gratification to the husband, with her shy tenderness, winning smile, and good companionship; and who expects from an ideal husband the love of her both parents. The ideal couple in Indian thought may be exemplified by the constantly united relations between any word and its meaning. Early marriages, as distinguished from pre-adolescent or early adolescent marriages, being negotiated by the parents/guardians and with the approval of their son or daughter have been the norms of Bengalee community here. A girl since her early adolescence is taught to worship and pray to family deity for an ideal husband who would be a person of her dreams. It is a common community belief that 'the bride yearns for beauty, her mother for wealth, her father for learning, her relations for family honour, and the rest for a feast'. Generally marriages should take place between members of families who belong to the same social, religious and cultural level. In Bengalee Community of Calcutta, the guardians insist that the marriage should be
within one's own caste, outside the direct parental line, and also outside certain specified degrees of blood relationship of both parents. Ancient Indian sociologists have always permitted marriages among descendants of the third degree on both the mother's and father's side. There is no true social ban against intercaste marriage but there are so many conventional cultural barriers against intercaste marriage by negotiation, though they are diminishing gradually. Marriage is never considered here as a mere contract; so both the issues of divorce and widow marriage are not just as are; because the problems arise out of the conflict potentials in the cognitive frame of the party(s) concerned.

Proceeding down the ages, history reveals that ideally a woman must be educated in all the formative years of her life as fit to become a submissive, dutiful and loyal wife, totally dependent upon her husband — everything is concerned with becoming an ideal wife. In brief, traditional outlook of society or community laid emphasis more on ideal wifehood than on ideal womanhood. There is a cliche that 'this is the land of Sita Savitri' which emphasises the heritage of fidelity of women to their husbands. Both of them were found living in the community belief and cultural heritage of the land since epical period. The third name is Parvati or Sati. The legends concerning each of them, speak of docility, suffering and fidelity. "Pursuing this trend, a loyal and chaste wife alone, having an abiding interest in her household affairs to the exclusion of all other outside interests, come to be the ideal in society. The emphasis
was on a faithful and docile wife whose life centred round her family and home alone. This particular image of ideal women has been projected and their memory kept alive through different mass media (Mukherjee, 1978).

Nami, the great jurist of ancient India, envisaged the need of helping the women to tide over the expected hurdles of social life and recommended certain provisions of their property rights. According to him, "what was given to daughter before marriage proper, what was given to her on the eve of departure being married, what may be given to her by others out of affection and love, and what she would receive from her brother, mother, or father, be considered as the exclusive property of her" (7). This includes the affectionate gift of her husband also. But under critical moments or emergency the husband is entitled to use the property of her wife. "The remarriage of woman, except under the clause of poverty, was also disapproved, as that would make her deprive of the said property right. It is further said that she must ask the consent of her husband before spending her property. What becomes from those stipulations is that a definite pattern of life was being imposed on women on pain of property deprivations. For example, a maiden should preferably marry (a) within three years of puberty, (b) an equal caste, and according to the approved four forms of marriage. She should avoid committing the punishable offenses, stay in husband's house, not to break the sacred marriage tie throughout life, irrespective of her misfortune of becoming a widow per chance" (Mukherjee, 1978). A woman

(7) Narm Smriti. IX, 121, 122, 194-96, 198.
must be married only once and her sons should bear her husband's name. It is believed that this son can only pave the way of the father to go to heaven, by performing proper condolence rights (8). Such belief has created an urge in the parents to get a male child always. According to Kalidasa, thus the need for having a son for economical and spiritual causes has emphasized the patriarchal and lineage assumptions in the society and culture of India.

In spite of the emphasis on the aspect of "ideal wifehood" in the Indian and Bengalee traditions there are quite a number of exemplary characters giving contrary characteristics of ideal womanhood. It has been mentioned that the parents in ancient time wished and prayed for learned daughters also and did not want them to marry young because of the possibility of getting scholar husbands (9, 10). The great grammarian of India, Panini in his aphorism indicated residential schools for girls; references are available for permitting the willing girls to remain unmarried throughout life for studying philosophy and theology or at least up to their marriage (11), and about reputed female teachers with specialised knowledge (12). The parents and girls of contemporary age still prefer to remember the names of female scholars/teachers of those days and so the following names are not uncommon in

(8) Manusmriti, IX, 138. 
(9) Atharva Veda XI, 5, 18.
(10) Brhadaranyakopanished VI, 4, 17.
(11) Viramitrodaya, upanayansamaskara, 402.
(12) Astadhayayi (of Panini) III, 3, 21; IV, I, 49; Vyakaranamahabhasya. IV, 1, 14.
in Bengalee community: Atreyi, Gargi, Lopamudra, Maitreyi, Sakuntala, and the like.

In the epical age the societal governors listed so many vices and faults of women that even a man with hundred tongues can not utter them fully over a period of hundred years. Later authorities, however, allotted a woman lesser numbers of vices and faults viz. love of bed, love of position and possession of ornaments, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct (13). Habit of drinking alcohol, keeping company with bad people, separation from husband, roaming abroad, sleeping at day time, and living in another's house were mentioned as the six common causes of women's ruin (14). Regarding this aspect of character two contradictory opinions are available in the pages of modern history also. While one view supports that 'woman is born with qualities to lead man astray', the other view holds that 'woman really possesses more virtues than man and who is worthy to be mother only can never be condemned'. The authentic scripts have accused equally man and woman for disregarding the sacred marriage law and promise, but men care little for the said law and promise, unlike women; so "women are superior to men" (15).

The Bengalee girls in Calcutta Society of contemporary days live mostly in a typical Bengalee community where the influence of the traditional concepts of "ideal womanhood or ideal wifehood" are found prevalent. But, certainly they are not living

(13). Manu Smriti IX, 17, 330.
(15). Brihatsamhita (of Varahamihira) Ch. 74.
in typical traditional social setting, rather nowadays they are to live more in modern industrialised social setting and interact with highly complicated grouping of people. They get socialized during the formative years of life through a series of continuous interpersonal actions. They are reared up and educated under the constant exposure of the said interpersonal actions with respective direct involvements. As a participant in these actions they are to share and act around a set of common goals and beliefs, attitudes, and modes of action for ensuring effective social adjustment and social competency. But modern society is composed of many communities, organizations and smaller groups within communities—— that are formed in family, school and college life, during pastime and recreation, at work environment, and the like social situations. These smaller groups have an internal structure and functional peculiarities, whose influence in social behaviour cannot be denied. Usually, the adolescent Bengalee girl population of Calcutta City with their respective personal native peculiarities get opportunity to interact with three small groups, in the community life, viz. (a) home life with parents and family members, (b) school life with teachers, and community of students, mainly of a particular school, and (c) friends or peers, seniors, family friends, neighbours, and other associates in the surroundings. For effective participation in these small group life the adolescent girls are to face or encounter with a system of well-defined psychological nitches —— for which they are specially trained and into which they are fitted. These psychological nitches include mainly the girls' position in a group, her roles
and her status in a group, and the multiple positions, roles, and status, she usually has to come across. All these nitches not only determine a girl's personality development but also motivate her psychosocial mobility from one group to another group, or at least develop aspiration-potential in the cognitive field. A very interesting study on this aspect of aspiring adolescent had been reported before two decades by Douvan, Elizabeth, and Adelson (1958). Severe frustration centering around this area may predispose an individual to adopt extremist political attitude (Krech, et al. 1982).

Owing to the expansion of the city, high increase in the temporary, semi-permanent outstation dwellers, multistoried and rented flat type of living accommodation in the growing area of the city, and the significantly changing cosmopolitan character of the metropolitan population, there have been rigorous alterations in the social surround and the neighbouring cultures of the locale — in the midst of which the girl population under study lives. Obviously, these adolescents are found picking up cultural ways that are found helpful, or perceived so, in solving their life problems — immediate and future. During the post-independence years the younger generations of girls definitely picked up many such cultural ways for effective living and transmitted that to their juniors and contemporaries; and thereby transacting new meaning of the term 'decency living'. These social transaction involve the elements of both explicit cultural ways and implicit cultural ways. The former includes language, gestures and postures, manners, ethics, decorative elements, articles of daily use and comforts, etcetera; while the latter includes
beliefs, values, norms, and premises, mainly. Another important element is to learn to ignore the traditional taboos, stereotypes, dogmas, superstitions, and alike hidden determinants of social attitudes in the light of its normative trends of permissibility in the immediate group life and wider community life. Throughout the high school life a Bengalee girl has to learn to display the conformity skill, keeping in view of the objectives of "ideal wifehood" — yet ingrained in her cultural doctrines, of course without that traditional rigidity.

The statements in the foregoing paragraphs have stressed on the need of studying the modal characteristics of adolescent Bengalee Girls of the city — their developmental backgrounds, important social perceptions, aspirations, and existing beliefs and attitudes concerning their life-environment integration efforts — for immediate and future social competency. The question of the problems of Bengalee girls is very urgent at a stage when there is definitely a lag of any serious scientific approach to probe into the matter with a background of 33 years' political independence and with acclaimed rights of equality with men. More introduction of legislation policies would do no true upliftment until the girls are made educated from all respect during their teens to become able to take the advantage of prescribed rights and privileges of Indian citizens.

The increasing need for counselling and guidance with reference to a desirable mode of adjustments in different spheres of social life of the adolescent girl students have nowadays drawn the attention of everybody concerned with their welfare.
The success of the said service to them often face problems pending sufficient data regarding any objective picture of normative trends of their social life peculiarities. The success or worth of the said service, in the school, depends mainly by making them enable to identify their life-problems, personality limits, and develop adjustment or coping skills for good citizenship. With reference to the need for studying the psychological frame in the existing social reality of Bengalee adolescent girls of Calcutta, envisaged so far, the present investigator has conducted the present investigation by a scientific method — which has been finalised after surveying the following literature of relevant scientific methodology.
About 25 years back a report on 'what has happened during the past two decades' in the field of psychological assessment presented in a nutshell an idea about the methodology question (Sundberg, 1954). A recent report expressed an apprehension about a gradual decline of interest in developing new personality tests and, in lieu, a rising interest in developing tools for behavioral assessment (Reynolds & Sundberg, 1976). "Assessment, in contrast to measurement, aims at discerning individual characteristics which are important for decisions in person-society relationships. In addition to testing, assessment includes interviewing, observation, and various other methods for combining and communicating personal information" (Sundberg, Snowden, & Reynolds, 1978). In the field of "assessment", competence is a term that connotes a search for positive characteristics, particularly capabilities for coping with life situations. According to Bloom (1977), "to link individual problems to characteristics of the social system, the most compelling have been the concepts of competence and competence building."

The term competence has been discussed by different authors with different denotations. Competence of an individual being recognised and approved by others in a social context may act as incentive to reinforce motivating factors in the individual concerned (White, 1969; Smith, 1966; Hampden-Turner, 1971; White, 1973; Harter & Zigler, 1974). According to some authors, it is developed in the cognitive field by the process of analysis-synthesis and restructuring of the field as an ability (McClelland, 1973) as interpersonal behaviour skills (Foote & Cottrell, 1966; Phillips, 1968).
and as the signs of mastering curricular goal-achievement skills (Anderson & Messick, 1974; Pottinger, 1975). The core content of these denotations has signified the presence of knowledge, attitudes, and skills in a composite form in one's competence—a personal characteristics which lead to achievements having adaptive payoffs in significant environments (Sundberg et al., 1978). So this personal characteristics suggest an ecological situation or supportive social milieu in the midst of which one's adequate knowledge, a well-balanced attitude pattern, and high skills for expression, are so developed as he can function in that setting with confidence and efficacy. In the present investigation an attempt has been made to study the modal peculiarities of ecological situations of Bengalee adolescent girls of school leaving classes, of Calcutta, their attitude patterns towards self, social systems, and interpersonal skills, and some other relevant variables of studenthood. In this study the objective criteria for classifying the sample population in terms of certain possible competency-strata is 'a girl student's total examination marks for which she is judged by others as of 'high worth or 'low worth'.

Current trends in the assessment of competence put more weightage on the recognised or 'proven worth' of an individual in a particular sphere of operation or performance as cognitive alternatives to Intelligence Quotient (Feuerstein, 1973; Babad & Budoff, 1974), resting on the premise that intelligence is an ability to learn and profit from appropriate past experience. Community psychology services count seriously the question of competence and there is a concomitant interest in developing tools
to assess personal resources for adaptive coping in natural or specially arranged environments (Sundberg et al., 1978). Assuming a hierarchy amongst positive self attitude, attitude of trust, and optimism toward the world and instrumental behaviour as essential elements of healthy personality, Tyler & Gatz (1977) evaluated competence amongst adolescents and showed that change from guidance and counselling was moderated by competence level. Spivack & Shure (1974) identified interpersonal problem solving skills as critical components in social adjustments of young children — involving references of the consequences of social acts and social motivations in self and others. In spirit, in these assessment approaches, emphasis has been laid on teaching strategies of thought ‘rather than ‘specific behaviours’ i.e. towards restructuring of cognitive field structure of cognitive reorganisation. Personality theorists show an increasing preference to formulate healthy functioning and positive achievements for assessment purpose. California Psychological Inventory, Minnesota Counselling Inventory, with positive scales have given serious consideration to constitutional, poise, social responsibility, and achievement factors. After Goldfrid & D’Zurilla (1969), the question of competence may be explained in terms of the following: (a) achievements or accomplishments, (b) internal antecedents, or (c) behaviour-environment interactions. They can be studied in terms of (a) any criterion score or measure, (b) content analysis of projective test data, and (c) scores of attitude scales, respectively. Self-management and self-understanding scores also may be experimented for assessment purpose — as these scores would be more purposeful or meaningful to the
The Adolescent Research Questions Overview:

Adolescence may be described as a period of psychological growing up for keeping pace with significant physical changes during the teen-ages of life. During this period the individual moves mainly towards autonomy from dependence, and freedom from restriction. An adolescent lives in a stage of 'not a child, not an adult' (Malm & Jamison, 1952). An adolescent girl dreams for a preparation for accepting future responsibilities, which, amongst other, includes educational, vocational, social and marital fields of her life. She wants to live a happy and self-sufficient future life in a family setting with others in community and to perform several social roles competently in successive stages of her life.

More comprehensively, adolescent research literature expressed interest in the following line of enquiries (Malm & Jamison, 1952):

(a) The world of adolescence: their perceptions about reality.
(b) The physical development of the adolescent: their constitutional changes.
(c) Social adjustment: their peer life, social relations and sociability.
(d) Heterosexual adjustment: heterosexual interests, company, and curiosities.
(e) Emotional adjustment: their feelings, sentiments, and hopes and frustrations.
(f) Standards, ideals, morals, religion, beliefs: their faith in community, culture.
(g) Personal adjustment: Their modes of adjustment with family
members, school, societal systems, vocational opportunities/expectations, and other spheres of life that are usually expressed through their attitudes towards the issues.

School governs the activity of an adolescent girl, a teenager, for six or more of the most energetic hours daily, excepting in the vacations and holidays. So this institution plays a highly significant influencing role in her life, particularly in the formative years. Here her planned learnings go on, she learns here skills for future life and gains experiences for her future preparations. Here she enjoys the service of the professionals and lives in the adolescent's society for meaningful transactions of group life. The school is the social world which provides the transitions from the life within the home, intimate and protective, to the life within the community, often interpersonal and competitive. Many of the adolescent's most seriously felt responsibilities and most serious problems are those concerned with school work and school living. In brief, home and school lives cover the major part of the total field of an adolescent, when her major needs are found to grow centering around the advantages and achievements of the grown-up adults—as seen, as heard, or may be as dreamt of—"around ego and its defenses" (Freud, 1948).

Since 1948, up to 1957, a number of interesting works were conducted and published in the United Kingdom also. Of these Dr. C. M. Fleming's Adolescence: Its Social Psychology, R.G. Kuhlen's The Psychology of Adolescent Development, W. D. Wall's The Adolescent Child, Midlands survey of adolescent life entitled Eighty
Thousand Adolescents, Pearl Jephcott's Some Young People, Jordan & Fisher's study with a group of Pimlico adolescents entitled Self-portrait of Youth, and L.T.Wilkins's The adolescent in Britain, are enlisted in a Doctoral Dissertation work, The Problems of Adolescent Girls, of London University, of the period in question, by James Hemming (1960). R.G.Bavighurst (1951) suggested a list of ten developmental tasks which face the adolescent:

1. Achieving new and more mature relationships with age-mates of both sexes.
2. Achieving a masculine or feminine social role.
3. Accepting one's physique and using the body effectively.
4. Achieving emotional independence of parents and other adults.
5. Achieving assurance of economic independence.
7. Preparing for marriage and family life.
8. Developing intellectual skills and concepts necessary for civic competence.
9. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behaviour.
10. Acquiring a set of values and an ethical system as a guide to behaviour.

Around 1960s valuable publications of Harvard psychologist Erik Erikson took up a distinctive position in the field of adolescent study. Of particular significance to an understanding of adolescence is his Identity: Youth and Crisis (Erikson, 1968). His epigenetic principle states that "anything that grows has a ground plan, and that out of this ground plan the parts arise,
each part having its time of special ascendency, until all parts have arisen to a form a functional whole" (Erikson, 1968). Human development has been explained by him in terms of "increasing psychosocial function". The beauty of Erikson's Identity thesis is synthesis and comprehension by involving Freudian 'being', Adler's 'becoming' and Havighurst's 'selecting-developing-preparing-achieving'. In the battle for autonomy a girl may show stubborn refusal, temper tantrums, and the "yes-no" syndrome or, by overcoming the psychosocial barriers, may bloom with all her becomings, with a wholesome personality of a desired competence. She is in the sojourn of searching and searching.

"Identity, or a sense of sameness and continuity, must be searched for. Identity is not given to the individual by the society, nor does it appear as a maturational phenomenon, like pubic hair; it must be acquired through sustained individual efforts. Unwillingness to work on one's own identity formation carries with it the danger of role diffusion, which may result in alienation and a lasting sense of isolation and confusion..... The search for an identity involves the production of a meaningful self-concept in which past, present, and future are linked together" (Muuss, 1975). One of the basic issues regarding education during adolescence, in the light of Identity thesis, is to what extent and how do schools contribute to and enhance Bengalee girls' efforts in producing a "meaningful self-concept".

Erikson's thesis has been further extended and elaborated by James Marcia under the title "Determination and Construct Validity of Ego Identity Status". He has stressed on two essential
variables viz. crisis and commitment. "Crisis refers to times during adolescence when the individual seems to be actively involved in choosing among alternative occupations and belief" (Marcia, 1967). This element of belief has a significant prevalent influence on the total cognitive field of an individual—as a very important determinant of growing individual's act of perceiving the world.

The trend of discussions in the foregoing paragraphs have enlightened, mainly two sides of adolescent study that are prevalent in the contemporary thoughts. Of them, the first one is a list of important variables to cover the study comprehensively and their operational dynamics in the process of making an adolescent. The second one is the role of educators, educational institutions and a policy for rendering best service to the adolescent population. So far as the 'variables' are concerned the list suggested by Havighurst (1951) and Marcia (1967) seem to be sufficient and undisputed. About the 'operational dynamics', consciously or unconsciously, all serious thinkers have accepted the Lewinian model (Lewin, 1939) in spirit and principle. "The particular type of behaviour that emerges and the degree of adolescent behaviour depend greatly on the strength and nature of these conflicting field forces—as variables. Above all in importance is the amount of difference between—and the factors that separate—adult society and the child society in a particular culture" (Lewin, 1939). In regard to the role, personnel function, and service policy of educational institutions there lies an undeniable support to Piaget's following two assumptions.
Piaget wholeheartedly believes in the child's autonomy and his active participation in his own cognitive growth. "There are two basic and correlated principles from which an educator inspired by psychology can never depart:

1. That the only real truths are those that one builds freely one's self, and are not those received from without;

2. That moral good is essentially autonomous and cannot be prescribed". (Piaget, 1947a).

Piaget's first basic principle is very significantly present in the recent views of humanistic approaches or a 'third force psychologies' (Sahakian, 1977). Kohlberg, inspired by Piaget's cognitive-developmental approach to moral development, distinguished three basic levels of moral development viz. the premoral level, conventional level, and autonomous level. Morality becomes more sophisticated (from a rudimentary idea of premoral justice) and social as the adolescent moves through specific stages of moral thinking; and may reach to an awareness of universal values and ethical principles. He classified six stages of moral development viz. (i) obedience and punishment orientation; (ii) instrumental relativist orientation; (iii) interpersonal concordance orientation; (iv) orientation towards authority, law, and duty; (v) social contract orientation and (vi) universal ethical principles orientation (Kohlberg, 1969; 1970). Adolescents critical attitude towards self and others develop during the stages three and four (upto mid adolescence) and in late adolescence the continued endorsement of conventional morality reflects a deficiency in moral development. "Life is
conceived as sacred in terms of its place in categorical moral and religious order of rights and duties" (Kohlberg, 1970) — this statement supports the importance of an adolescent's commitment to traditional values and beliefs, as envisaged in the assumption of Marcia (1961).

Before closing the adolescent research question it would not be irrelevant to bear in mind the equivocal influence of both home and school during adolescence, that has been emphasised by the social learning theorists repeatedly. The influence of the personal examples set before the adolescents by the parents, elders in family, teachers and social or political leaders — as model figure— has been admitted by the said group of theorists unequivocally. A great variety of social learning phenomena, viz. moral judgment, sexual behaviours, permissible habits, adherence to certain standards, and the like, are acquired because a learner observes a model's behaviour and imitates the behaviour observed (Bandura, 1963). In contrast to any predetermined influence, social learning theory assumes that behaviour is primarily determined within a social situational context and the behavioural changes that occur in a given individual are the consequences rather than a function of age. These assumptions speak in favour of a dominant influence of students community life in school, in comparison to other social milieu, during adolescence. "Cut off from large segments of society, adolescents have found psychological support and social reward within their own group and depend upon each other. Consequently, this adolescent subculture has created its own vernacular and its own value system" (Coleman, 1961).
Adolescence can be explained in a variety of ways, ranging from Hall's description of a rebirth to Hollingworth's description of gradualness. The disposition to emotional and social difficulties during this period is substantially greater than during other developmental periods. The hypothesis of a universal period of storm and stress is no longer tenable, and in the light of the findings presented by Bandura (1964) and Offer (1969) one can no longer accept the storm-and-stress concept as applicable to even the majority of adolescents in our society (Muuss, 1975).

Whether the above statement of Muuss (1975) will be applicable also to Bengalee adolescent girls of Calcutta, the findings of the present investigation will decide that.