Adolescence is a transitional developmental period between childhood and adulthood that is characterized by more biological, psychological, and social role changes than any other stage of life except infancy (Feldman and Elliot 1990). Kalat (1996) defines adolescence as a period characterized by sexual, social, occupational and ideological adjustments and striving independence from parents. So the one word which characterizes adolescence is ‘change’, i.e. change in the psychological, sociological and physiological aspects. The fact is that the incidents of this period affect the whole personality of an adolescent and that is why it has been called the most crucial period of life. Medically, adolescence begins with the growth and hormonal changes associated with sexual maturity and end where there is no further growth. Legally, adolescence ends with the assumption of adult responsibility for voting and for contracts including marriage. Educationally, adolescence is the time spent in high school and college. Psychologically, adolescence is a period of transition during which cognitive, physical, personality and social changes occur, adult roles are practiced and personal identity is formed (Berk 1999).

Adolescence is a period of transition, turbulence, trance and tension unmetered for its energy and impact on rest of the life (Mohan 2000). The transition, it is believed, results from the operation of a number of pressures. Some of these, in particular the physiological and emotional pressures, are internal; while others originate from peers, parents, teachers and society at large and are external to the young person. Sometimes these external pressures carry the individual towards maturity at a faster rate than he or she would prefer, while on the other occasions they act as a brake, holding the adolescent back from the freedom and independence which he or she believes to be a legitimate right. It is the interplay of these forces that in the final analysis, contribute more than anything to the success or failure of the transition from childhood to maturity (Coleman 1994).

Holmebeck (1994) has given an empirically based framework for understanding adolescent development. This framework is based on the notion that there are primary changes that occur during adolescence, all of which have impact on a set of secondary
changes. The primary changes, i.e. biological/pubertal changes, psychological/cognitive changes and changes in social roles, have an impact on the secondary changes via the contexts in which adolescents develop, namely, family, peer, school and working settings.

Changes in every aspect of life of the adolescents lead them to a state of confusion and emotional turmoil. Adolescents may have emotional ups and downs, period of anxieties, worries about being accepted by peers, involvement with others in delinquent activities and concern about the understanding by the siblings, parents and teachers. Many psychologists, social workers and educationists have showed their concern about the problems faced by adolescents, as adolescence is a period of stress, emotional upheavals and anxiety. So there is a need to understand the various aspects of adolescents’ life, their problems, worries, fears and anxieties which are a big obstacle in the psychological development of adolescents. Adolescents may have problems related to home, school, peer group, physical changes, sex, living conditions etc. Gupta and Gupta (1978) studied the areas of adolescent problems and the relationship between them. They found that maximum numbers of adolescent problems were observed in social, school and emotional areas and a positive correlation was found between the different areas of adjustment.

The present study focused on the problems of adolescents, in terms of family income, school, sex, culture, peer groups, electronic media and coping mechanisms used by them to overcome anxieties associated with the period of adolescence. Not only adolescents face problems but their parents and teachers also face enormous problems because of problematic behavior of adolescents at home and school. The present study was conducted on adolescents as they represent an important segment of population undergoing change.

However the specific objectives of the present study were:

i) To examine the major problems faced by adolescents e.g. academic, sexual, financial, cultural etc.;

ii) To study as to how these problems vary with socio-economic status and gender;
iii) To understand how the problems faced by adolescents vary with the type of school and attitude of parents at home;

iv) To identify the problems faced by parents and teachers in terms of adolescents, both boys and girls;

v) To analyze how the peer group and electronic media contribute to the problems of adolescence;

vi) To understand the coping mechanisms used by adolescents.

To meet the above objectives, the study made an attempt to find out the major problems faced by adolescents i.e. academic, sexual, financial and cultural and how these problems varied with socio-economic status and gender of adolescents. Attempts were also made to find out the problems faced by parents and teachers in terms of adolescents both boys and girls. The influence of peer groups and electronic media on adolescents was also examined. So an attempt was also made to find out how these two agents were contributing to the problems of adolescence.

The problems were examined across the different socio-economic groups of adolescents, enrolled in three schools which were purposely selected. These three schools were Vivek High School, sector 38, D.A.V. Model School, sector 15-A and Govt. Senior Secondary School, sector 37-D, Chandigarh. The sample for this study comprised of the students studying in classes VIII\textsuperscript{th}, IX\textsuperscript{th}, XI\textsuperscript{th} and XII\textsuperscript{th} of the arts stream in each of these schools, which represented upper, middle and lower socio-economic groups respectively. There were two main reasons for choosing these three schools i) these schools were having children of different socio-economic background and ii) all these schools were co-educational institutions, which enabled us to examine gender differences. Sixty students from each of the three schools, both boys and girls, were randomly selected by using lottery method, leading to a total sample of 180 adolescent respondents. In addition to students, sixty parents (twenty in each school) and thirty teachers (ten in each school) were also interviewed. The data were collected with the help of an interview schedule, each for the adolescents, their parents and teachers.

To get a clear picture of the kind of respondents who formed part of our study, the socio-economic and the demographic profile of the respondents was presented in
Chapter II. Under the socio-economic profile age of the respondents, religion, educational qualifications and occupation of parents, structure and size of family, income and the type of schooling of respondents were studied. These variables are very important and relevant for the present study as these affect the attitude, thinking, and emotional, psycho-social development of the adolescents. A detailed introduction to the demographic, socio-economic and family background of the respondents has been presented in Chapter II entitled “Adolescents: A Socio-economic Profile.”

The data analysis in Chapter II revealed that out of 180 respondents there were 87 male and 93 female respondents. The present study indicates that 29.4 per cent of the respondents belonged to the age group of 13-14.11 years and 34.5 per cent belonged to age of 15-16.11 years while 36.1 per cent of the respondents belonged to 17-18 years in age. Almost an equal proportion of respondents were found in the three categories. A majority of the respondents, i.e. 91.1 per cent, belonged to nuclear families and most prominent family size was found to be the one consisting of 2-4 members. It was found that a higher proportion of respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools were having families of small size as compared to respondents from Government School. In the present study, the propensity of nuclear family was seen. Further the other variables relating to socio-economic background of the respondents were discussed in Chapter II.

Respondents in the present study belonged to three religious communities namely, Hindu, Sikh and Muslim. Most of the respondents, i.e. 65 per cent belonged to Hindu religion.

The educational status of respondents’ parents was also examined as parental educational level has a significant impact on the personality of adolescents. The educational qualifications of both father and mother were classified into six categories, i.e. i) Professional/Post Graduate ii) Graduate iii) Metric/Higher Secondary iv) Primary/ Middle v) Illiterate vi) any other. It was observed that quite a large number of the respondents’ fathers were educated. On comparing the educational status of respondents’ fathers in all the three schools it was observed that respondents in public schools had highly educated fathers. Most of them were engineers, doctors, lawyers, MBAs and MCAs. The respondents in Government School on the other hand mostly had illiterate or less educated fathers. As far as
educational level of mothers was concerned it was found that mothers of adolescents in Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools were better educated than mothers of adolescents from Government School. So a clear difference was found in the educational level of parents of adolescents from the three schools, coming from different socio-economic status.

The occupational status of parents was another significant variable which was examined. For analyzing the occupational status of respondents’ parents, six occupational categories were made after scanning through the data, i.e. i) Government Job, ii) Private job, iii) Business, iv) Farming/ Land lord v) Pension holder and vi) Any other. The study showed that 36.7 per cent respondents’ fathers were in government jobs. Fathers of respondents coming from well reputed private schools, i.e. Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools were at good positions in government jobs like IAS, IPS, Judges, Army officers and Bank managers. On the contrary, fathers of respondents from Government School were mostly in low ranking Government Jobs as peons, drivers, gate keepers, gardeners and sweepers etc. It was also found in a few cases that fathers of respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools were landlords. This shows a clear difference among the financial status of respondents from the three schools. The study also revealed that majority of the respondents’ mothers was housewives while only one third of the respondents had working mothers. Number of respondents whose mothers were housewives was much higher in Government School as compared to the other two schools. Here also a clear difference in the kinds of jobs were found as mothers of respondents of private schools were occupying good positions like doctors, engineers, lectures, teachers, lawyers and army officers while mothers of respondents of Government School were working mainly as house maids.

Another very significant variable in the socio-economic profile of the respondents was their family income. Five categories were made on the basis of family income, i.e. families with an income up to Rs. 15,000 per month were considered as having lower income level, and families with income from Rs. 15001 to Rs. 50,000 per month were put in the middle income level and those who earned more than Rs. 50,000 per month were labeled as high income group. It was found that 41 per cent respondents’ had a family income between Rs. 15001 to Rs. 50,000 per month
belonging to middle income level. A clear association was found between the income of families and the type of schools respondents were studying in. Data showed that 33.3 per cent respondents’ families came under the low income category which mainly belonged to Government School. Respondents from Vivek High School and D.A.V. School belonged to higher and middle income groups respectively. Therefore difference in the income levels showed the class differences in all the three schools. Family assets were another important variable indicating the socio-economic status of the respondents. Respondents from Vivek High School belonged to higher socio-economic status as all the respondents had big houses, commercial properties, large farm houses and agricultural land while on the other hand respondents from Government School belonged to low socio-economic status.

The present study highlighted with various problems relating to different aspects of adolescents. The study made an attempt to find out the major problems faced by adolescents, i.e. academic, sexual, financial and cultural etc. Efforts were also made to find out how these problems varied with socio-economic status, type of school, gender and attitude of parents. These were the main objectives of the present study. The study has attempted an in depth analysis of the same which has been presented in Chapter III entitled “Problems of Adolescents and their Correlates”.

Attitude of parents is a very significant factor which influences the psyche of the adolescents. For an adolescent, attitude of parents’ matters a lot as parents’ positive attitude can give an adolescent a happy and healthy life while their negative attitude can ruin the life by creating problems for their adolescent child.

In order to find out the kind of attitude adolescents’ parents had towards respondents, relevant questions were asked. The study attempted to find out the attitude of parents towards adolescent respondents. It was observed that 63.3 per cent respondents with negligible gender difference felt that their fathers were authoritarian while 24.5 per cent respondents’ fathers had friendly attitude towards adolescents. Therefore in the present study fathers of the respondents proved to be an authoritarian figure irrespective of gender. On the other hand, 84.4 per cent respondents with negligible gender difference said that their mothers were friendly with them. Therefore relation with mothers as compared to fathers with their children was found to be friendlier by the respondents, both boys and girls. Only 7.8 per cent respondents with negligible
school difference said that their mothers were authoritarian. It was further observed that more than half of the respondents (55.5%) were spending less than five hours a day with their parents. 28.3 per cent respondents with higher number of girls than boys reported that they spent hardly one to two hours daily with parents. This shows that they were not spending enough time with parents, which was responsible for creating communication gap between parents and respondents. It was observed that respondents were not feeling comfortable talking to their parents as 45.6 per cent respondents (with higher number of girls than boys) said that they shared their general problems with their friends instead of parents. Therefore it has been observed that importance of peer group was greater as compared to their parents for adolescent respondents. Further, 70 per cent respondents with almost an equal number in all the three schools shared their personal problems with their friends and the percentage of such boys was higher than girls. While interviewing it was found that most of the respondents felt hesitant sharing their personal problems with parents. When respondents were asked who in their families listened to their problems patiently, 66.1 per cent respondents (including 28.9 per cent boys and 37.2 per cent girls) said that their mothers listened to their problems patiently, while 13.9 per cent respondents’ (with more number of boys than girls) fathers listened to their problems patiently. Only 8.3 per cent respondents disclosed any kind of discrimination by parents on the basis of gender. Such respondents felt bad and inferior to their brothers/sisters often leading to hatred and jealousy with the other sibling.

Another attribute of parents which was disliked by respondents was their attitude towards their wards’ friends which often influenced the behavior of the adolescent respondents. 50.6 per cent respondents said that their parents approved of only some of their friends while a few respondents disclosed that the main cause of clash between them and their parents was the disapproval of their friends by their parents. This shows how the peers of adolescent respondents often proved to be rivals to parents. It was found that a larger number of respondents from Vivek High School as compared to other two schools complained of their parents disapproving their friends. On the contrary only 21.6 per cent respondents were given full freedom by their parents to go out with friends. Rest of the respondents were facing parental objection in going with friends in the form of ‘No freedom’ or ‘Freedom with some of the
friends’. This attitude of parents often led to strained relations as it was found that 51.6 per cent respondents had gone against the wishes of parents either sometimes or quite often. The study also revealed that as compared to the boys, fewer girls went against the parents’ wishes. Therefore more boys were rebellious than girls as indicated by the present study.

Next, an effort was made to analyze the effect of scolding on the behavior of adolescents as well as on their relationship with parents. Therefore relevant questions were asked to the respondents. It was found out that only 3.3 per cent respondents had never been scolded by parents. It means that rest of the respondents were being scolded either rarely (77.2 per cent) or daily (19.5 per cent). It was also found that more boys were scolded than girls and the number of respondents who got daily scolding was higher in Government School than the other two schools. In Vivek High and Government Schools more boys were daily scolded than girls whereas in D.A.V. School number of such girls was more than boys.

The major issues over which respondents were getting scolding included watching excessive television/using computers, disobeying parents/not doing household work and not studying and roaming with friends. It may be concluded that respondents were scolded on different issues with some variations between boys and girls. Watching excessive television and using computer for long hours was the major issues over which respondents were scolded as 33.9 per cent respondents (including 15.6 per cent boys and 18.3 per cent girls) said so. Here the number of girls was higher than that of boys in all the three schools. Data in the study revealed that maximum number of respondents felt bad but not sorry on being scolded by parents. An extremely negative behavior towards parents as a reaction to scolding was that some respondents with an equal number of boys and girls said that they felt like hitting back on being scolded. 17.8 per cent respondents also disclosed that their parents scolded them in front of others and more boys than girls expressed that opinion. Respondents revealed that they felt bad and demoralized on being scolded in front of others. Therefore, it can be said that scolding attitude of parents does not inculcate passive attitude in their adolescent children rather it made them either depressed and develop inferiority complex or they become rebellious or emotionless. As some of the respondents
disclosed in the interview that they felt depressed, inferior and low in confidence on being scolded.

Efforts were also made to know respondents’ understanding with their mothers and fathers. It was found that most of the respondents admired their parents for the loving, caring and encouraging attitude of parents but disliked their fathers for their dominating nature and mothers for their scolding behavior. Therefore, there were certain aspects in the behavior of parents which were liked or disliked by the respondents.

In today’s competitive world where everybody is struggling to surpass others, the expectations of parents towards their children have multiplied. Parents have become more demanding and exert enormous pressure on their wards to get more marks and to achieve better. This has been substantiated in our study where 90.6 per cent respondents (including 42.2 per cent boys and 48.3 per cent girls) said that their parents encouraged them for studies. The data also indicate that respondents from Government School were getting less encouragement from parents for studies than the other two schools. 82.1 per cent respondents felt that they were being compared by their fathers, mothers or both, with their classmates. They were persistently asked by their parents to perform as good as their classmates. Only 17.8 per cent respondents said that neither their mothers nor fathers compared them with others for their performance. It was therefore revealed that respondents did not like such kind of comparison as they felt depressed and demoralized because of this behavior of parents. One of the respondents said that he felt so discouraged on being compared that he felt like committing suicide. This shows that how much comparison can prove to be fatal to the adolescents. Such an attitude on the part of parents was often found to inculcate an inferiority complex, adversely affecting self confidence among respondents.

Therefore it can be concluded that such an attitude on the part of parents adversely affects the psycho-social development of the developing adolescents. Either they become depressed, demoralized, feel shy in front of others, lose confidence or they become indifferent towards what their parents keep telling them persistently.

Findings in this study have revealed that parents were extremely irritated over an excessive amount of time spent by their adolescent children either on television or
computer. This often led to altercations between the two. However, this also occurred due to high expectations parents had from their children.

Therefore relevant questions were asked to find out the academic problems of adolescent respondents. On comparing the academic performance of respondents from all the three schools, it was found that the number of respondents getting first division in Government School was much lower as compared to those in other two schools. When the respondents were asked as to how they rated themselves academically, 63.3 per cent respondents rated themselves as average students and their number was higher in Government School as compared to other two schools.

Respondents were then asked the following questions in order to examine their interest in attending school: what were their experiences in school; how often did they bunk school without parents’ knowledge. It was revealed that only 19.5 per cent respondents never felt like not going to school. 80.5 per cent respondents at one or the other time felt like not going to school. Only 3.3 per cent respondents bunked school very frequently and 8.9 per cent bunked sometimes without the parents’ knowledge. It was also observed that a greater number of boys than girls bunked the school and reason of bunking was lack of interest in studies. Very few respondents said that they did not like the teachers.

Data further indicated that 28.3 per cent respondents had parents who were too demanding regarding academic achievement. Respondents also revealed that they were always pressurized to score high by their parents, often leading to tension and high stress levels. 36.1 per cent respondents revealed that their parents scolded and punished them for not doing well in exams. While more boys than girls have had such an experience, difference among the schools was negligible. A few boys from Government School disclosed that they were beaten by their parents on getting very low marks.

34.4 per cent respondents with almost negligible gender and school difference had clashes with parents due to academic performance. The data show that most of the respondents discussed academic problems either with friends or with teachers, while very few respondents discussed these with their parents. Therefore it can be concluded that though not all the students were facing academic problems, yet a
higher number of respondents from Government School were facing academic problems.

Respondents were further asked about the amount of money they received from parents and the problems they faced in this regard. The major source of money for respondents was pocket money. They were getting it from parents. It was found that only 77.8 per cent respondents were getting pocket money. Some of the respondents from Government School said that their parents were not earning enough to give monthly fixed pocket money whereas some other respondents were not given any money by parents due to the apprehension that they would indulge in wasteful spending.

Respondents from Vivek High School were getting the maximum amount of pocket money. Not much gender difference was found in this regard. A clear association was found between family income and pocket money received by respondents. Therefore it can be inferred that respondents were getting pocket money according to the family income.

Efforts were made to find out whether respondents were satisfied with pocket money they were getting. As many as 66.1 per cent respondents (including 30 per cent boys and 36.1 per cent girls) were not satisfied with their pocket money. Among all the three schools, maximum number of respondents from Vivek High School was not satisfied with their pocket money in spite of getting maximum amount of pocket money. It was also found that girls were in the habit of saving some money out of their pocket money while boys spent all the money they got. Respondents from Government School were more dissatisfied because they were not able to get enough money from their parents belonging to lower income levels. Data showed that most of the respondents were not satisfied with the pocket money they were given. 15.6 per cent respondents (most of them from the Government School) said that they wanted more pocket money and that should be at least 500 rupees per month and in this case number of girls was higher than that of boys. 18.9 per cent respondents wanted pocket money between 500-1000 rupees per month whereas 11.1 per cent respondents wanted more than 1000 rupees per month. 16.6 per cent respondents (all from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools) said that pocket money should be according to the needs, that most of the respondents wanted more money to meet their requirements was
evident. When asked as to how then they coped being short of money, they revealed that at times they borrowed from friends and they even stole money at home or even outside.

An effort was also made to know whether parents were watchful about the spending of pocket money by their wards. Data revealed that 55 per cent respondents including (23.9 per cent boys and 31.1 per cent girls) were asked by their parents as to how and where they were spending money. Here gender difference could be seen as more girls than boys were questioned by parents in this regard. Boys disclosed that on being asked by parents they did not give clear answer or showed their irritation or anger; therefore parents avoided asking them about spending money. It was also found that parents of respondents from Government School were least concerned about the spending of money by their wards. Some of the respondents disclosed that they told lies to their parents about their spending.

Therefore respondents were asked to indicate as to where they spent money. 21.6 per cent respondents (including 9.4 per cent boys and 12.2 per cent girls) spent money on eating out. It was found that as compared to boys higher number of girls loved to spend on eating outside. 20.6 per cent respondents with higher number of girls than boys spent money on cosmetics and clothes. 17.8 per cent respondents with higher number of boys spent major portion of pocket money in either cyber cafes or on mobile phones. A few boys disclosed that they spent a major portion of pocket money on cigarettes. As far as comparison of all the three schools was concerned there was a difference in brands of things and places of eating joints. Data show the clear gender difference as far as spending habits were concerned. Girls mostly loved to spend on clothing, cosmetics and eating joints while boys mostly loved to spend on movies, computers and mobile phones.

Adolescence is a stage when they want to buy whatever they see their friends have, without assessing the usefulness of products. Therefore parents sometimes do not allow them to buy whatever they demand. On asking respondents whether their parents allowed them to buy whatever they wanted, respondents belonging to high income group narrated that they did not find any problem in buying anything they wanted but respondents belonging to Government School were not able to buy things every time they wanted. 36.1 per cent respondents disclosed that their parents did not
allow them to buy whatever they wanted. Respondents from Government School gave the reason that their parents were unable to buy things every time because of lack of money, whereas respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools said that their parents had the fear in their mind that their wards would become over demanding, due to which their parents often imposed restrictions on their spending.

Further respondents were asked as to in case they had more money, where would they spend it on. In answer to this question 38.3 per cent respondents with higher number of girls than boys would love to buy clothes, shoes, and cosmetics. In this case the number of respondents was higher in Government School as compared to other two schools. 31.7 per cent respondents with higher number of boys than girls wanted to spend money either on mobile phones of latest models and on computers. 21.7 per cent respondents wanted to spend money on eating outside with friends and watching movies. Only 8.3 per cent respondents (including 2.8 per cent boys and 5.5 per cent girls) said that they would like to spend on studies and most of them were from Government School. Therefore it can be said that if respondents had more money they would love to spend on trendy clothes, cosmetics, latest mobiles and partying with friends.

In the present study adolescents were found to be facing diverse issues including sexual problems. During adolescence, bodily changes occur and sexual urges develop giving rise to fear in the mind of adolescents. So adolescents try to gather information from here and there. Due to lack of right information they often face sex related problems. An attempt was therefore made to find out whether respondents were facing sex related problems and for that they were asked relevant questions. It was observed that 41.1 per cent respondents admitted that they felt shy or hesitant in the company of opposite sex. Sometimes teachers made them sit separately. These cases were found to be higher in Government School than in the other two schools. As far as respondents having friends of both sexes was concerned, the number was highest in Vivek High School while 28.9 per cent respondents (with higher percentage of boys than girls) had friends of same sex only. On asking the reasons of not having friends of opposite sex, some of the respondents replied that they felt hesitant making friends of opposite sex. In all the three schools maximum numbers of respondents from Government School as compared to other two schools were facing this kind of
problem. Respondents also revealed that because of societal and parental restrictions they did not make friends of opposite sex. During fieldwork it was found that only 10 per cent respondents (with higher number of boys than girls) disclosed their dating behavior. A clear gender difference was also found as boys openly accepted that they were dating while girls hesitatingly disclosed about the same. These cases were found higher in D.A.V. School than the other two schools. 61.1 respondents indicated that they had never dated and among them percentage of girls was more than boys. Therefore it can be concluded that more than half of the respondents said that they were not dating and those who had been dating were hiding the fact from others especially from parents.

71.1 respondents were having friends of both sexes. Further an effort was made to know whether their parents were aware about their wards’ friendship with opposite sex. It was observed that parents of 57.2 per cent respondents with higher number of girls than boys had knowledge about their friends of opposite sex while these cases were very few in Government School. 13.9 per cent respondents disclosed about their parents’ lack of awareness about their friends of opposite sex and such responses were more in Government School. As compared to Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools, respondents from Government School felt hesitant and scared of revealing about their friends of opposite sex to their parents. 25 per cent respondents (with higher number of girls than boys) disclosed that their parents did not like their wards’ friendship with opposite sex. 46.1 per cent respondents’ (including 20.6 per cent boys and 25.5 per cent girls) parents had no objection regarding their friendship with opposite sex but these cases were found to be very few in Government School. Interestingly it was also observed that most of the respondents from Government School did not have friends of opposite sex. 25 per cent respondents (with more number of girls than boys) revealed that their parents did not like their wards’ friendship with opposite sex.

Further, parents behaved differently when their sons and daughters dated. They were more possessive and adopted a conservative attitude in case of dating behavior of their daughters. On the other hand parents had no objection regarding their sons’ affairs and dating behavior. Here clear gender discrimination can be seen where girls were being beaten up for going on a date and boys were given freedom for dating by their parents. As one of the girls disclosed that her parents would kill her if they came
to know about her affair. This clearly revealed the differential approach of parents in dealing with the sons and daughters. Therefore it can be said that most of the adolescents did not go into relationship because of the fear of parents (possibly they did it secretly). 17.8 per cent respondents (including 13.9 per cent boys and 3.9 per cent girls) expressed their inner feeling of having boy/girl friends as a prestige issue. 80.5 per cent respondents believed that having boy/girl friends was not prestigious rather it spoiled the reputation of both the adolescents as well as their parents.

Adolescence is a stage where physical development takes place which leads to appearance of pubic hair, genital growth, seminal emissions for the boys, and development of breasts and menstruation for the girls. These bodily changes are a major cause of concern for adolescents affecting their level of confidence. Often, they feel hesitant to talk about these changes with others. Therefore it was attempted to know whether respondents were fearful about their bodily changes. It was found that 29.4 per cent respondents (including 11.1 per cent boys and 18.3 per cent girls) were fearful about their bodily changes and such responses were highest in the Government School and girls were found more scared about bodily changes than boys. An interesting observation here was that 63.3 per cent respondents (including 37.2 per cent boys and 26.1 per cent girls) discussed sexual problems only with friends. It was found that in all the three schools, highest proportion of respondents from Government School discussed their sexual problems with friends only. Data reveal the importance of peer group in adolescents’ life. 2.8 per cent respondents admitted that they felt shy while discussing sexual problems with anyone, so they did not discuss these with anyone. A higher proportion of girls shared their sexual problems with mothers. Only 5.6 per cent respondents (mainly boys from all the three schools) discussed their sexual problems with fathers.

Another very important aspect of adolescents’ life is their way of living, dressing, eating and sleeping habits. Sometimes they face objections regarding their way of dressing, eating, sleeping or adopting other cultural norms in conflict with their own culture. Adolescents remain in a state of confusion because they can neither leave their own culture completely nor could adopt western culture. That is why they face cultural problems. It was attempted to find out whether respondents were facing such
kind of problems related to their way of living, eating and dressing up and to elicit such information, relevant questions were asked.

Data have revealed that 57.2 per cent respondents (with negligible gender difference) wanted to look modern and the craze for looking modern was found more among respondents from Vivek High School, whereas for 42.8 per cent respondents, looking modern was not so important. Data also show a craze among respondents for English language and to look modern, as 77.2 per cent respondents (including 35 per cent boys and 42.2 per cent girls) felt that English speaking helped in enhancing one’s status and self-confidence, thus helping to impress others. Out of all the three schools, respondents from Government School were more anxious about speaking English, probably because they were studying in a Hindi medium school. One of the respondents from Government School disclosed that he felt ashamed in front of others because of his inability to speak in English language. Only 22.8 per cent respondents did not believe English helped in enhancing one’s status.

Data in the present study reflected that adolescent respondents felt that not just speaking English but wearing western dresses also enhanced one’s status. As many as 79.4 per cent respondents (with negligible gender difference) preferred to wear western dresses instead of the Indian, while only 20.6 per cent respondents loved to wear Indian dresses. On comparing all the three schools it was found that higher number of respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools as compared to Government School preferred western to Indian dresses. Respondents from Government School disclosed that they faced parental objections for wearing western dresses and 56.1 per cent respondents (including 31.1 per cent boys and 25 per cent girls) disapproved of their parents’ restrictions on wearing western dresses. They also revealed that they often clashed with parents on the choice of dresses. Therefore it may be inferred that adolescents felt desperate to follow the latest fashion or western way of life, despite the fact that it was not approved by parents. Not only western dresses and English language but fast food has an equal craving among adolescents. 46.7 per cent respondents (with no gender difference) were found crazy for pizzas or burgers. Craving for fast food was found more among respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools in comparison to the Government School. 29.4 respondents loved Chinese food while only 15 per cent respondents liked dal/sabji/roti. 8.9 per cent
respondents (with no gender difference) liked south Indian food. So influence of latest trends on food choice of adolescents is evident.

Not only food choices of adolescents but their habits of sleeping and waking up have also changed. It was found that only 3.3 per cent respondents, mainly from Government School went to bed before 10:00 p.m. 3.9 per cent respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools had no fixed timings for going to sleep. Rest of the 92.8 per cent respondents went to sleep late after 10:00 p.m. (51.1 per cent respondents used to go to bed after 10:00 p.m. or between 10 to 11 p.m., 37.2 per cent between 11 to 12 p.m. and 4.5 per cent slept after 12:00 p.m.). Working on computer and surfing the net were the main reasons for their sleeping late. Not only life style of adolescents has changed but the role models in their life have also changed. It was found that in place of political, social leaders or freedom fighters, celebrities (Hollywood actors/actresses and sports persons) were their role models. For a higher number of boys than girls, celebrities like Hollywood actors, cricketers or other sports persons were their role models while more girls considered parents as their role models. 37.8 per cent, 32.2 per cent and 13.3 per cent respondents considered parents, celebrities and teachers, respectively, as their role models. Main personality traits in their role models which were attracting respondents were success, money, glamour, beauty and popularity. It was also found that a larger proportion of boys as compared to girls did not have any role models.

An attempt was also made to examine the problems faced by parents and teachers of adolescents. Therefore for making this study more comprehensive, 20 parents and 10 teachers from each school were interviewed with the aim to find out the kinds of problems they were facing relating to their adolescent children/students. In the chapter entitled “Parents’ and Teachers’ Perceptions about Adolescents”, it was found that parents were facing enormous problems in dealing with their adolescent children. 50 per cent parents complained about their wards’ excessive use of computer and television. They also disclosed that television/computer was biggest bone of contention between them and their wards. One of the parents shared his bad experience when he stopped his son from using excessive computer; his son broke the computer in anger. Another parent disclosed that her adolescent children showed tantrums, i.e. refused eating food, when restricted from watching excessive television.
This shows that adolescents either emotionally blackmail their parents or threaten them by showing aggressive behavior. Parents were found worried for not only an excessive use of computers by their adolescent children but also the purpose for which they were using it. As one of the parents disclosed that he had caught his son surfing porn sites. Hence parents were worried about the effects of such material on psychological development of their growing up children. 18.3 per cent parents showed a great concern about the company enjoyed by their wards. 13.4 per cent parents were worried because of poor academic performance of their children while 18.3 per cent of them were unable to bear irritating and bad behavior of their wards. Interestingly, 76.7 per cent parents believed that problems of adolescents varied with gender. During interaction, parents responded that boys were more aggressive than girls. Boys roamed around with friends all the time and did not listen to their parents but these kinds of problems were not observed in case of girls. Only 23.3 per cent parents opined that problems did not vary with gender as they were facing same kinds of problems with boys and girls.

Efforts were also made in the present study to find out the issues over which parents had clashes with their adolescent children. 45 per cent of the parents said that an excessive use of computer and television, and irregular sleeping habits were the main sources of clash between them and their wards. Parents were worried that their wards were neglecting their studies because of computer and television. 25 per cent of the parents were facing conflicting situation due to an over indulgence of their children with friends who were disapproved by them. Other issues of conflict were back answering or arguing with parents when parents objected at adolescent children’s dressing sense, eating habits and misbehavior at home. Not much difference was found in terms of type of school or gender.

Thereafter it was attempted to examine as to how parents coped up with these situations. It was found that 13.3 per cent of the parents found it hard to cope up with the problematic adolescent children. On the other hand 40 per cent of the parents said that it was more effective to deal with adolescent children with love and understanding. An interesting finding here was that parents belonging to lower income group believed that scolding, beating, punishing and keeping control was the only way to handle adolescents. Parents of respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V.
Schools were found to be more liberal in dealing with their adolescent children. The researcher somehow felt that these parents somehow managed to give politically correct responses.

Parents were also asked to comment upon the impact of electronic media on their wards. 81.7 per cent of the parents considered that television was playing a negative role in their adolescent children’s life. Negligible difference in responses was found among the three schools. As far as negative role of computer was concerned, only 16.7 per cent parents admitted to it. They said that sitting in front of the computer for long hours affected not only studies but outdoor/indoor activities of the adolescent children also. As far as benefit of electronic media was concerned only 10 per cent of the parents were in favor of watching television. 41.7 per cent parents admitted that in today’s world, knowledge of computer was a must as enormous information was available on it which could be very useful to the adolescents in their studies. 41.7 per cent parents felt that computer had both positive and negative effects, while only 8.3 per cent parents found television both good and bad depending on how it is used.

When parents were asked about the advantages and disadvantages of electronic media for their adolescent children, most of the parents expressed concern about the ill effects of the excessive/wrong use of electronic media by their adolescent children, as it was affecting their studies, health, indoor-outdoor activities and socio-psychological development. It was also making them over demanding because of advertisements shown on television. Parents made a constant complaint that their wards did not spend time with them but kept glued to either television or computer.

Apart from parents, thirty teachers (ten from each school) were also interviewed and efforts were made to find out the different kinds of problems faced by them while dealing with adolescent students. Findings indicate that in all the three schools teachers were facing multiple problems. Interestingly, teachers in Government School were facing more problems as compared to other two schools. Not completing home work, cheating, not paying attention in the class, fighting with other students and making noise were most cited problems in all the three schools. However, problems varied with the school and gender. Damaging school property like benches, chairs, switch boards and bunking the classes were common in D.A.V. and Government Schools but not in Vivek High School and the number of boys creating this kind of
problems was higher among boys than girls. Teachers also complained that they were facing more problems with boys than with girls as boys were more aggressive and argumentative than girls. Further, boys tried to disturb the class while teaching was in process by asking irrelevant questions, teasing other students and laughing. Teachers of Government School also disclosed that misleading and arguing with teachers by boys were common but these kinds of problems were not observed in other two schools.

So it may be concluded that teachers in different schools faced different kinds of problems in handling the adolescent students. It is clear from the data that students belonging to Government School were from lower socio-economic strata and were found to be more problematic by teachers. One of the Government School teachers said that every day they faced one or the other kind of problems. Fighting among students had become everyday norm in the school. When principal called parents to complain about the misdeeds of their wards, their parents in turn started quarreling with teachers for taking the matter to the principal. So for Government teachers it was very difficult to handle the students as well as the parents since most of the parents found it difficult to come to school due to their occupational hazards and they also were not very supportive to the teachers.

Another Government School teacher narrated one of the incidents that had happened in the school. She said that one of the male students of ninth class misbehaved with a girl of the same class. When the principal called the boy’s parents, his father reacted by saying, “mere ladke ne kiss hi to kiya hai koi rape to nahi kiya”. Teachers also disclosed that every other day they caught students having mobile phones with porn movies or MMSs.

Thus teachers from Government School were facing more problems as compared to the other two schools. Further, teachers were asked to give their views on whether problems varied with gender.

80 per cent teachers said that problems varied with gender as they faced different kinds of problems with boys and girls. One of the teachers said that boys usually indulged into rowdy behavior by damaging things in the school but girls never did such things and boys were more aggressive, destructive and disobedient than girls. Views of teachers were elicited on the advantages and disadvantages of electronic
media in the life of adolescent students. In response to that teachers showed their concern over the misuse of internet by teenagers. They said that no doubt knowledge of computer was necessary, yet adolescents were using this technology for wrong purposes like making projects or assignments by copying material from internet, making false accounts on face book and watching objectionable material without knowing its consequences. Spending long hours in front of television was affecting their studies, health, sociability and mental development.

Thus according to data discussed in the preceding chapters, adolescence is a tough stage not only for adolescents but for their parents and teachers also. In chapter IV, it was indicated that parents and teachers were worried about the excessive use/misuse of electronic media by adolescents and opined that it had harmful effects on the all-round development of adolescents. So the study made an attempt to find out the effects of electronic media as well as the peer group on adolescents and coping mechanisms used by them.

Television is a very influential electronic medium which has penetrated into almost every household. In the present study all the respondents except one from the Government School had television at home. It was also found that 62.2 per cent respondents watched television for 1-2 hours, 27.2 per cent for 2-3 hours, 7.2 per cent for 3-4 hours, and 3.3 per cent watched it for more than 4 hours, daily. Not much gender difference was found but on comparison it was found that a higher proportion of respondents from Government School watched television for longer duration. Spending more time in watching television is not much a cause of concern but the kind of programs adolescents watched matters a lot. It was found that 66.1 per cent of the respondents watched entertainment programs (movies, daily soaps, cartoons and sports) while 30 per cent watched informative programs like news and quiz or science related programs. On comparing the three schools it was found that 75 per cent of the respondents from the Government School and 73.3 and 50 per cent from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools respectively watched entertainment programs. Gender difference was found in this case as more girls loved to watch entertainment programs as compared to boys in all the three schools. As far as information related programs were concerned the number of boys in all the three schools watching such programs was higher than that of girls.
41.1 per cent of parents restricted their children from watching television while 58.9 per cent of them did not. As compared to other two schools, a higher proportion of respondents from Vivek High School were facing restrictions from parents from watching television. As far as gender difference was concerned more boys than girls complained that their parents restricted them from watching television. Computer is another powerful electronic media and popular among adolescents. It was found that 59.4 per cent of the respondents were having computers at home whereas 40.6 per cent did not. Among those who were possessing computers at home, 93.3 per cent belonged to Vivek High School. Not a single respondent from Government School was having a computer at home. Possessing a computer at home was found to be associated mainly with the family income.

Respondents (40.6 per cent) who were not having computer at home were accessing the same at different places. Out of 40.6 per cent respondents, 15 per cent (all from Government School) were not using computer anywhere, whereas rest of the respondents were using computers at cyber cafes, friends’ places or/and in the schools. It was observed that 68.3 per cent respondents (with negligible gender difference) were spending 1-2 hours daily on computer. In all the three schools respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools were spending more time on computer as compared to the respondents from Government School probably because they were having computers at home. Respondents of Government School were deprived of the computer facilities at home, so they could either use it at school or at cyber cafes, and thus the time spent on computer was less. On the whole, adolescent respondents loved to spend time on computer. Efforts were made to find out the purpose for which they used computer. It was found that e-mailing and chatting were a favorite pastime of respondents as 40 per cent of them spent time on these activities. This percentage was higher in Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools as compared to Government School. It was also found that some of the respondents were indulging in unethical activities like concealing their identity while chatting, making fake profile on face book and talking to their boy/girl friends without the knowledge of parents. They often used computer for preparing projects for which they usually copied and pasted the material.
A few respondents disclosed that they had never gone to the library to collect material as every kind of educational material was available on the internet. This shows that many of them were spending large part of their day on computer, curtailing other social activities and studies. Even parents complained that their wards were neglecting their studies and outdoor activities because of computer. 56.1 per cent respondents said that they had never missed their studies because of computer but their parents contradicted their statements. During interviews adolescent respondents had concealed the truth.

Findings have shown that an excessive use of computer and television was a major bone of contention between parents and their adolescent children, as 50 per cent parents expressed their anguish over the excessive use of computer and television by their wards. The data highlight that 35.6 per cent of the boys missed their studies as compared to 22.6 per cent girls for the sake of computers. The proportion of respondents who missed their studies was higher in both Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools as compared to Government School respondents.

During interviews respondents were asked whether their parents objected to the excessive use of computer and in response to this question only 28.3 per cent respondents said they were restricted by their parents on computer use. As far as gender difference was concerned more boys, with a maximum number of respondents from Vivek High School were facing objection to the use of computers. Preceding with the analysis the researcher asked the respondents about the kinds of objections faced by them. Respondents faced objections by their parents on account of the effects of computer on studies, health and other activities. 26.1 per cent respondents (with more boys than girls) felt that an excessive use of computer had hit their outdoor activities like playing with friends or going to market etc. whereas 58.9 per cent respondents did not feel so. Not only outdoor activities but daily schedule/social activities had also been adversely affected by prolonged use of computers and 21.7 per cent respondents admitted that. Respondents told that ‘going for walk’, joining ‘tea group’, ‘playing and interacting with friends or family’, ‘time of sleeping and studying’ had been reduced. However, 63.3 per cent of the respondents said that they did find any change in the daily schedule/social activities. However, the parents were very categorical in admitting that their adolescent children were cut off from family,
friends and society because of computers and did not participate either in domestic work or in other social activities.

An effort was also made to examine the reaction of respondents on the arrival of guests when they were working on computers or watching television. It was found that the arrival of guests was not a pleasurable experience for many respondents as only 6.1 per cent of them said that they would switch off the computer or television and attended the guests. Very few respondents admitted that they would meet the guests and then return to the computer or television again. So it may be inferred that respondents did not want to leave computer or television for guests. A few of them disclosed that they felt disturbed on the arrival of guests. They also got irritated when their parents asked them to switch off the computer/television and attend to the guests which often led to friction between respondents and their parents. So it may be inferred that electronic media were making respondents unsocial, affecting their social interactions.

Not only social relations but respondents’ health was also at stake because of an excessive use of electronic media. 63.3 per cent of the respondents themselves admitted that an excessive use of computers could lead to health problems. It was observed that respondents from Vivek High and D.A.V. Schools faced more health problems as compared to Government School respondents. Most of the respondents were finding it hard to stay away from computer in spite of knowing the ill effects of excessive use of it on health. This indicates an over dependence of adolescents on computers. Most of the respondents mentioned health problems they were facing because of excessive use of computers like neck or back pain, poor eye sight or irritation in the eyes, mental exhaustion, stress, strain and obesity.

Efforts were also made to find out the perceptions of adolescents about computer. Interestingly, only 2.8 per cent respondents admitted that computer was a trouble. 48.3 per cent respondents considered computer both as a necessary as well as a trouble while 33.9 per cent considered computer as a necessity. For respondents computer was a magic box providing every kind of information and medium of connecting to the outer world.

After studying the perceptions of respondents, parents were also interviewed to know about their perceptions about electronic media. Most of the parents expressed their
concern over the adolescents’ addiction to computer and television. They admitted that their adolescent children watched even those programs which were not meant for them. An excessive use of computer and television by adolescents was not only affecting their studies but other activities and health also. Parents disclosed that their adolescent children did not listen to them while working on computers or watching television. They had become extremely demanding and had adopted western culture, forgetting their own values and Indian culture. However, some of the parents were of the opinion that adolescents should not be restricted from watching television or using computer within a limit. They should be allowed to watch a little of television to reduce the academic stress and pressure. One of the parents said that at least her wards did not loiter around with friends and remained indoors because and television or computer. Teachers were also interviewed and they said that computer was a blessing if used for the right purpose. It is full of information like an open library but this had harmful effects on the health and academics of the students. Students were becoming copy cats. Both parents and teachers were aware of the possible harmful effects of electronic media but still were of the opinion that in order to survive in today’s society, adolescents needed to become computer literate.

Not only media but peer group is another powerful influencing agent. Findings in this study have revealed that most of the respondents shared their personal problems with their friends as compared to their family members and they preferred the company of friends over parents. Indeed, peer group was most important for them. In the present study it was found that respondents compared themselves with their friends in the matter of dresses, looks, pocket money and freedom given by parents and thought that their friends were better placed. Such an attitude was not found so common among boys. It was also observed that respondents loved to stay in the company of their peer group. They enjoyed the company of peer group for the activities like going to the market together, gossip around or play, watch television and surf internet. It was also found that very few boys admitted that they teased girls.

On the whole, it was observed that respondents loved to spend most of their leisure time with their friends. They were enjoying even unethical activities like teasing girls under the influence of their friends. One of the boys disclosed that they watched pornographic material on internet with friends. An effort was made to find out
whether friends pressurized respondents to do any unethical activities. 29.9 per cent boys and 21.5 per cent girls revealed that their friends often pressurized them to befriend opposite sex. Some of the respondents disclosed that under peer pressure they had damaged public property, smoked and watched pornographic material on internet. One of the girls from Government School admitted that she had stolen money from home. This shows that under peer pressure adolescents indulge into activities which are illegal, without knowing what is right or wrong. Data revealed that peer group was playing an important role in adolescents’ life. Most of the parents revealed that their children were either busy with computers or with friends. Even teachers felt that peer group mattered a lot to the respondents. They bunked classes, damaged school property, teased classmates or other students under peer pressure.

Further an effort was made to trace the coping mechanisms used by adolescents to solve their problems. In case of shortage of money, 37.2 percent respondents admitted having borrowed money either from friends or siblings while some of them (with equal number of boys and girls) did not bother. One of the boy said he was doing part time job to earn money. A few respondents disclosed that they stole money either from home or outside. This shows that respondents managed in one or the other way to get money. Respondents were not only facing problems regarding pocket money but were facing restrictions imposed by their parents on over indulgence with television and computer. Maximum number of respondents had stopped using computer or watching television after their parents’ objections and among them, the proportion of girls was higher than boys. Some of the respondents said that they continued using computers by keeping it a secret from the parents. But 18.9 per cent respondents said that their parents were curtailing their freedom by restricting them from using computer or watching television and because of this they felt depressed. A few respondents said they sat alone and cried on being restricted by parents. Efforts were also made to find out association of type of families and time spent on computer and television and no significant association was found in both the cases. So it can be said that time spent on television and computer does not affected by family type.

Parents were not only worried about the excessive use of electronic media but also the company of their wards and they tried to restrain them from meeting some of their friends. Maximum number of respondents in all the three schools stopped meeting
those particular friend/friends. Some of them continued meeting them secretly while few of them did not bother about parents’ restrictions and continued meeting their friends openly. Here objections raised by parents had no meaning for the adolescent respondents. Very few tried to convince their parents about their friends and some of them said they sometimes met such friends.

Such issues naturally increased the gap between adolescents and their parents, creating problems for both. Both parents and children therefore were found to use different coping mechanisms. Most of the respondents discussed their problems with friends because they had opined that their friends would better understand them. 22.2 per cent respondents said that they did not share their problems with others. Some of the respondents disclosed that they sat alone and cried because they thought they had no other option left or felt helpless. Respondents were also asked when they got frustrated what they did. In response to this question 54.4 per cent respondents said they discussed with their friends and tried to relax. 41.1 per cent respondents said they could not relieve themselves from frustration and sat alone and cried. One of the girls from a well reputed school revealed that she had indulged in taking alcohol. A few of them also admitted that they retaliated by shouting, fighting and breaking things or not responding to parents in a respectful way. Therefore, it may be inferred that chatting with friends was the best way to overcome the frustration used by respondents.

**Theoretical Contribution of the Study**

Going back to the different theoretical perspectives on adolescence discussed in Chapter I, it may be argued, on the basis of the findings of the present study, that with the passage of time, problems of adolescence have changed considerably. To take Freud’s viewpoint, while an adolescent definitely goes through several biological and psycho-social crises while passing through puberty and teenage, his/her coping behavior is bound to vary with different socio-cultural contexts. The sociological perspectives have always underlined the significance of cultural and social environment in the adolescence experience; yet, the nature of these experiences cannot be conceived as being static. With an enormous exposure to electronic media, first television and then computers and now mobile phones etc., coupled with the
tremendous influence of peer group, adolescence experience has moved out of ‘home’ and ‘parents’. The whole experience from the perspective of adolescents as well as parents has now to be understood in the light of media and peer pressure, thus making it a challenging task for both parents as well as teachers. The present study thus highlights the role of peers and media in the whole experience of adolescence, both for boys and girls, which greatly vary with income, class and type of school. Thus, adolescence cannot be understood per se, it needs to be examined in the context of gender, peer group, school, income and media. Not only the problems but the coping mechanisms also vary significantly with these variables, giving a contextual meaning to the whole phenomenon.

Implications for Further Research

Since the present study focused upon adolescents, their parents and teachers in the city of Chandigarh, it would be a meaningful exercise to validate its findings in the context of somewhat different locales, e.g., small towns, metropolises and rural set up. Further, in view of the fast pace of change in terms of information communication technology, the adolescence experience is bound to change tremendously with the passage of time. Hence, repetitive studies shall throw more light on the most recent experiences relating to adolescence, in relation to parenting as well as the coping mechanisms.