CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION AND FORMULATION OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The development of the human young is a continuous process that occupies approximately the first two decades of life. It is nevertheless convenient to divide this phase into three phases, namely infancy, childhood and adolescence. Although these merge with each other and are difficult to define precisely, yet these phases can be distinguished with reasonable clarity. Each phase has its own problems, namely, physical, social and psychological.

Adolescence is a crucial period of life between childhood and adulthood. It is rightly held by psychologists to be one marked by rapid all round development and growth of the human system. For this reason it has remained a subject of fruitful enquiry and great interest for research purposes. Almost all societies, past and present, sophisticated or primitive, have regarded adolescence as a crucial phase of growth (Hemming 1960). Modern scientific investigation of adolescence as a separate and distinct phase in human development really began with the work of Hall. To Hall (1904), the adolescence stage of life has been the most fascinating of all themes and is the most crying need of service, yet not understood how to render right. According to him, adolescence years are the best decades of life and no age is so responsive to the entire best and wisest adult endeavor (Scarborough 1981).

The adolescence image is not only somewhat unclear and confused but the terms relating to this period are also variously, often ambiguously defined. Adolescence, as a process and as a period, also has been defined differently. However, to form a clear concept about what adolescence means and who an adolescent is, it is better to understand the meaning of adolescence. Different scholars have presented varying views on adolescence and its correlates. During this phase of life an adolescent is likely to undergo continual change, change of stature, strength, mental power and emotional reaction. Following are some of the definitions of adolescence given by various scholars.

Longman Dictionary of Psychology and Psychiatry (1984) describes adolescence as "the period of transition from childhood dependence and immaturity to the greater
maturity and independence of adulthood. The period starts with puberty and roughly spans from age 12 to 21 in girls and 13 to 22 in boys”.

According to the Stoff’s “Dictionary of Human Behavior” (1981) and Good’s “Dictionary of Education” (1959), “adolescence is usually defined as the period of human development between the onset of puberty at around 12 years and the attainment of physical adult maturity at around 21 years”.

In Page and Thomas’s ‘International Dictionary of Education’ (1977) adolescence is a chronological term, is often equated with teenage years or in advanced societies, with the period of secondary education. This is regarded as the period between the beginning of puberty and the attainment of adulthood, varying in length and nature between and within cultures.

Diverse interpretations of adolescence develop from the fact that various writers have used different terminology for describing the adolescent period. For example Gesell, Illg and Ames (1956) speak of youth and define it as a period from ten to sixteen. Hurlock (1973) and Freud (1924) have defined adolescence period from 13 to 18 years for girls. According to Hanna and McAllister (1960) puberty usually occurs in girls from 10 or 11-13 and girls begin to mature sexually one or two years earlier than boys. According to Davis (1985) adolescence is the development period between childhood and adulthood, spans the years from 12 to the early 20s. It is a complex period of human growth that leaves many parents, teachers and counselors perplexed and startled by the rapid changes in the mood and behavior of the adolescent. Chauhan (1987) states that, chronologically adolescence comes roughly between the years from 12 to the early 20s. The onset of adolescence also varies from culture to culture depending on the socio-economic conditions of the society.

Hurlock (1976) defines adolescence as, “both a way of life and span of time in the physical and psychological development of an individual”. It represents a period of growth and change in nearly all aspects of a child, e.g. physical, mental, social and emotional life. It is the time of new experiences, new responsibilities and new relationships with adults as well as peers. Hall (1904) thought of the period of adolescence as a critical stage of transition between the primitive and civilized person characterized as the age of “Storm and Stress” in a very famous disposition. Muzio (1976) refers to adolescent stage as an exclusive period because at this period the
adolescent attempts to differentiate himself/herself not only from younger children, but particularly from adults, whose responsibility he/she finds frightening.

According to Bossard and Ball (1960), with puberty comes the beginning of adolescence. It is the transition stage from childhood to maturity, during which new patterns of behavior have to develop to meet the demands, both of the larger and more diversified life of his/her peers and of the adult society which he/she begins to enter. For Frank (1952) “adolescence is traditionally defined in physical terms as the period of growth beginning with puberty and ending with adulthood”. However, for purposes of education, guidance and research, a more inclusive concept is desirable. In our society adolescence is both a geological process and a sociological phenomenon.

Physically, adolescence can be defined as, “the span of a young person’s life between the obvious onset of puberty and the completion of bone growth” (Konopka 1973b). Psychologically, adolescence may also refer to adjustment of status. For example Konopka (1973b) defines adolescence as the “transition period from dependent childhood to self sufficient adulthood” as a marginal situation in which new adjustments have to be made, namely those that distinguish child behavior from adult behavior in a given society.

Freud (1953) considered development as proceeding sequentially through five stages: oral, anal, phallic, latent and genital. The genital stage marks the advent of puberty and entrance into adolescence. Ausubel (1954) included two aspects of change in his theory of adolescence, i.e. biological and psychological change. According to Jersild (1957) “adolescence is the span of years during which boys and girls move from childhood to adulthood - mentally, emotionally, socially and physically”. According to McCandless (1970) “adolescence is both a time of drastic change and a part of the continuous stream of human development. Adolescence is a bridge period, a time of shifting from one stage to another”.

Medically, period of adolescence refers to the onset growth and hormonal changes leading to sexual maturity (Scarborough 1981). Legally, adolescence ends when the individual is an adult, assumes the responsibility for casting a vote. Educationally, adolescence is the time period spent mainly in high school and partly in college. Sociologically, adolescence period leads from parental dependency to self-sufficient adulthood. Psychologically, adolescence follows a set of physical, social, emotional or cognitive changes as well as changes relating to personality. Beginning puberty is a
major developmental milestone of adolescence considered by many as the
developmental change that signals one’s transition into adolescence from childhood
(Brooke and Peterson 1984). According to Crow and Crow (1956) the term
adolescence, adolescent age, adolescent period or teenage phase of development are
used variously to designate the period of transition from dependence upon adult
direction and protection to self-dependence and self-determination.

Thus there are different views on adolescence expressed by scholars, yet according to
Rogers (1981) “whatever the relative merits of the various concepts of adolescence,
all must be taken into account, since all exist in modern society. We must clear
ourselves to the current frame of reference whenever adolescence is being discussed”.

A detailed review of above conceptualizations of adolescence leads one to conclude
that the socio-cultural contexts of societies notwithstanding, adolescence implies the
period in which a child turns into an adult and goes through several biological,
psychological and cultural changes, causing a lot of stress to him/her, as well as the
society and family of which he/she is a part. Due to this very reason, it is very
pertinent to conduct systematic studies on adolescents, especially in contemporary
societies, with tremendous competition and stress in store for adolescents, especially
from the sociological perspective.

**Theoretical Perspectives on Adolescence**

A number of theories, e.g. behavioral theory, psychoanalytic theory, anthropological
theory, social learning theory and developmental theory have put forth various
explanations for adolescence and related issues.

Among the most widely accepted ideas in the behavioral sciences is the theory that
adolescence is a period of disturbance for the child’s self-image. It puts forth the idea
that adolescent’s social and personality development is directly linked to biological
and physical changes. It is a critical stage of transition between the primitive and
civilized person characterized as the age of “storm and stress” (Hall 1904).

The psychoanalytical theory proposes that during adolescence there is a close
relationship between physiological and psychological changes. These changes would
lead to moodiness, anxiety, tension and other such characteristics (Freud 1953). An
adolescent may behave for a considerable length of time in an inconsistent and
unpredictable manner to fight his/her impulses or to accept them successfully or to be overrun by them, to love his/her parents and to hate them, to revolt against them and to be dependent on them, to be more idealistic, artistic, generous and unselfish than he/she will ever be again but also the opposite, i.e. self-centered, egoistic, calculating (Freud 1948). These fluctuations between extreme opposites would be deemed highly abnormal at any other stage of life. Psychoanalytical theory postulates that the bourgeoning sexual desires at puberty spark a resurgence of oedipal conflicts for the boys and pre-oedipal pressures for the girls (Blos 1962 and Freud 1958). To establish mature cross-sexual relationships in adulthood, the child must resolve these conflicts during adolescence. In the interim, both his/her body image and his/her self-image radically change.

Another psychologist views it as a time of identity crisis in which one struggles for a stable sense of self. ‘Crisis does not mean a breakdown or catastrophe but rather a “crucial period” that focuses on the integration of a number of important elements such as capacities, opportunities, ideals and identifications into a viable self definition (Erikson 1959).

The central thesis of Ausubel’s integrated comprehensive theory is that adolescence is a distinct developmental phase with changes that are biological as well as social in origin. These changes are discontinuous of the preceding biosocial conditions of growth and status of the child and require extensive reorganization of the personality structure. This reorganization contains uniform elements across cultures because of the common psychological reactions associated with sexual maturation and sex roles combined with new personality traits, changed status and adult roles in the community. Thus Ausubel distinguishes between universal psychological problems and psychosocial problems that are conditioned by specific socioeconomic factors and modes of regulation and attitudes of specific social and cultural orders (Ausubel 1954).

Anthropological perspective has provided the cross cultural analysis of adolescence. It argues that the adolescence period need not be full of stress and emotional turmoil in all societies. In fact the outlook towards this period varies with each culture. In 1920 Mead found that adolescence was not particularly stressful in Samoa and New Guineasas in western culture. The stage of adolescence could not thus said to be universal (Mead 1949). Social learning theory too strongly rejected the idea that the
personality of the child undergoes a basic change at adolescence. There is no “storm and stress” accompanying adolescence. The personality of the child would continue to develop and would not change radically.

Sociologists traditionally characterize adolescence as a period of physical maturity and social immaturity. Because of the complexity of present social system, the child reaches physical adulthood before he is capable of functioning well in adult social roles. Adolescence becomes extremely difficult because the new physical capabilities and new social pressures to become independent coincide with many impediments to actual independence, power and sexual freedom.

Davis (1944) argued that one important control on adolescent behavior arises from the ‘socialization of anxiety’. The child learns to seek behavior that is approved and avoid behavior that is not approved in order to avoid anxiety. During adolescence, such socialized anxiety becomes an internal guide to behavior. The culture defines for the adolescent as to which norms and values would lead to reduction of anxiety. For adolescents the amount of turmoil will be related to the rigor with which they are made to conform to social norms.

Developmental psychologists emphasize that the young must master developmental tasks- a skill, an attitude or a certain kind of knowledge during adolescence. These include the necessity of the young to learn new ways of behaving, to acquire new ideas about themselves and other people and to make important decisions that will affect the rest of their lives. Havighurst (1951) felt that the healthy unfolding of the personality demands:

1. Accepting one’s physique and learning to cope with a masculine or feminine role.
2. New relationships with age mates of both sexes.
3. Emotional independence from parents and other adults.
5. Selecting and preparing for a vocation.
6. Developing intellectual skills and concepts for carrying out the general civic responsibilities of an adult citizen.
7. Desiring and achieving socially responsible behavior.
Empirical evidence on the issue as to whether or not it is appropriate to speak of adolescence as a ‘crisis’ or for the existence of unusual stress during adolescence is controversial. On the one hand, various agencies and individuals who deal with adolescent problems assert that the number of children who come to the attention of intervention agencies rises during adolescence. On the other hand, there is evidence that the majority of adolescents do not have unusual difficulties. In a large survey, Douvan and Adelson (1966) found that there was little conflict between adolescents and their parents. The majority of adolescents surveyed did not report any existence of psychic upheaval, feelings of conflict or strong rebellion. It did not however deny the existence of crisis rather it was being avoided or suppressed by the strong demands of society for adolescent conformity. Offer (1969) on the basis of his longitudinal study of adolescent boys from ages 14 to 18, suggests that for most boys these years are not characterized by stress or turmoil.

**Empirical Studies on Problems of Adolescence**

Review of related literature is an essential pre-requisite for planning and execution of any research work. Best (1983) writes, “the research for reference material is a time consuming but fruitful phase. A familiarity with the literature in any problem area helps to discover what is already known, what others have attempted to find out, what methods of research have been promising or disappointing and what problems remain to be solved”. In order to create a practical background to the plan and procedure of the study in hand, it is desirable to refer to the related studies on the subject. Survey of related studies was undertaken with a view to enrich the present knowledge about the research problem and to judge from the previous records, how far effective work has been done to find out the problems of adolescents. Available studies indicate that in India there is a dearth of standardized work done in the area under focus.

The empirical studies on the problems of adolescents by and large can be categorized into six broad themes. These are discussed below.
1. Problems Associated with Adolescence

Quite a few studies reveal that adolescents, both boys and girls face similar kinds of problems during this stage. These studies are given below.

The Berkeley Growth Study (Jones and Baley 1941) provided data on the problems that occurred during the development of youngsters. The parents of these children reported a high rate of incidence of many childhood behavioral problems (such as destructiveness, temper tantrums, eating and sleeping disruption) and personality problems (timidity and demanding attention). By adolescence only seven problems were commonly cited compared to forty-six categories needed to classify common childhood problems. About one-third of the adolescents were bothered by at least one of the seven typical disturbances, mood swing, outburst of temper, jealousy, over sensitiveness and disturbing dreams.

Jenning (1950) conducted a study and found that the highly chosen girls were described most frequently as being cooperative, having an even disposition, displaying initiative and exhibiting behavior which contributed to the harmony and effectiveness of group living. In contrast, the under-chosen girls were characterized by socially disagreeable behavior characteristics. Their mothers indicated that these girls frequently exhibited quarrelsome complaining, nervous, aggressive, and domineering and attention seeking behavior.

Valentine’s (1943) study of his student group revealed that 76 per cent recalled moods of intense depression during adolescence, some of considerable duration, 29 per cent of the sample reported contemplating suicide during adolescence.

Frank (1951) concluded from an investigation, in which projective techniques were used to explore the personality development of adolescent girls, that the three hundred girls in the study showed evidence of ‘more frequent and more severe’ emotional disturbances than was anticipated. Problems appeared especially in the area of interpersonal relationships, giving rise to ‘Preoccupation with personal perplexities, feelings and fantasies’. There was evidence of a great deal of unhappiness especially among some younger groups of adolescent girls coming from ‘widely differing socio-economic levels and ethnic-cultural groups’.

Working with a group of 109 women in training colleges, plus 19 post graduate students taking the Diploma of Education, Wall (1948) found that 11.7 per cent of his
sample stated that they were unhappy in adolescence. The research indicates that the adolescent years tend to be less happy than those preceding puberty. It is not that adolescence by itself generates problems, but the period of adolescence is one of vulnerability, when problems of adjustment and relationships emerge under the inescapable tasks and challenges of the period.

According to an American study by Pressey and Robinson (1933) based on 5000 cases, the incidence of worries concerned with personal appearance doubles between the ages of twelve and fifteen among girls and then remains about constant until the early twenties, whereas fear of fire is high at age twelve. To summarize the American research, we may say that the past quarter of a century has been a vigorous and varied series of inquiries into adolescent problems, the upshot of which has been a considerable degree of agreement about the range of adolescent problems and the categories into which these problems group, even though variations are found between researches in the importance of individual items. A striking outcome of the investigations has been that differences in social and economic status affect only slightly the range and type of problems experienced by young people.

According to the study done by Frank (1944) during adolescence a number, not definitely known but significantly large, suffer what is known as “Nervous breakdown”, while others commit suicide or attempt to do so, become delinquents, vagrants, “bums” or homosexual or waste their lives in alcoholism, drug addiction or in various neurotic patterns to self-defeat and tragedy for themselves and their families. Some of these unfortunate outcomes occur among the most promising youth, the highly intelligent and gifted, whose perplexities and personality difficulties are often too long ignored.

Saxena (1966) conducted a study on the topic “An Investigation into the Personality Traits and Adjustment of the Adolescent Girls in Relation to Intelligence” and reported that adolescent girls’ social and emotional adjustments are influenced by their intelligence level in the negative direction during the adolescent period.

2. Gender and Problems of Adolescence

A large number of studies indicate gender differences in that problems of adolescence tend to vary between boys and girls. Some of such studies are discussed below.
Jones et al. (1960) at the University of California made an extensive study of the special problems that face early and late maturing adolescents. They found that early maturing girls suffer real handicaps while early maturing boys are not adversely affected but in fact are benefited by early physical and sexual development. Early maturing girls have many serious adjustment problems to face while this is not generally so with late maturing girls.

Hand et al. 1949 found in their research that girl adolescents faced money related problems or the main source of most of their troubles was home life where parents did not get along very well. Whereas boys’ chief problem was related to sex and learning to control the urges.

Symonds (1946) has made a comparative study to find out the difference between various likings of adolescent boys and girls. He has found that their likings and problems, though almost of the same type, are different only in degree. Their most difficult problems were related to health, economic independence, interest in studies and physical appearance. The problems of boys related more to economic independence and information connected with the opposite sex. The problems of girls related mostly to efforts for making their appearance more attractive.

In a study carried out by Lewis (1949) involving 362 junior high school girls and 339 junior high school boys, the subjects were asked to submit lists of personal problems. These problems were then classified in seven different groups: school, home life, social future, money, religion, health and development. For the girls, by far the largest categories were social, home life, and school, in that order. It is interesting to observe that, in the social and home life categories, the incidence of problems among girls was twice as great as that among boys.

Bell (1939) brought out following significant differences of home adjustment between boy and girls. The high school boys had experienced a desire to run away from home more often than the high school girls. The high school girls were more irritated than were the boys because of the home conditions like favoritism by parents to boys, fear towards their parents, conflicting love and hate for parents, parents with violent tempers and parents criticizing their appearance.
Amos and Washington (1960) in their study found that the areas of major concern for boys were school, money, work and future and self centered concerns whereas for girls these were money, work and future.

Cole and Hall (1964) found that social problems trouble girls more than the boys do problems related to morals, religion, sex and marriage and problems around personal attractiveness.

Gore, Susan, Aseltine, Robert and Calton (1992) studied the means through which life stress is associated with depressive symptoms, as measured by the Center for Epidemiological Studies Depression Scale. Data were collected from randomly selected sample of 1208 high school aged adolescents. Analysis was focused on family structure, socio-economic status and gender as background risks that directly and indirectly influences symptoms, as well as vulnerability context that shape differential repressiveness to stressful experiences. Findings indicate (1) while significant gender differences are evident in aspects of stress exposure and in additive models of stress effects, stresses and supports do not explain the significant gender difference in depressive symptoms (2) girls with low educational backgrounds have the highest levels of depressive symptoms (3) no gender differences are found in vulnerability to stress (4) children in single parent families have higher levels of depressive symptoms. (5) Both boys and girls with low socio-economic backgrounds are more vulnerable to a wide range of stresses and support deficits.

Seth (1970) investigated the adjustment problems of female adolescents. He found that female teenagers had home, school, sex, personal, social and vocational problems. Some of the reasons for these problems were found to be (1) lag between physical and social development (2) emotional changes that occur during this period (3) although problems seemed to be common, the aspect of individual differences was found to be in operation and (4) the individual factors of significance were found to be age, religion, socio-economic and sibling position.

Saraswat (1964) compared girls and boys with a view of studying the extent to which boys and girls differ in home, health, social and emotional adjustment. One hundred and sixty students of both sexes and of age group 14-16 years were taken. It was found that adolescent boys and girls had almost the same problems regarding health. These were slight similarities in social and emotional areas among boys and girls.
Sarojini (1971) studied personality problems of pupils between age group 8 to 16 years. Her findings revealed that during the years 14-16, boys had more adjustment problems than girls. Behavioral, emotional and adjustment problems were significantly more for boys than girls during the period of early adolescence.

Goswami (1980) constructed an adjustment inventory for assessing personality adjustment of adolescent girls. The study reported that the adolescent girls encounter maximum problems in the area of emotional, mental, school, social and home adjustment. The least problematic areas were physical adjustment and sex adjustment.

Vohra (1993) studied the psychological problems of adolescents in relation to their ego-identity, laws of control and family cohesion. The study was conducted on a sample of 320 adolescents, in the age group of 15-17 years. The results revealed that significant sex differences were found in various problem areas, such as social and recreational activities, living conditions, employment, finances, social-psychological relations and the future (vocational and also educational) amongst the arts and science students.

3. Socio-economic Status and Problems of Adolescence

Problems of adolescence have also been found to vary with the family and socio-economic background of adolescents. Following studies indicate this association.

Hollingshead (1949) of Yale University concluded that the social behavior of adolescents was related to the position of his/her family in the social structure of the community.

Kuhlen and Bretsch (1947) compared the personal problems felt by pupils with high and low socio-metric status. Although there was little difference between the total number of problems checked by the high and low status pupils, the pupils with low socio-metric status checked personal problems more “often” than the pupils with high socio-metric status.

Keislar (1954) reported that the pupils with high and low socio-metric status both checked approximately the same number of problems. Although the high status pupils tended to check more specific problems, there was little difference between the two groups.
Bedoian (1953) reported that pupils with high socio-metric status had significantly higher mental health scores than pupils with low socio-metric status. Similar findings were reported by Baron (1949 and 1951) for pupils in the eleventh, fifth and sixth grade classroom. He noted that the high status pupils tended to feel more self-confident, more physically adequate and more secure in their school relationships and gave indications of greater emotional stability than low status pupils. The results were similar for boys and girls, with the exception that low status girls indicated the presence of nervous symptoms which did not appear in low status boys. Similar findings were reported in a study at the second grade level that pupils with low socio-metric status had more problem tendencies (Fuller and Baune 1951).

Saxena (1952) found that one’s economic status had a direct influence on his personality adjustment and persons with higher socio-economic status likely to be better adjusted than persons with lower socio-economic status. Author also found that there was an influence of an increase in economic status on one’s personality adjustment. Depression and irregularities in economic status have shown an unfavorable influence on personality adjustment.

Mathur (1970) inquired into the causes of frustration among the adolescents of Mathura District. The sample consisted of 772 students studying in XI standard. The tools used were Kuppuswamy’s socio-economic status scale, Jalota’s General Mental Ability Test and Saxena’s Personality Inventory. He reported that the incidents of frustration were significantly higher in adolescents belonging to low socio-economic status than those from higher socio-economic status.

Shanthakumari (1973) conducted a study on the problems of adolescent girls studying in the secondary schools of Bangalore city. The investigator studied the problems of adolescents in seven areas namely, physical, social, personal, home, financial, health and educational. The sample consisted of 300 girls studying in VIII, IX and X standards of Bangalore city drawn from 10 schools. The sample was selected by a stratified random sampling method. The ‘t’ test was used as a statistical tool for testing the significance of the null hypothesis. The analysis of the results revealed that the adolescents had more problems in personal, educational areas and less number of problems in health area. There was a significant relationship between socio-economic status and the problems of adolescent girls. It was found that the girls from low socio-economic status had more problems than the girls from high socio-economic status. It
was also found that there was an inverse relationship between academic achievement and problems. That is, more the problems lower was the achievement.

Kumar (1975) analyzed the determinants of the problems of adolescents who were asked to report on five major areas of problems in order of their severity found that they listed lack of social adjustment, self-confidence and feeling of inferiority as more dominant complaints. Their determinants in a majority of the cases were reported to be socio-economic status of the family, education of the parents and parental dominance.

Chaudhary (1984) found that 30 out of 77 students attending the University Counseling Centre had problems of socialization, e.g. feeling of inferiority, lack of confidence, difficulties in socializing, whereas the remaining 47 students were facing academic, adjustment, emotional and sexual problems. It is concluded that a student who has inherited an inferior economic and educational background is at a disadvantage. He is more self-conscious, lacks self-confidence and possibly has low self-esteem. There, in turn, are chances of developing social as well as other kinds of problems.

4. Correlates of Adolescence Problems

Some other studies have found an association between problems among adolescence and factors such as attitude of parents/teachers; academic stress and anxiety about career, etc. Following are some of such studies on adolescence problems.

Cole (1954) has grouped adolescent problems into eight interest and activity areas: emotional maturity, establishment of heterosexual interests, general social maturity, emancipation from home control, intellectual maturity, the beginning of economic independence, adult uses of leisure, and the establishment of an interest in general principles of conduct. A majority of young people are confronted by more or less serious problems connected with their home life, their school experiences, their work activities and their social relationships. The factors most commonly cited as those which are likely to predispose toward adolescent maladjustment include the following: economic instability, parental discord, inadequacy of school offerings, and lack of understanding of adolescent psychology on the part of parents and school faculties, unwholesome neighborhood or community conditions, inadequate
recreational facilities, unpreparedness for vocational activities or unintelligent job placement.

Charlotte Pope (1943) assembled material from essays written on personal problems by 1904 pupils, aged fifteen to eighteen years of a St. Lewis High School. She wrote: 46 per cent mentioned problems growing out of their relationships with their teachers, 34 per cent mentioned problems growing out of selecting a vocation, 24 per cent mentioned feelings of inferiority growing out of social relationships, 19 per cent problems growing out of social relationship, 19 percent problems growing out of financial conditions of the home, 10 per cent problems of making friends.

Health and Gregary (1946) surveyed 259 college sophomores; they revealed conflicts with parents in more than 50 per cent of the cases. Most of the disagreements in both of these studies centered around such problems as size of allowance, attendance at dances, selection of friends, selection of crossing, late hours, and a variety of personal traits and habits. Apparently the same sources of conflict that operate in early and middle adolescence continue to produce disagreement even in late adolescence.

Adolescence is a period of life in which many such changes takes place which influence one’s physical, emotional, mental and social settings. These changes are so effective that the total outlook of an individual is modified and transformed. An adolescent wants to be recognized as a full member of society having a unique personality of his/her own. He/she feels tempted to express his/her opinion on an issue without being asked for the same, but proper attention is never given to what he/she says. The adolescent sometimes, faces great difficulties when he/she finds that the parents and other elders at home and teachers at school are not ready to listen or loosen their strict control over him/her. This is so because they treat him/her still as a child. Mostly elders intend to mould the behavior of the adolescent according to their own likings or disliking which the adolescent resents. Consequently he/she experiences great stress and strain, because he/she wants to follow the path of his/her life according to his/her own wishes and attitudes.

A young person’s social adjustment is not a thing apart, but is closely linked with his adjustment to his home and school relationships. Young people with certain personality lacks in their home and school relationships make it very difficult to meet their social responsibilities adequately. Moreover, the causes of an adolescent’s social maladjustment often can be traced to a home environment in which the teenager has
had little or no opportunity to experience cooperative group living (Crow and Crow 1945).

Smithies (1934) studied those normal adolescent girls who were socially and educationally maladjusted as a result of inferiority complexes. Various causes of inferiority complexes were jealous of older siblings, physical disability, parental dominance, broken homes etc.

Cromption and Partridge (1939) investigated the “Social Adjustment” associated with individual differences among adolescent boys and states that in many cases the problems of growing boys are accentuated by the nature and administration of the educational program to which they are exposed. He writes that careful research is needed to determine the nature of social implications and the way in which they affect the behavior of the individual. It is quite probable that the problems faced by girls as they grow into maturity are quite different from those found in boys.

Bhagia (1982) found many significant differences between the subgroups of pupils studying in different types of schools, indicated that the environment of the school appears to play a significant role in influencing the level of pupils’ school adjustment. Wherever school conditions are sound and better in a particular aspect, the adjustment of pupils in that aspect is better. On the other hand, adjustment is lower wherever the school conditions are comparatively poor. The school environment acts as a contributing factor to pupils’ school adjustment ascertainment the urge for improving the school environment, curriculum, teachers, activities and facilities etc. in order to raise the level of pupils’ school adjustments in general.

Siegelman (1965) in a study of parent-child relationships reported that anxious and introverted males tended to come from families in which both parents were rejecting.

Prem Lata (1985) studied the teachers’, parents’ and counselors’ approaches towards the personal, vocational and educational problems of adolescents. The sample included case studies of 35 adolescents. It was found that a large number of problems were related to social, physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral development and that parents and teachers were not being in a position to resolve most of the problems faced by adolescents.

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 that there was a positive correlation between the different areas of adjustment.

Mathur (1975) studied the causes of frustration in adolescents and its relation with the level of aspiration. The study investigated the causes of frustration in adolescents and also whether frustration was higher in urban adolescents or rural adolescents. Subjects of the study were 772 male students of class XI of Mathura District. The questionnaire used, contained four sections: Home and family, Health and school and social-personal. On the basis of the findings of the study the following conclusions were drawn: The causes of frustration were found mainly in home, health, social-personal areas. The foremost causes of frustration were however, found to be health, vis-a-vis school. Significant difference was found among the adolescents belonging to urban areas and rural areas.

Rangi (1969) also studied the adjustment problems of teenagers and suggested some useful remedies for the mal-adjustment. He took into consideration four types of adjustments: home, health, social and emotional. A stratified random sample of 500 teenagers was taken to study their adjustment problems. The research was done on secondary classes comprising 8th, 9th and 11th class. The investigator concluded that more and more teenagers were unhappy with their home surroundings. The number of teenagers who were facing health mal-adjustment was far greater than those who were health adjusted and the problem of social adjustment was quite acute among teenagers. The researcher also found that the problem of emotional adjustment was the severest of all problems.

Reddy (1966) studied the adolescent adjustment in relation to home environment. The sample consisted of 1280 adolescents, from schools and colleges within the age range of 14-20 years. Results indicated that conflicting attitude of extreme nature on the part of parents led to significant trends of maladjustment increased with age. Further, adolescents in the age group of 17-19 years revealed significantly more personal maladjustment than the subject in the early age group.

Kakkar (1964) studied adjustment problems of adolescents and found that 43% cases had serious adjustment problems: the school areas passed greatest number of problems, while in the area of home, adolescents were over-dependent on parents: girls accepted parental control but boys grumbled about it, a feeling of insecurity in
the home was mirrored in their attitude towards school situations. In social areas, problems like how to be popular, ‘how to get along with others’ worried them.

Hence, the review of literature indicates that though there is no necessary relationship between adolescence and stress, generally adolescence remains a period of stress and tension particularly for the adolescent, irrespective of gender. While there are some problems which are gender specific in that while girls may get anxious for one set of problems, boys may be stressed for altogether reasons, there are many problems, which both boys and girls confront during adolescence. However, there are a number of intervening factors. Such as socio-economic background of the family to which an adolescent belongs, his/her level of intellect, parents’ attitude and so on.

5. Peer Pressure and Problems of Adolescence

Adolescents spend most of their time outside the home with members of the peer group; it is understandable that the peer would have a greater influence on adolescent’s attitudes, speech, interests, appearance and behavior than the family has. Most adolescents, for example, discover that if they wear the same type of clothes as popular group members wear, their chances of acceptance are increased. Similarly, if members of the peer group experiment with alcohol, drugs or tobacco, adolescents are likely to do the same, regardless of how they feel about these matters.

There are few studies, which show the influence of peer group on adolescents.

Peer group is a group of individuals usually well known to each other and of the same age, sharing similar social experience, values etc. Peer group relations are of crucial importance to the developing child, especially during adolescence when peer group standards and expectations begin to challenge those of the family. The peer group may establish ways of dressing, language and behavior that set it apart from other groups and may be a form of adolescent rebellion against parents and family (Page and Thomas 1977).

According to Rogers (1962) “The adolescent is influenced unduly by group pressures in the life decisions he begins to make at this age. In his recreational interests’ moral, religious and social beliefs, in his choice of vocation…He is likely to be influenced by the opinions of his crowd rather than guided by his particular needs”.

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Erikson (1965) describes that the adolescent seeks reassurance and conformation from her peers, particularly in the revolt against parental constraints, and is concerned to conform to the peer group norms and practices. Therefore the peer group in its widest sense is recognized as a particularly strong re-enforcer of behavior at adolescence because it represents a highly esteemed reference group, and this explains why group work is seen as a method of work which has special potential for causing change in the behavior of adolescents.

An adolescent’s personality characteristics and social behavior affect the likelihood of being accepted by peers. In general, as indicated by a variety socio-metric studies, adolescents of both sexes who are accepted by their peers are perceived as liking other people and being tolerant, flexible and sympathetic; being lively, cheerful, good natured, possessing a sense of humor, acting naturally and self confidently without being conceited; and possessing initiative, enthusiasm, drive and plans for group activity. This has been indicated by Jennings (1943), Bonney (1946), Laughlin (1954), Gronlund and Anderson (1957) and Lathe (1968).

It is evident from studies by Grossman and Wrighter (1948), McClelland and Ratcliff (1947) and Kuhlen and Bretsch (1947) that children who are not well accepted by their classmates often have more social problems and show more nervous symptoms than the average. Kuhlen and Collister (1952) go so far as to suggest that social maladjustment may be to some so important that it results in their actually leaving school earlier than their better-adjusted contemporaries.

An important aspect of social acceptability is its relationship to maladjustment and delinquency. That acceptance by others is a strong factor making for a good personal adjustment was shown by Potashin (1946).

The unpopular adolescent is likely to be caught in a vicious circle. If he is already emotionally troubled, self pre-occupied and lacking in secure self-concept, he is likely to meet with rejection or indifference from his peers. In turn, an awareness that he is not accepted by his peers and lack of opportunity to participate in and learn from peer group activities only further undermines his self confidence and increases his social isolation (Mussen 1974).

In a study of over 2000 adolescents, Feinberg (1953) found that young persons who were accepted by others had, on the whole, a more favorable view of themselves than the rejected ones and those they have better relationships with their parents and
teachers. Remmers and Radler (1958) stated that probably one of the most important factors leading to delinquency is a need to be accepted by the gang. According to the survey by Gallup and Hill (1961), American youth approve of “Moderate” or “Social” drinking. Almost half the college reported that their companions drank “a lot”. Use of marijuana by peers is the best predictor of whether an adolescent is using marijuana. Adolescents who report that their friends do not use drugs report that they too do not use drugs. Teenagers who report that most of their friends are marijuana users are four times as likely to use marijuana themselves. If members of the adolescent’s family, as well as friends, are drug users, there it is even more likely that adolescent in question is using drugs (Kandel 1973).

Hence review of literature revealed that peer group is the primary source of influence on adolescent’s behavior. Thus it is the society of peers that the adolescent finds support for his/her efforts. So acceptance and rejection by peer group is an important thing for adolescents. They follow the values set by peer group without realizing their positive or negative effects.

6. Electronic Media and Problems of Adolescence

Modern information technology ensures that something new is rapidly and almost universally transmitted through all or most strata of the population, from one city to countryside. This has the effect of accelerating, diffusing and standardizing the cycles of ‘fashion’ spreading new ideas and patterns of conduct, commodities and services to everyone, since most people are exposed to the media. Adolescents are the maximum user of media especially electronic media which has both positive and negative effect on them. Many scholars believe that media is playing a negative role in their lives and creating problems for them. Following studies show the influence of media on adolescents.

At the advent of television, thoughtful parents and social commentators expected it to be an important framed experience for children. They saw television captivating youngsters, bringing them a fabulously enlarged and lively window on the world. Some worried; television would seduce children away from desirable activities. Many however, were enthusiastic about the opportunities television presented for showing children the wonders of the world and the goodness of humankind, bringing master teachers to all schools, and providing a happy time for the whole family to be
together. Parents and social critics are, however, also very much aware of television’s faults. One observer argues that television introduces children to an adult world they should not yet know about and holds this “total disclosure medium” responsible for the disappearance of childhood (Postman 1982). Other found it violent, sexist, racist, and commercial (Mankiewicz and Swerdlow 1978). Another wants to abolish it altogether (Monder 1978). Parents complain that content is too violent, sexy or amoral, not uplifting enough, and too likely to give children a case of “the gimmes” (Bower 1973; Yankelovich and White 1977).

T.V. viewing reduces opportunity to be outdoors, which results in reduction of physical activity, i.e. opportunities to do exercise like walking, cycling, playing outdoor games, Shepherd et al. (1989). Many Indian parents express concern that T.V. is taking time away from studying, leisure and other family activities (Misra et al. 1985; Phatak and Singh 1986).

Bickham et al. (2006) investigated the relationship between television viewing time, content, context, and peer integration. As children spend more total time watching television, they spend a significantly shorter amount of time with friends as compared to those who don’t. Thus, viewing television causes poor peer relationships and thereby increases the risk for social isolation, anxiety disorder, and antisocial behavior (Thakur and Khokhar 2001).

A study by Milavsky et al. (1982) reported concurrent correlations between boys’ and girls’ aggressive behavior and their viewing television violence, reading violent comic books, seeing violent movies, having aggressive friends, being students in aggressive classrooms and at least 20 other such experiences. The largest correlations were with children’s friends and classmates, next their parents, next television, and last other media.

In contemporary society, the mass media serve as a powerful socializing agent. By the time an average American student graduates from high school, he or she will have spent more time in front of the television than in the classroom (Graber 1980).

Parke, Berkowitz, Leyens, West and Sebastian (1977) working with delinquent adolescent boys living in special schools, the researchers randomly assigned some living units to an aggressive commercial film group. Boys in each group watched five films on five successive days during which no television viewing was permitted.
Their verbal and physical aggression during everyday activities was recorded several times a week the three weeks before and the one week of the special films. During the viewing week, boys watching aggressive films usually become more aggressive. What happened the next three weeks when normal television viewing resumed and no films were shown differed in the two studies in which it was measured. In one, only the more aggressive boys who watched aggressive films continued to be more aggressive, while in the other only the less aggressive boys who watched aggressive films continued to be more aggressive.

Anderson and Dill (2000) measured aggressive personality traits, delinquent behaviors, and video-games playing habits of 227 college students. Those who reported playing more violent video games in the past engaged in more aggressive behavior and had lower academic grades in college.

Present day aggressive heroes are abundantly provided by the mass media, particularly television. Children have numerous opportunities to view and admire “stabbings, beating, strangling... and less graphic but equally destructive forms of cruelty” (Bandura 1973) performed by their favorite television characters, including detectives, athletes, superheroes and cartoon characters.

Weinstein (1998) reported that teenagers are much heavier internet users than their parents. While adults tend to use the internet as part of their jobs and to get employment related information, teenagers were more likely to use the internet to play games, to listen to music and to meet new people. He believes that internet users will loose the skills and patience to conduct social relations in the corporeal world and that the internet will intensify the negative affect a television has already on our social skills.

Karat et al. (1998) examined the social and psychological impact of the internet on 169 people in 73 households during their first one to two years online. In this sample, internet was used extensively for communication. Nonetheless, the greater use of the internet was associated with decline in participant’s communication with family members in the household, decline in the size of their social circle, and increase in their depression and loneliness.

Rosengren (1994) study revealed that the children, who rely heavily on media advice and models, are less integrated with the family or the peer group; while others do not
since their activities outside home provide them greater stimuli and other role models. The role of the primordial agents of socialization, i.e. the family, the peer group, and the working group, has probably been reduced.

From the above findings it is clear that electronic media act as an influential socializing agent for adolescents. No doubt adolescents get huge knowledge about the world through media but on the other hand they are becoming more aggressive and violent because they are watching violence, sex and aggressive behaviors of heroes on television. Heavy doses of televised crime, violence and brutality make the children aggressive, disturbed and anguished. The aggression may turn into general animosity towards society. So problems of depression, loneliness, decline in the size of social circle, decreasing integration with parents and peer group is on increase in adolescents. Adolescents are losing the skills and patience to conduct social relations.

**Formulation of Research Problem**

Each stage of life has special and unique problems which must be understood. The study of problems of adolescents is important because they are a vitally important group of society and indeed play a significant role in bringing about changes in it. In India, moreover, the importance of adolescents is even greater because the current proportion of youth (those between the ages of 14 to 20 years) to the total population in India is greater than in most other countries. In the history of India, their proportion has never been as high as it is today. The study of problems of adolescents which vary with socio-economic status and gender is important because the economic and social changes that have taken place in India during the last six decades are enormous. Adolescents are an important segment of society, affected by these changes. Most of the studies on adolescents’ problems have been conducted in western countries but in India there is dearth of such studies from sociological angle. Moreover, the results of the studies in western countries are not fully applicable in Indian situation which is totally different from its western counterpart. So we need more sociological studies to understand the problems of adolescents, both from the perspective of adolescents as well as that of their parents. The present study is designed to analyze the problems faced by adolescent boys and girls as well as their parents. In the present study both adolescents and their parents will be studied with a view to obtain their perceptions about the situation.
Objectives of the Present Study

After reviewing the literature one observes that the period adolescence is accompanied by a number of problems. There are many factors which contribute to the problems of adolescents like school environment, socio-economic status of parents, peer group, media, and gender differences etc. However the specific objectives of the present study are the following.

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, & 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.

Research Methodology and Data Collection

The present study was comparative in nature wherein an attempt was made to study the problems faced by adolescent boys and girls and to see whether these were affected by their socio-economic background. For doing so, three kinds of schools were taken up with the objective of making a comparison among respondents belonging to low, middle and upper income groups. The proposed study was conducted on the schools located in U.T., Chandigarh. This city as well as its schools makes a typical case representing socio-economic distinctions within its population, making it convenient to distinguish one socio-economic segment from the other.

Since the present study was undertaken to make a comparative analysis among lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups of adolescents, three schools were purposely selected. These were Government Senior Secondary school, Sector 37- D,
D.A.V. Model School, Sector 15-A and Vivek High School Sector-38 Chandigarh. The population for this study consisted of all the students of classes VIIIth, IXth, XIth and XIIth of the Arts stream in each of these schools. Hence, the universe for this study comprised of the students studying in these three schools, which represented lower, middle and upper socio-economic groups respectively. There were two main reasons for choosing these three schools: i) these schools represented adolescents of different socio-economic backgrounds and ii) all these schools were co-educational institutions, which enabled us to examine gender differences. Thus in each of the three schools, a sample of 60 students was randomly selected by using lottery method, leading to a total sample of 180 adolescent respondents. The Roll Numbers of students enrolled in classes VIIIth, IXth, XIth and XIIth of the Arts stream were obtained from the office of each school. The lists were then segregated for boys and girls. Then an effort was made to select 7 boys and 7 girls each from VIIIth and IXth classes and 8 boys and 8 girls each from XIth and XIIth classes. While 30 boys and 30 girls were thus selected in Vivek High School, in D.A.V. School, two boys declined to respond and due to non-response from boys, two more girls were selected. Similarly, in Government School, due to non-response of one boy, another girl student was selected. Thus there were 30 boys and 30 girls selected in Vivek High School, 28 boys and 32 girls in D.A.V. School and 29 boys and 31 girls in Government School. A sub sample of 60 parents (twenty in each school) was also interviewed. Five parents from each class were taken, amounting to 20 parents in each school. Parents were chosen by using non-random method, mainly on the basis of availability. While interviewing the respondent, he/she was asked whether his/her parents would be willing to give information. Then an appointment was fixed after taking consent from parents on telephone. Five most willing parents from each class were interviewed at their residence. Parents were interviewed as per their availability. If both the parents were available interview was conducted in the presence of both the parents. In other cases interview was conducted with father or mother depending upon their availability. Another sub sample of 30 teachers (ten in each school) was also interviewed. For that, the class teachers of all the four classes and teachers teaching main subjects were interviewed.

The data were collected with the help of an interview schedule, each for the adolescents, their parents and teachers. A pilot study was conducted on a smaller
sample of respondents before finalizing the interview schedule for adolescent respondents. It helped me to ensure that respondents understood questions properly and if there were any irrelevant questions. After this pretesting, any discrepancies if found, were removed and interview schedule was finalized. Both closed as well as open ended questions were framed to collect relevant information.

Both qualitative and quantitative data were obtained. After the collection of data, the relevant information given by respondents was tabulated and simple frequency tables were made. Frequencies were interpreted in the form of percentages. Comparison on the basis of school, gender and socio-economic status was constituted a major exercise in the study. The major findings along with data are discussed in the following chapters.