Conclusion
CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study was planned to explore the role of psychosocial factors in teenage health. **Teenagers were chosen as the target sample as this is an age where many health relevant risk behaviours peak.** This period of development has been rightly labeled as period of **Emerging Adulthood.** At the same time this period is also crucial for health promotion. Many developmental psychologists have opined that adolescence is a period of continued biological development – continued brain development – which leads to an enhanced intellectual functioning and improved comprehension of health related issues. These cognitive changes which adolescents experience may facilitate health promotion efforts, since adolescents become better able to comprehend health risks, reflect on their behaviour and consider long term consequences of their actions.

The results of the present study clearly identified some common protective and risk factors for teenage health. Extraversion, Positive Mental States of Satisfaction With Life, Optimism and Happiness, Task focused and Emotion focused Coping, Healthy Life Style comprising of Health Habits of exercise, diet avoiding drug abuse, Social Connectedness all emerged as positive correlates of physical and mental health. Some of the common risk factors in teenage health were anxiety, stress, anger and depressive tendencies. Some gender differences in these correlate of health status also emerged. In the present study, girls emerged with a better health profile than boys. The present findings, have a clear implication for health behaviour in teenagers. There was convincing evidence that positive affect (happiness, optimism, hope, satisfaction with life) was related to better
health. Negative affect (anxiety, distress, anger) were related to poor health status.

The central point which emerged was that happiness and mood affected health (both mental and physical). A range of other factors which influenced health (eg. Health Habits, Health Protective Behaviour and Social Connectedness) may be doing so by enhancing happiness.

So, if health promotion and disease/illness prevention programs have to be formulated, efforts should be made to improve positive affect, individual moods, help develop appropriate task focused and emotion focused coping, develop the right life style and interpersonal skills and to reduce negative affectivity (eg. Anxiety, anger, stress, depression). This may go a long way in improving teenage health and consequently lay ground for their becoming healthy adults.

The Asia Region Consultation on “Adolescents and Life Skills” was held at Commonwealth Youth Programme: Asia Centre, Chandigarh India from 11th to 17th November, 2002. Experts and youth leaders from 6 countries participated to evolve training programs to enhance life skills of adolescents with the guidance of experts like Kothari (Adolescent Sexuality); Bhagwan Prakash (Perspectives); Hamzah (Parenting); Mohan (Stress); Kumar (Biology); Singh (Emotional Intelligence); Malhotra (Mental Health); Sehgal Diabetes) and Quraishi (Adolescent Issues and Programs). The analysis of problems, issues and perspectives of adolescence led to finding out culture-specific and youth friendly solutions, strategies and life skills to enhance their training and subsequent effectiveness. They reported that teenagers can be trained in life skills and thus improve their quality of life.

Findings of the present investigation imply that there is need to shift from focusing negative effects of pathology to positive mental health states to increase our understanding of how to promote and maintain physical and emotional well-being.
One must also admit towards the end that these findings are limited to school and college going youth. One may extend this work to non-school / college going population as well. Also, the target population here was older adolescents – one may also extend this work to younger / early adolescent age group to discover a continuous pattern of dynamics of teenage health.

The results of the present investigation, unambiguously, highlight the ancient Indian traditional understanding of health and illness and affirm the new found insights of behavioural medicine that health in general but teenage health in particular is intimately intertwined with psychological characteristics and social ethos.